

# OTTOMAN ARMENIAN INTRICATE RELATIONS WITH WESTERN POWERS BEFORE AND DURING THE PEACE SETTLEMENTS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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**Abstract:** *When the First World War brought the two imperialistic blocks of Europe face to face, the clashing interests of each included the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. The extremist Armenians of the Empire were already an armed force committed to the Allies when the Ottoman Empire, siding with the German block, had entered the war. Particularly at the Russian front they wholeheartedly contributed to the Allies, with the anticipation of an independent Armenia including Eastern Turkish provinces. Their anticipations for territorial claims increased with the Wilsonian principles and the ambiguous Article 7 in the Armistice of Mudros following the Ottoman defeat. However, the attitude of the Bolshevik Government in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution and the Turkish nationalists' resistance to the occupations in the wake of the Armistice caused the Allies to approach Armenian demands with more caution during the Paris Peace Conference. With the Turkish resistance having turned into an organized independence war under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha and with the defeat of the Armenians in the East, the Great Powers reached a consensus in Paris that the Armenian demands were beyond anything to be realized. Upon the defeat of the Armenians the Treaty of Gyumri was concluded whereby the Eastern border of Turkey was secured. The stance of the Allied Powers toward the Armenian delegations continued throughout the Paris Peace Conference. It was not until the Lausanne Treaty signed on the 23rd of July 1923 that an Armenian expectation of an independent state encompassing Turkish provinces was put to an end.*

**Key Words:** *Armenians, Allies, Paris Peace Conference, Turkish nationalists.*

**H**istorical acknowledgments on the Armenian Question support the claim that this long-debated question, which emerged during the second half of the 19th century and continues to be discussed today, is an artificial question, for the mutual existence of Turks and Armenians throughout the centuries does not indicate major disturbances between them. Armenians under Ottoman rule enjoyed more privileges than other non-Muslim communities within the framework of the *millet* system, which entitled them to full religious and communal autonomy. They were recognized as *millet-i sadıka* (most loyal subjects); many enjoyed the confidence of the rulers as dragomans or were given important positions in the administrative hierarchy of the Ottoman Empire. The Armenian historian Mikael Varandian, in his book

*History of the Armenian Uprisings, Geneva, 1914*, summarizes well the condition of the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Turkish Armenians, when compared to the Russian, were quite independent and strong about their culture, language, history and literature. Until the beginning of the 19th century, Europe was not aware of Armenian nationhood. Europeans knew the Armenians only through Istanbul, as merchants dispersed all over the world, as people who had no other value than their interests, similar to Jews, as unlucky vagabonds, people without a nation or country.

It was with the provocations and support of the great powers, holding imperialistic interests upon the weakened Ottoman state of the 19th century that the Armenians fell into a chain of armed struggles with the Turks.<sup>2</sup>

It must be kept in mind that since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the foreign policy of each of the three great powers of Europe (England, France and Russia) focused on Mediterranean supremacy for colonial expansion and each had its own motive for establishing itself in the Middle East and using the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire to reach this aim. On the other hand, the great power across the Atlantic Ocean, the United States of America, did not have significant contact with the Ottoman Empire until the 1820s when American Presbyterian missionaries started to venture to Ottoman lands with the purpose of proselytizing. Developing economic interests in the Ottoman Empire and concluding a commercial treaty in 1830 were the immediate outcomes of this newly formed relationship for the U.S. This allowed America to observe the European approach to Ottoman minorities as instruments to further enhance their economic advantages and created interest in the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, each of the great powers had formulated its own geopolitical, strategic, and economic approaches to fulfill expansionist expectations from Ottoman territories and created its own policy concerning the Armenians. Therefore, to more fully understand the Armenian Question, it is essential to briefly examine the role played by these powers in the emergence of this question in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Russia, recognized as a European state since the 18<sup>th</sup> century reforms of Peter the Great, was the only western power which shared frontiers with the Ottoman Empire. However, adherence to the Russian Tzar's policy of reaching the Mediterranean Sea<sup>3</sup> through Ottoman territories via Eastern Anatolia or the Balkans became the cause of numerous wars between the two states, making them archenemies. The Treaty of Kucuk Kaynarca ending the Ottoman-Russian War of 1768–1774 provided Russia with recognition as the protector of the Orthodox communities of the Ottoman Empire composed mainly of Greeks and Armenians. This gave Russia the right to interfere with Ottoman internal affairs through these communities while it set eyes on Armenians in Eastern Anatolia with the intention of using them as a means of reaching the Mediterranean.

1 *Uras, Esat, Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, Istanbul: 1976, p.150.

2 *Karal, Enver Ziya, Osmanlı Tarihi V.VIII*, Ankara: 1983, pp.126-145.

3 *Klyuchevsky, Vasili*, translated by Archibald, Liliana, London: 1963 (See for Peter the Great's policy and Reforms).

Russian strategy included inciting the Armenians to rise against the Ottoman Empire for autonomy, diverting the attention of the Ottoman administrators to Eastern Anatolia. Weakened control of the capital and the straits undoubtedly would leave the doors to Istanbul open for Russian advancements.

The Middle Eastern policy of Great Britain, the most advanced colonial power of the time, focused on preserving Mediterranean security for a safe passage to its valuable colony, India. Accordingly, the possibility of a Russian blockade on this route was a major threat which compelled Britain to support Ottoman integrity, providing that the state remained weak. Russian interest in and expectations from the Ottoman Armenians concerned Britain, which was equally interested in this community. Accordingly, while supporting the American missionaries proselytizing Armenians, Britain increased her efforts to acquire state approval for constructing the first Protestant church in Jerusalem in 1842. This provided Britain the protectorateship of the multiplying Protestants in the Empire<sup>4</sup> as well as closer contacts with the Armenians. However, British policy included providing the foundation of a buffer Armenian state in Eastern Anatolia to confront possible Russian advancements toward the Mediterranean. Britain was confident that possible Russian violations of this small Christian state in order to pass to the Mediterranean would be met with objections by Christian societies of the western world that undoubtedly would remain silent in the case of similar violations of Ottoman territories. Hence, the British intentions included inciting Armenians against the Ottoman state to the point of establishing an independent Armenian state in Eastern Anatolia.

The Ottoman-French alliance, which dates to the 16th century, had endowed France with close socio-economic and cultural ties, as well as recognition as the protector of the Catholic elements of the Ottoman Empire. The capitulations France acquired through this established alliance, and the Napoleonic expedition to Egypt at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, had provided it with multiple installations and investments in the Ottoman Empire. Being a Mediterranean power, France designed its colonial expansions in the Middle East and North Africa, although this strained Ottoman-French relations from time to time. France sought liberal utilization of its investments in Ottoman lands, which depended on preventing Ottoman interference by exercising France's power in the Mediterranean. France maintained very favorable relations with the Maronite Christians in Lebanon and during the conflicts between Christians and Muslims in the 1850s, played a prominent role in providing an almost autonomous status for Lebanon with the 1861 regulation. This furthered French prestige among the Christians, particularly the Armenians seeking a similar status. Consequently, France became the supporter of the Zeytun Armenians who revolted for privileges and started to interfere on behalf of the Armenians in the area with the anticipation of providing for the autonomy of Cilicia.<sup>5</sup> France was aware that Armenians' amity would be instrumental toward the Mediterranean superiority France longed for, thus France supported the Armenians for its own interest and, by nationalistic propaganda, constantly provoked them against the Ottoman state.

<sup>4</sup> Karal, *Enver Ziya, Osmanlı Tarihi...*, p. 128.

<sup>5</sup> Gürün, *Kamuran, Ermeni Dosyası, Ankara: 1983, pp. 57-69.*

Although a non-European power, the intentions of the U.S. concerning the Ottoman Empire were no different than that of the Europeans' aims; accordingly, the U.S. also manipulated the Ottoman Armenians for achieving its hidden imperialistic ambitions in the Middle East. The conclusion of Treaty of Commerce and Amity in 1830<sup>6</sup> had introduced a closer recognition of the Ottoman Empire in America. Meanwhile, as American philanthropic and economic interests in the Ottoman Empire expanded, it was through the Christian missionaries rather than the commercial contacts that America discovered the Armenians there. The missionaries, after realizing that the Ottoman government's restrictions would not allow them to convert Muslims to Christianity, had turned their attention to Armenians and approached them philanthropically. The U.S. government, not wanting to be only a spectator to European expansionism in the Middle East, made good use of this newly established close relationship. Gradually, the Christian missionaries in the Middle East, originally in the region for evangelical purposes, were guided into becoming the agents of the U.S. State Department<sup>7</sup> and close observers of the American policy of weakening the Ottoman Empire since a feeble Ottoman state was a most essential part of the American imperialistic scheme. Proselytizing, which was supposed to be the primary task of the missionaries, became their ostensible duty. They created an extensive network of schools and health centers and approached the Armenians with benevolence in these institutions. With the awareness that acknowledgment would facilitate inciting the Armenians against the state, the missionaries assumed the responsibility of enlightening them. Institutions operated by the missionaries were well suited for this purpose. In schools they established in Istanbul, Lebanon and different parts of Anatolia, they taught the Armenians their own history and literature and informed them about identity, nationalism and human rights.<sup>8</sup> What was learned in schools was carried to homes, coffee houses, church events and health centers where people gathered and discussed everything. These discussions served to establish a propaganda chain which, for America, contributed to substantial proselytizing and for Armenians to demand reforms from the state.

Especially after the Greeks gained their independence in 1830, the Armenians frequently and bitterly complained of the ill-treatment they claimed that they were being subjected to on account of being Christians. Encouraged by the Russian Armenians and consulates, they appealed to the state for reforms and in 1860 took the preliminary step toward expressing their identity by preparing the Armenian Constitution. In 1863, the constitution, which included the establishment of the Armenian General Assembly, was sanctioned by the Ottoman sultan. State recognition of the constitution restricted the absolute power of the Armenian Church. Some scholars regarded this movement as the

6 Trask, Roger R., *The U.S. Response to Turkish Nationalism and Reform, 1914-1939*; Michigan: 1971, p. 5-6. Article 9 of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, finalized in May 7 after consecutive attempts since 1799, and approved by the Senate on February 1 1831, equipped America with the most favored nation treatment for commerce as well as the benefits of "capitulations"; namely, commercial privileges the Ottoman Empire first granted to France in 1535. Capitulations which later encompassed social, judicial and educational privileges as well were granted to other states also in the course of time and were described by one writer as "a code of legal reconciliation founded upon the immiscibility of Christianity and Islam" See Trask, 5-7.

7 Grabill Joseph, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East, Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927*, Minneapolis 1971, p.40.

8 Karal, Enver Ziya, *Osmanlı Tarihi...*,p. 129.

Armenian approach toward western civilization and education, for the subsequent steps taken included the openings of Armenian schools and cultural institutions of western styles, not only in Istanbul but in various parts of the country. Armenians published newspapers and journals, developed their language and culture and socially elevated themselves as they continued requesting reforms from the state.<sup>9</sup> In each of these steps, they were guided by American missionaries who since the 1820s had taught and employed the Ottoman Armenians by the hundreds. Close contact with the missionaries steadily preaching to them the Bible as well as liberation stimulated the independence sentiment among the Armenians. Soon gaining independence became an obsession for the Armenians. When the Ottoman Constitution was declared in 1876, they appeared to be content and praised the state, but soon they realized that Ottoman parliamentarism would be a stumbling block for their march toward independence; thus, they recommenced with seeking reforms that would equip them with educational and administrative privileges.

Armenians found better opportunities to react against the Ottoman administration after the Russian victory of the 1877–78 Ottoman-Russian War which concluded with the San Stefano Treaty of March 3. The treaty included state commitments to Russia for the radical reforms Armenians sought (Article 16). England, France and Germany, concerned that the article allowing the control of the promised reforms gave too much authority to Russia, sought the modification of this treaty with the Berlin Treaty of July 17, 1878. This treaty, which altered the San Stefano Treaty by extending the same authorization to the four powers with Article 61, can be regarded as the first official display of the Armenian Question in European diplomacy. The Berlin Treaty also became a turning point that opened the way for the intervention of these powers on all issues pertaining to Ottoman-Armenian relations.<sup>10</sup> Once the Armenians were assured the full support of the great western powers, and relied on their commitment to Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty, the Armenians repeatedly pressured the Ottoman state to apply the promised reforms. Yet, all of the concerned states knew that fulfilling such an obligation was beyond the capacity of the Ottoman state. Reforms were postponed each time they were brought up. This fueled the hostility of the Armenians against the administration as they, in the following years, were exposed to the provocations of the revolutionary societies of the Armenekyan, Hincak and Dashnakutsyun, all founded abroad after the Ottoman-Russian War to propagate revolts among the Armenians, distressed from unfulfilled commitments of the Ottoman state.

The following decades witnessed multiple attempts by the revolutionaries to prompt European states to intervene on behalf of their cause while consecutive Armenian uprisings were met with Ottoman reprisals. Both the Turkish and Armenian populations were subjected to violence by each other, shedding much blood. As Turkish-Armenian relations were more and more damaged by these unfortunate events costing many Turkish and Armenian lives, the great powers rapidly approached their goal of further weakening the Ottoman state.

<sup>9</sup> Nalbandian, Louis, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement*, Los Angeles: 1963, pp.26-27.

<sup>10</sup> Vertanes, Charles, *Armenia Reborn*, New York:1947, p. 15.

This desire for a weakened Ottoman state materialized with Ottoman defeats in the Tripoli and Balkan Wars of 1911-13. Although Adrianople was reoccupied by the Turks during the Second Balkan War, the Ottoman military had proven unbattleworthy and the government, among immediate measures for its resurgence, sought the military expertise and assistance of Germany for the army, Britain for the navy and France for the gendarmerie forces. Russia, disappointed for failing to reassert its grip on the Balkans, suffered another disillusionment with the appointment of German General Liman von Sanders as a commander of the Ottoman First Army Corps. Germany was provided this appointment in return for military assistance, which was a move toward converting the Turkish army into an instrument of German aggression, and, undoubtedly, challenged Russia's expectations for possessing the Straits. Accordingly, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs Serge Dmitrievich Sazanov, deciding that the Straits, without allowing a third power, should for the time being remain in Turkish hands, turned to Eastern Turkey, where a future political partitioning seemed inevitable. Using the Armenians of this region for creating a zone of special privileges for Russia was once more resorted to with the signing of the 1914 February Turkish-Russian Convention, authorizing Russia to supervise reforms providing for the appointment of foreign inspector generals and for elected assemblies of Christian and Muslim community representatives.<sup>11</sup> The settlement of some of the many Turks who were displaced after the Second Balkan War was resettled in Eastern Anatolia following the Muslim migration from the Balkans.

When the First World War brought the two imperialist blocks of Europe face to face, expectations of each block included granting formal recognition of their economic spheres of influence in Turkish territories, which meant the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. Most of the Ottoman Armenians were already an armed force committed to the Allies when the Ottoman Empire, siding with the German block, entered the war at the end of October 1914.

Within the next few months, the Ottoman armies were fighting at the Caucasian, Egyptian and Gallipoli fronts as the Allies used the Armenians as pawns once again. Armed Armenian revolutionaries and propagandists dispersed throughout the Ottoman Empire to agitate the Armenians against the government while the Allied embassies and consulates assisted and facilitated their activities by spying. In a line stretching from Kars toward Aleppo, encompassing Sivas-Kayseri to Muş-Bitlis, Ottoman supply lines were cut and not only the military but civilians were also attacked by guerilla troops, composed of Armenians refusing to join the Ottoman army.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the Turks, engaged in a war in which the existence of their country was at stake, were confronted by an internal enemy as well. Trapped in a multi-front war, the Ottoman administrators, after several warnings, resorted to removing the insurgent Armenians from the war zone and transferring them elsewhere within the Ottoman frontiers until the fighting ceased. The state was compelled to resort to this measure in late May 1915, which involved relocating several hundred thousand Armenians, of which a

11 Kent, Marion, *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*, London: 1984, p. 96.

12 Sonyel, Salahi, *Minorities and the Destruction of the Ottoman Empire*, Ankara: 1993, p.390.

significant percentage died during the long migration. Casualties resulting from fatigue, hunger and epidemics as well as from attacks and combat between Turks and Armenians raised the death toll to the point that the relocation became the bleeding wound of the War for the Ottoman Empire.

## AMERICA AND THE ARMENIANS

Americans became familiar with the Armenians mainly through the writings of missionaries. Most of the missionaries in the Ottoman Empire, rebuffed by Muslim Turks and well received by the Armenians, often stigmatized the Turks in their correspondence. Consequently, Americans viewing the Ottoman Empire, particularly the Armenians, through the eyes of the missionaries, came to believe that the Armenians were vulnerable Christians, suffering under the Muslim yoke and wholeheartedly supported them through the multiple conflicts prior to World War I. Many of the missionary installations served as Armenian hideouts or depots for their weapons during these insurrections. Although America did not enter the war until 1917, during the war years and especially after the Armenian relocation, American sentiment already in favor of the Armenians surged tremendously. The U.S. government, officially displaying neutrality for the sake of American installations and investments in the Ottoman lands, did not refrain from encouraging the Near East Relief Fund, a supportive organization for the missionaries, from nourishing this sentiment. Efforts were made to keep the public interest high and raise charity funds for the Armenians. Henry Morgenthau, the U.S. Ambassador in Istanbul at the time of the relocations, remained a staunch defender of the Armenians and conducted relations with Ottoman authorities in the triangle of Istanbul-U.S. State Department and the Near-East Relief Fund.<sup>13</sup> There was various correspondence exchanged between the State Department, the U.S. Ambassador in Istanbul, and James Barton, chair of the Near East Relief Organization, which serves to underscore the close U.S. connection, and, of course, state involvement in missionary entanglements with the Armenians (Appendix 1).

Furthermore, the close contact of the American missionaries with Ottoman Armenians and the involvement of some of the missionaries with the Armenian Revolutionary Committees served demonstrate missionary support for Armenian independence as well as provide evidence of America's partiality on the issue. Direct involvement of the missionaries with the Armenian revolutionary committees frequently became a matter of dispute between the Ottoman state and the U.S. Embassy. The Ottoman government, unable to overlook this involvement, frequently requested the assistance of the U.S. Embassy for the replacement of those involved in such matters (Appendix 2).

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13 American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions-ABCFM.

## AMERICA IN WORLD WAR I

The U.S, in observing the Monroe Doctrine,<sup>14</sup> preserved its neutrality during the first years of World War I, although multiplying commercial ties continued American relations with European countries. The U.S. policy, not any different from that of both European imperial blocks, was focused on the welfare of state interests and investments in war zones. As far as the Ottoman Empire was concerned, these were either commercial investments or installations such as educational institutions and health centers established and operated by the American missionaries. Similar to the proselytizing activities of the missionaries, American installations also appealed mostly to the Armenians within the Ottoman Empire, thus their preservation depended on supporting the Armenians whose relations with the Ottoman state had been diminished several decades before the war. Moreover, the steady deterioration following the first disputes had triggered what the world even to this day terms the Armenian Question.

When America declared war against Germany on April 6, 1917, the U.S. government, concerned with preserving its existing philanthropic and commercial investments, carefully refrained from declaring the Ottoman Empire among the belligerent countries. On the other hand, commitments to the Armenians had made the Armenians dependent on the U.S. for the realization of their dreams of independence. As a matter of fact, aiming to be more supportive of obtaining independence, many Armenians working in American missionary institutions had even become American citizens. Thus, when America's entrance into the war also brought the hope of peace, providing a good representation for the Armenians, the approaching negotiations became one of the primary concerns of the U.S. government. U.S. state officials even proceeded with the preparations for and the handling of the Armenian case without awaiting the end of the war.

U.S. Foreign Secretary Robert Lansing, in a letter dated May 29, 1917 directly consulted W.G. Sharp, the U.S. Ambassador in Paris concerning the personality and status of Boghos Nubar, the head of the Armenian National Delegation, who was not recognized as an official but was in Paris as a prospective representative. Secretary Lansing promptly reflected affirmative results of his inquiries about Boghos Nubar to the U.S. Congress. Meanwhile, Nubar, with a May 24 memorandum titled "The Armenian Question at the Peace Conference"<sup>15</sup> had already forwarded to Secretary Lansing his people's request for an autonomous Armenia. The memorandum, with nine points, expressed that an autonomous Armenia should be "composed of the entire Armenian territory in Asiatic Turkey .... consisting of the six vilayets of Erzerum, Bitlis, Van, Diarbekir, Mamuret-ül Azis and Sivas, together with Cilicia and the ports of Mersina and Alexandretta on the Mediterranean and of Traibzond on the Black Sea." The

14 Several passages of President James Monroe's annual message to the Congress delivered on December 2 1823 hitherto was recognized by the US as the principals of American foreign policy and was referred to as the Monroe Doctrine: "...that the American continents, by the free and independent conditions which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers....Our policy in regard to Europe...is not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers (but) but to cultivate friendly relations with it, submitting to injuries from none", Faulkner, U. Harold, *American Social and Political History*, New York: 1952, pp. 191-192.

15 Foreign Relations, 1917, Supplement 2 Part I: Continuation of the War- Participation of U.S. pp.792-795.



placement of the Armenian state under the protectorate of the great powers at first and administration by an independent assembly after a certain period were also among the requests (Appendix 3).

America's entrance into the war determined the destiny of the two blocks and, as mentioned above, served as an indication of the approaching peace. As each of the fighting nations started to take their own measures, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's determination that U.S. should play a major role in peace settlements prompted him to compile information by various means on probable areas of Armenian concentration.

Although a state of war did not exist between the Ottoman Empire and America, involvement with the Ottoman Armenians invited closer U.S. attention to Ottoman territories. Academicians were assigned and commissions were appointed by the government to investigate and report military, geographical, administrative and economic conditions of the areas holding American interests within the Ottoman frontiers. Needless to say, missionary installations erected mostly in regions populated by Armenians were the pinpoints. U.S. representatives in different European states were also consulted to obtain the various views concerning the existing condition of the Armenians within the Ottoman Empire, including information about their welfare and disputes with the Turks and Kurds. The April 15, 1917 report of William P. Cresson, Secretary of the U.S. Embassy in Petrograd to State Secretary Lansing offers a prime example of such acknowledgments. This lengthy report includes opinions about the factors causing the deterioration of Turco-Armenian relations, details about Armenian-Kurdish conflicts and views concerning different states' ambitions on Ottoman territories. Cresson wrote:<sup>16</sup>

It should be borne in mind that until within recent years the Armenian population of many Turkish border districts lived upon terms of comparative friendliness with their Moslem neighbors. According to reliable authorities (notably Lynch and Sykes) the present lamentable state of affairs dates largely from the unsatisfactory state of affairs set up by the Congress of Berlin, 1878.

As previously mentioned, the Ottoman Armenians since 1878 strove first for autonomy, then independence and tried to convince the great powers that they were worthy of independence since they had a demographic majority in the areas that they anticipated to create their state. However, Cresson's report continued:

.... The principal argument in the Turks' denial of an independent Armenia lay in the fact that in no district of the Armenian-claimed Turkish territory were Armenians originally a nation, or had majority, although it is claimed that the decrease in Armenian population in the mentioned areas are due to deportations.

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16 ABCFM 353, Roll 6, *April 15, 1917.*

The report includes the below comparative table, which Lynch related as the population of the Armenian lands for the year 1890.

<b>Provinces</b>	<b>Muslims</b>	<b>Christians</b>
Van	52,229	75,644
Bitlis	145,494	97,184
Kharput	182,000	93,000
Diarbiker	45,580	15,000
Erzeroum	428,495	109,000
Total	853,758	389,828

The report also contains a different view of the Armenian-Kurdish belligerency assumed to be stemming from being the cohabitants of Eastern Anatolia.

Nevertheless the complacent decision of the powers were always addressed to the Porte in a language which, by ignoring their most elemental rights, fired the blood of the none too patient Kurdish tribesmen, uniting the interests of the unruly subjects of the Porte for the first time in their history to the Government of Constantinople, and setting them in opposition to their Christian neighbors. Moreover, the differences between the Kurds and Armenians have always been economic rather than political or religious...

... While the agitation for an independent Armenia may continue, especially among persons not cognizant of the above conditions, the general impression among the more intellectual and liberal minded Armenians of the Caucasus appears to be that an assured place and future is reserved for the Armenian elements of the population in the liberated Russian State...

The report includes an interesting acknowledgment, inviting a different outlook to the 1915 relocation. This is the opinion of an Armenian from Aleppo, Marc Toroyan, who was employed as courier by a German officer (Lieutenant Otto Oelmann). Toroyan's explanations to Cresson concentrated on German involvement in the decision phase of the relocation:

A fact of particular interest emphasized by this man's testimony is that the Armenians of the Gilion (Alexandretta, Tarusus, Syria hinterlands) were not, as a part of general policy, molested during the recent massacres. These appear to have been directed solely against the population who, from their geographical position, might have become "contaminated" by the revolutionary propaganda for a "free and autonomous Armenia" under Russian rule.

The Young Turks appear to have realized the commercial value of the industrious town Armenians of Gilion, and the deportations which took place are principally directed against the Armenian peasantry whose lands

were coveted by their Turkish neighbors as a pasture for their flocks and herds. It would indeed appear that the Euphrates became, in a tragically literal sense, the “dead line” beyond which the organized massacre did not extend....

However active individuals of this nationality (Germany) may have been in attempting to save their fellow Christians from the hideous policy adopted by their political allies, there is an unfortunate consensus of local Armenian testimony to prove that as a rule, German officers and other officers consistently adopted a policy of complete dislocation, not only say a cynical indifference to these events. A searching examination of the witness left me in the impression that while Armenian workers under German contract engaged in constructing the Baghdad Railway, were in many cases protected from molestation, this policy was avowedly based on utilitarian reasons. It would of course be idle to maintain that the full result of the deportation massacres was realized by Professor Rohrbach (a name widely known and execrated among the Armenian population of the border provinces as the author of the whole deportation scheme) when he proposed to add to the commercial efficiency of the Arab population along the line of the Baghdad Railway elements drawn from the population of the Russian border provinces.

What may have been, at worst, an attempt to remove an active and possibly a dangerous political element from Russian influences, was a scheme at any rate through misunderstood or misapplied to suit the circumstances by the allies of Germany. A heavy burden of proof which, in the interest of the good name of the European in the East, it is to be hoped Germany will feel someday called upon to consider, rests upon the German Government. In order to clear the reputation of her officers stationed in this territory it will be necessary to show why, under the circumstances, they did not attempt to use their undoubtedly overwhelming prestige not only in Constantinople, but locally, in order to initiate, in some measure, the organized sovereignty of the military executions in Turkey and the deliberate massacres ordered from Constantinople by officers indirectly subordinated to German military control.

Such an assumption is not unique in the sense that U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau had also mentioned that the *en masse* deportation of the Armenians, a method Turks were totally alien to, was probably a German suggestion, in other words, “exclusively Germanic.”<sup>17</sup>

Cresson, in a section of the report marked “Confidential” evaluates Russia’s desire to possess Constantinople and the control of the Dardanelles as “a neo-Slavic movement supported by a number of the high officials of the present government.” He also points to the favorable position of the American missionaries among the Armenians and in the Ottoman Empire in general, and

17 Morgenthau, Henry, *Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story*, New York: 1918, p. 366.

concludes by underlining the importance of American investments and influence “which may be considered even of commercial value as creating a constantly growing relationship between America and the Middle East through the training offered by missionary schools.”

Most of what was related pertaining to the Armenians in the report above repeats what American officials already knew, including that when America entered the war, the substantial role America would be playing during the peace negotiations was readily accepted by the Armenians. In order to prove worthy of America’s support, Armenian community leaders preparing for the approaching peace conference carefully consulted or applied to the U.S. government not only for intentions in the war zone but even for community affairs. For example, when Miran Sevasly, the President of the Armenian National Union of America Federation, was considered for becoming the representative of the Armenian National Delegation in the United States, the Armenian leader Boghos Nubar applied to Lansing, asking him to grant the recognition and received the immediate response of the Secretary (Appendix 4). Similarly, when the Armenians wanted to form an armed force independent from France to fight for the Allies under the flag of “free Armenians,” they approached the U.S. officials for approval and assistance, and responsively were guided for the procedures to be followed (Appendix 5).

## RUSSIA AND THE ARMENIANS

The Russian invasion of Eastern Anatolia in the beginning of World War I intensified the collaboration between the Russian forces and Ottoman Armenians. Even before the Ottoman Empire entered the war, Armenians in Zeytun had declined to be under the Ottoman flag and rebelled while Transcaucasia was flooded with Armenian volunteers from all over the world to enlist in the Russian army to fight against the Turks. The Tzar, following the Ottoman bombardment of Sebastopol on October 14, declared war on the Ottoman Empire. So, too, did the Dashnakutsyun: The Armenian revolutionaries distributed arms and ammunitions to the civilian Armenians as the Russian army was ordered to cross the Turkish border. Although the Turks resisted the violations, they suffered heavy losses under the advancing Armenian-Russian forces in Eastern Anatolia and were massacred in Van when the city fell. The Van incident constituted one of the causes for the replacement to which the Young Turk government resorted.

However, the Tzarist government in accepting armed Armenians’ support had no intention of complying with their repeated pleas for independence, so it can said that Armeno-Russian relations were already strained at the time of the Van incident.<sup>18</sup> As the Russian army advanced into Eastern Turkey and took possession of Trabzon, Erzurum and Erzincan in the advancing months of 1916, it become clear to the Armenians that the Tzarist policy toward them no longer held the previously warm sentiments. The Armenian volunteers, accused of

18 Esat Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, Istanbul: 1976 pp.593-609 .

lawlessness and looting, were disbanded by the Russian government and refugees were forbidden to return to their districts without presenting valid property deeds. Armenian hopes for autonomy disappeared by June 18, 1916 with the announcement of the “Rules for the Temporary Administration of Turkish Areas Occupied by the Right of War.”<sup>19</sup> Declared by the Russian Chief of Staff, these rules combining eastern Ottoman provinces into a military governorship did not include the word “Armenia” or “Armenian” and were applicable to any territory under Russian military occupation. The following lines, “to reestablish and defend law and order, to protect the life and honor, property, religious – civil liberties of inhabitants to consider all nationalities equal before Russian government, and to guarantee these inhabitants the possibility of free and tranquil labor, on the condition that they submit into the suzerainty of Russia,”<sup>20</sup> reflecting Tsarist absolutism only served to confirm their disillusionment. Consequently, the direct and unconditional annexation of the Armenian territories into the Romanov Empire had started. Viceroy of the Caucasus, Grand Duke Nicholas, underlining that any existing Armenian problem before the war was outside of Russia and any procedure toward Armenian autonomy would only complicate matters, announced his opinion as such:

It is my profound conviction that there is at present within the bounds of the Russian Empire absolutely no Armenian question, nor should even a mention of such a question be permitted, for the Russian Armenian subjects within the Viceroyalty are, like Moslems, Georgians and Russians, equal subjects of Russia.<sup>21</sup>

However, the Tzarist regime in Russia did not survive long enough to see the end of the war.

## THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION AND THE SECRET TREATIES

The Bolshevik Revolution was another determining factor in the destiny of the Armenians and the war. Similar to America’s entry, the Bolshevik retreat from the war indicated that the end of the war was approaching.

The Armenians, fully confident in Russian assistance for Armenian independence, contributed wholeheartedly to the Allies during the Great War, particularly at the Russian front. However, developments close to the end of the war proved their anticipations to be futile. The Armenians faced reality immediately after the revolution when the Bolshevik government made public the documents pertaining to the secret partitioning of the Ottoman Empire among the Allies: During the war, England, France, Italy and Russia, wishing to safeguard their strategic and economic interest zones, shared most of the Ottoman territories concerned on paper with a set of secretly concluded treaties. Russian and French desiderata, totally disregarding Armenians’ expectations of establishing an independent

19 Hovannisian, Richard G. “The Allies and Armenia 1915-18”, *Journal of Contemporary History* 3, Jan 1968 p. 163.

20 Hovannisian, Richard G. “The Allies and Armenia...”, p.164.

21 Hovannisian, Richard G. “The Allies and Armenia...”, p.165.

Armenian state, included East Anatolia and Cilicia where a large portion of the territories of this prospective state was located. Even the Anglo-Russian confirmation of the shared Ottoman territories in East Anatolia by the Sykes Picot Treaty did not include land for the Armenians. Nevertheless, the Armenians, not informed about the presumptions until the Bolshevik revelation on November 24, did not lose their aspirations for an independent Armenian state. This presumed state, whether it were to be in boundaries extending from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, covering Cilicia, or limited to Northeastern Turkey, included portions from territorial anticipations of the Allies.<sup>22</sup>

Learning about the minus-Armenia partitioning was a blow to the Armenians who previously were so confident about England and France as they were of Russia for supporting their cause. In fact, this had prompted their immediate military contribution when the French government in October 1916 requested that the National Armenian Delegation furnish volunteers for an expedition into Anatolia. The head of the delegation, Boghos Nubar, was promised the broadest possible autonomy under French protection, after the war, in territories which, according to the 1915 London Agreement, (the second of the secret treaties) remained within the French zone of influence (Appendix 6). Volunteers from different areas had rushed to join the *Legion d'Orient*, later named *Legion Armenienne*, to fight under French command for Cilicia. Not different from the Armenian volunteers who fought in the Caucasus against the Turks and Germans and held the front almost a year after its collapse, the Armenians had held the Cilicia front.<sup>23</sup> The French sentiments for the Armenian volunteers were conveyed to Boghos Nubar by Clemenceau on July 14, 1918 with the following lines:

The spirit of self sacrifice of the Armenians, their loyalty towards the Allies, their contributions to the Foreign Legion, to the Caucasus front, to the *Legion d'Orient*, have strengthened the ties that connect them with France. I am happy to confirm you that the government of the Republic, like that of Great Britain, has not ceased to place the Armenian nation among the peoples whose fate the Allies intend to settle according to the supreme laws of Humanity and Justice.<sup>24</sup>

Throughout the war, the British repeatedly implied that providing for the establishment of an independent Armenia was one of their war aims. In the same manner, Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, announced in the House of Commons on November 6, 1917 that Britain had pledged to liberate the Armenians. Soon after that, on December 20, British Premier Lloyd George, in the same platform, repeated the same commitment by declaring that:

What will happen to Mesopotamia must be left to the Peace Conference when it meets, but there is one thing which will never happen. It will never be restored to the blasting tyranny of the Turk...That same observation applies to Armenia, the land soaked with the blood of innocents, and massacred by the people who were bound to protect them.<sup>25</sup>

22 Kurat, Yuluğ Tekin, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Paylaşılması*, Ankara:1976, p. 45-47.

23 See Appendix 6 for details.

24 Hovannisian, Richard G., "The Allies and Armenia...", p. 151.

25 Hovannisian, Richard G., "The Allies and Armenia...", p. 148.

The Armenians heard such promises only to learn by the announcing of the secret treaties that they were let down even before the war came to an end. The contrast between Allied words and Allied deeds was striking and this became more noticeable as the end of the war approached.

Matters pertaining to the Armenians entered a new phase with Russia's collapse and the Bolshevik Revolution. Russia's retreat from the war with the Brest-Litovsk Treaty of March 3, 1918 dimmed Armenians' hopes by returning to the Ottomans the East Anatolian provinces they looked upon as a part of their prospective state. Although along with Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan rejoiced when the Bolsheviks seized power in October, it soon became evident that the new government sought centralization. The trio comprising the Trans-Caucasian Republic had not yet been recognized and resorted to splitting into three, each declaring their independence at the end of May.<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, the Bolsheviks' denunciation of Tsarist war aims compelled England and France to reconsider their war years' policies. Although they no longer were enthusiastic to avoid the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, the revelation of the secret treaties obliged them to partiality in matters pertaining to Ottomans for the sake of their economic investments. Great Britain, however, was more concerned about the reaction Muslims in its colonies would display after learning of British ambitions in the caliph's empire. Accordingly, Lloyd George in the beginning of January 1918 did not appear to be as protective of the Armenians, but seemed to have tempered his outlook on the Ottomans as he said:

Nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary or to deprive Turkey of its capital, or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace, which are predominantly Turkish in race..... While we do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homeland of the Turkish race, with its capital at Constantinople, the passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea being internationalized and neutralized, Arabia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine are, in our judgment, entitled to recognition of their separate national conditions. What the exact form of that recognition in each particular case should be need not here be discussed beyond stating that it would be impossible to restore their former sovereignty the territories to which I have already referred. Much has been said about the arrangements we have entered into with our allies on this and other subjects. I can only say that as new circumstances, like the Russian collapse and the separate Russian negotiations, have changed the conditions under which those arrangements were made, we are and always have been perfectly ready to discuss them with our allies.<sup>27</sup>

Gradually, the Armenians began to notice the true attitude of the powers they relied upon for decades. "The politics of expediency rendered pledges to the Armenians obsolete."<sup>28</sup> During the Paris Peace Conference, it became more

26 Bayur, Hikmet, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi* vol. III Part IV, Ankara: 1967, p. 175-192.

27 Mears, Eliot Grinnell, *Modern Turkey*, New York: 1924, p. 622-23, from *Manchester Guardian*, January 7, 1918.

28 Hovannisian, Richard G. *The Armenian Holocaust, A Bibliography Relating to the Deportations, Massacres and Dispersion of the Armenian People, 1915-1923*, Cambridge:1980, p. xv.

apparent that the Allies were not the strong defenders of their commitments. Accordingly, the British and the French governments lost further credibility with the Armenians as they postponed recognition of the Armenian Republic until January 1920. This was another sad surprise for the Armenians who had been led to believe that an independent Armenia was one of the primary war aims of the Allies.<sup>29</sup>

## THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

The reluctance the Allies displayed for the prompt recognition of the new republic made Armenian representation at the approaching Paris Peace Conference problematic. The uncertainty brought by the revolution, which was made more severe by the attitude of the Allies, compelled President Wilson's advisor Colonel Edward M. House, who was in Europe to make arrangements for the president before the peace conference, to reconsider Armenian participation. The joint memorandum issued following his meeting with the Allied representatives revealed that existing conditions in Russia made it impractical to admit formally to the conference any representatives from the recently founded governments in Russia, which were not yet recognized. However, it was underlined that national groups such as the Armenians, the Jews in Palestine and the Arabs not admitted to the Congress as a member power would be received and heard through their representatives. During the discussions, the status of Armenia, which was not a belligerent power officially, would also be taken up.

According to the decision reached, the list, published in January, 1920 of representatives to attend the Paris Peace Conference did not include the Armenian representatives.<sup>30</sup> Armenian communities protested the list as President Wilson promised Boghos Nubar to provide the presentation of the Armenian cause, if not the invitation of representatives. Despite President Wilson's good intentions, it was not until January 19 that the U.S. Supreme Council announced the *de facto* recognition of the Armenian Republic. Although the recognition was immediately retracted, it was confirmed on April 23, 1920.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, Boghos Nubar's struggle for eligibility continued during the Paris Peace Conference through numbers of sessions even after the Sevres Treaty for since the Armenian Republic did not exist before it did not appear as a belligerent power to Turkey, so its participation at the conference was questionable. Nubar extended a memorandum to the Conference in early December, before the beginning of talks concerning Armenians, to verify that Armenian volunteers were ready to fight their traditional enemy, the Turks, in order to free their native soil. (Appendix 7).

Despite Armenian efforts, the controversial stand of the British and the French governments concerning war year commitments, the difference of opinion

29 Aspaturian, Vernon V., "Armenia in the World Arena 1914-1921", *Armenian Review* Vol.46, No. 1-4 pp.181-184 (1993) p. 119.

30 Hovannisian, Richard G. "The Allies and Armenia..."p.167.

31 Gidney, James B., *A Mandate for Armenia*, Unpublished PhD Thesis Ohio, 1967, p.208.



between the U.S. Congress and President Wilson and the emergence of the Turkish national movement all became obstacles in the way of the hoped-for integrated Armenian state.

## TOWARD THE PEACE TREATY

On January 8, 1918, President Wilson addressed the U.S. Congress to announce a set of principles he designed with the anticipation that they would provide a foundation for world peace. These principles based on “self-determination” of all nations were recognized as the President Wilson’s Fourteen Points and included terms such as open diplomacy, impartial adjustment of territorial claims, freedom of the seas and removal of economic barriers. One of the points called for the creation of a general association of nations to assure peaceful coexistence, which within two years, had materialized as the League of Nations. These terms, cherished by millions as the harbinger of peace, paved the way to negotiations. Armistices and peace treaties ending the war were prepared according to the Fourteen Points. The twelfth point directly addressed the Ottoman Empire:

The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.<sup>32</sup>

Ironically, this was the article upon which both Turkish nationalists and the Armenians relied for the recognition of their self-governing nation-state.

When it finally became evident that the Central powers had lost the war, on October 4, 1917, Germany appealed for an armistice according to the Fourteen Points.<sup>33</sup> Shortly after, the Ottoman Empire followed suit. England and France, with the awareness that observation of the Fourteen Points calling for open diplomacy would cost their shares in secret treaties, meticulously worded the Mudros Armistice, which the Ottomans had signed on October 30, 1918. Article 7 gave the Allies the right to occupy any strategic point in the event of any situation arising which threatened their security, and Article 24 provided the basis for an independent Armenian state in Eastern Anatolia by allowing Allied intervention in case of disorder in Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, (Mamuretülaziz) Harput, Sivas,<sup>34</sup> referred to in the West as the “six Armenian provinces.”

32 Mears, *Eliot Grinnell, Modern Turkey...*p. 622; *On the Fourteen Points, see: Tumulty Joseph P., Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him, New York: 1921, p. 340.*

33 *Faulkner, U. Harold, American Social and...*, p. 682.

34 The names of four, and than two of the six vilayets were first mentioned in 1880, for the reforms promised by the Berlin Treaty of 1878; See: Karal, Enver Ziya, *Osmanlı Tarihi...*pp. 126, 134 and in the given order in Esat Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve...*p. 298.

The Allies, reluctant to observe the Fourteen Points, made use of the ambiguity in the mentioned articles and did not lose any time in landing troops on territories which actually were their areas of interest but according to Mudros, remained within Turkish frontiers. In fact, the Turkish nationalist struggle was launched following the Greek landing at Izmir on May 15, 1919 was the rejection of the occupations violating Article 12 of the Fourteen Points. The Allies, not overlooking this, approached the Paris Peace Conference, which convened in January 1919, very cautiously. They came to Paris prepared to present alternatives which would justify the occupations and allow them to preserve their interests. Among these alternatives was a suggestion for Armenians.

The joint memorandum Armenians submitted to the conference on February 26 proposed the establishment of an integrated Armenian state extending from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Its designed boundaries did not only include Eastern Anatolia but also Cilicia, still looked upon as a French zone of influence. This triggered England and France to suggest their alternative, which was the placement of underdeveloped areas of the world under mandates of the great powers until they economically and socially became capable of self-governance. In order to preserve their shares in Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria that were obtained by the secretly concluded Sykes Picot Treaty, they introduced the idea of establishing Armenian and Kurdish states in Eastern Anatolia to be administered as mandates. France, interested in Cilicia and its southern region, desired to become the mandate power in the Eastern Mediterranean and Syria-Lebanon area. Considering that the Kurdish populated territories were in fertile, oil-rich lands, the English volunteered for the mandate of Mesopotamia. Both Britain and France suggested that America assume the Armenian mandate. This proposal was extended to President Wilson by British Premier David Lloyd George at the May 1919 Paris meeting of the Big Four<sup>35</sup> as the mandate system, conceived and articulated by General Smuts in Paris, became “the way out of the dilemma of violating promises or of foregoing the spoils of war.”<sup>36</sup>

The suggestion was applauded in Europe and was tentatively agreed upon by President Wilson, with the reservation of it first being presented to the U.S. Senate for approval. However, the consideration was met with hesitation in the U.S. Adding to uncertainties in America were the dispatches to the American Peace Mission at Paris from Admiral Bristol, U.S. High Commissioner to Turkey, warning them of the Allied motives for insisting on an American mandate over Armenia. Admiral Bristol underlined that such a step would create an Armenia to serve as a buffer against Bolshevik expansions toward Tran-Caucasus, which was among the chief concerns of England. He also pointed out that it would also secure U.S. protection for the rich oil resources of Mesopotamia, which would be under British mandate. Finally, he called attention to the fact that American acceptance of an Armenian mandate inevitably would bring an end to America’s objection to the partition of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>37</sup> Hence, two commissions were

35 Bryson, Prof Thomas A. Mark Lambert Bristol, U.S. Navy, Admiral-Diplomat: His Influence on the Armenian Mandate Question, *The Armenian Review* Vol. 21, No. 4-84, Winter 1968, p.2.

36 Gordon, Leland James, *American Relations with Turkey 1830-1930*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press:1932, p. 268.

37 Gordon, Leland James, *American Relations with...*, pp. 3-9.

formed to investigate the area involved. The King Crane Commission, appointed by the Big Four in Paris, was to tour the Arab provinces. The General Harbord Commission, appointed by President Wilson, was charged with investigating East Anatolia and Trans-Caucasus to determine the possibilities for an independent Armenian state encompassing the mentioned area and assuming an American mandate over Armenia and the Ottoman Empire.

The General Harbord Commission investigated at first hand the economic and demographic conditions of the area to determine the requirements necessary should the U.S. assume a mandate. When General James G. Harbord,<sup>38</sup> arrived in Erzurum, which the Armenians intended to include in their prospective state, he was greeted by Turks holding posters which read, “*Vive l’Article 12 des Principes de Wilson.*” This was to signal that Turks constituted the majority in the province and ought to be entitled sovereignty.

General Harbord, before returning to Istanbul in mid-September, stopped at Sivas, where a congress had recently been held to organize the nationalist movement, to confer with Mustafa Kemal, who was recognized as the leader of the nationalist action. Mustafa Kemal explained to Harbord that Turks wanted nothing more than independence within the frontiers determined by Mudros Armistice, which was based on the Fourteen Points. After numerous interviews before and after the Sivas visit, Harbord was assured that the nationalists were not antagonistic to Christians and that their only aim was to provide the unconditional acceptance of a sovereign Turkish state. Harbord’s interviews with Turkish and Armenian authorities in Turkey and Trans-Caucasus as well as his personal experiences during the journey convinced him that “there was much to show that, left to themselves, the Turks and Armenians have hitherto been able to live together in peace.”<sup>39</sup> His impressions were compatible with Admiral Bristol’s concern that the British and the French were spreading propaganda “looking to their advantages.”<sup>40</sup> It should be noted that Admiral Bristol had already conveyed his views to Paris and to the U.S. and swayed influence over some senators, particularly Henry White and Henry Cabot Lodge, Chairman of Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Both senators, in favor of the U.S. mandate over Armenia at the beginning of the Senate discussions, became rejecters during discussions.<sup>41</sup>

The view expressed in the report General Harbord submitted to President Wilson upon his return<sup>42</sup> did not encourage the establishment of an independent Armenia covering Eastern Turkey, where there was a Turkish majority. Rather than two mandates, an integrated mandate, if any, was suggested in the report while twelve reasons for and against it were listed without any specific recommendation as to acceptance or rejection. It was also stated that American troops would be needed in the area should the U.S. assume such responsibility.

38 Akgün. Seçil, *General Harbord’un Anadolu Gezisi ve Raporu, İstanbul: 1981.*

39 Harbord, Maj. Gen. James, *Investigating Turkey and Transcaucasia, Worlds Work V. XL, NY 1920, pp 185-87.*

40 Bryson, Prof. Thomas A. “Mark Lambert Bristol, U.S. Navy, Admiral-Diplomat: His Influence on the Armenian Mandate Question”, *The Armenian Review* Vol. 21, No. 4-84, Winter 1968, p. 9.

41 Bryson, Prof. Thomas A. “Mark Lambert Bristol...”, pp.9-15.

42 Harbord, Maj. Gen. *James G. Conditions in the Near East- Report of the American Military Mission to Armenia, Washington Government Printing Office, 1920.*

In general, the report, including a very high financial estimate, was not favorable to Armenian interests, therefore was a letdown to American Armenophiles. Although it was dated October 16, 1919, it was transmitted by President Wilson to the Senate on April 3, when, according to the *New York Times* on April 6, it was “several months after it ceased to have any practical value.”<sup>43</sup> Debates on the report started shortly before the Allies met first in London, then at San Remo, to determine the peace terms to be presented to the Ottoman Empire.

During the months President Wilson viewed the appointed commissions' reports to guide him to the right decision concerning the mandate, the delay in concluding peace with the Ottoman Empire had started to cause severe criticisms in France and England, eagerly awaiting to confirm their interests. Journals, particularly in England, lost no time in cynically reflecting that the Armenian Question was still not solved.<sup>44</sup> The House of Commons' pressing request for the solution to the Armenians' problem, diverted to the British Premier, was also in the daily papers. These pressures started to dim the glamour of the Armenians and the issue to the point that Sir Eyre Crowe, Undersecretary of the British Foreign Ministry, complained: “There is no doubt that the Armenians are chiefly responsible from the crusade the Turks started against them,” while even Lord Curzon, the Foreign Minister, commented “the Armenians are not innocent lambs.”<sup>45</sup>

On April 18, English, French and Italian representatives met at San Remo to determine the peace resolutions over matters pertaining to the Armenian and Kurdish elements of the Ottoman Empire. The general expectation of the Christian world from the Allies was to provide the foundation for an independent Armenian state situated in Turkish territories and under an American mandate in addition to the existing Republic of Armenia. In fact, determining the frontiers of the Armenian state in Anatolia, preferably with outlets to the Black Sea from Trabzon and Cilicia to the Mediterranean, was the topic of discussion that occupied the congress for days. The Allies strove to formulate adequate terms to impose this on the Ottoman government, also preparing for the peace settlement. They were also determined to involve the U.S. in the Armenian mandate, but when they extended a formal proposal to President Wilson on April 25, the U.S. Senate had already announced that America would not be officially represented at the peace discussions in Europe.<sup>46</sup> President Wilson, through his Foreign Secretary Colby, informed the conference that he could not attend officially. However, England and France, aware of his sentiments, were persistent in guaranteeing America's commitment. Finally, President Wilson was personally invited to determine the Turkish-Armenian frontier. He gladly accepted this task officially given to him by the Paris Peace Conference, but met unexpected resistance at home, especially from his political opponents who were aware of the challenges the U.S. faced over oil.

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43 *New York Times*, April 6, 1920, p.10.

44 *The Manchester Guardian*, April 22, 23, 1920.

45 Akgün, Seçil, *General Harbord'un Anadolu ...*, p.153.

46 Gordon, Leland James, *American Relations with...*, p. 30.

## THE ARMENIAN QUESTION IN THE U.S. SENATE

Discussions in Washington on the U.S. assuming the Armenian mandate largely focused on the Harbord Report, yet there were two other dimensions of major importance. These were the approaching elections and oil interests in the Middle East. Bitter complaints from some senators that President Wilson had endangered the Armenians' case by submitting the report months after it was given to him, certainly were not favorable comments for Wilson's upcoming presidential campaign. Therefore, on May 24 when he conveyed the San Remo proposals concerning Armenian mandate and determination of the Armenian frontiers to both houses of Congress for approval, he carefully worded his message with Christian sentiments so he could win the hearts of the American people. However, his political opponents mostly disregarded his philanthropic tone and harshly reminded him that the French and the British took away the most fertile provinces, the rich oil wells and copper mines. He was even questioned on whether he intended to exchange mandates with Great Britain.<sup>47</sup>

The general atmosphere of the Congress was supportive to Armenians but reluctant to approve the mandate. Yet, it was impossible not to notice the brooding contempt among some senators not only in assuming the mandate, but even toward the Armenians when responsibilities and obligations the U.S. would have to confront were learned through the Harbord Report. The number of lives to be sacrificed and the amount of dollars to be invested for the Armenian cause left only to America were brought up by one senator after the other. Senator James A. Reed of Missouri even underlined that the Armenians themselves had been guilty of massacres "so that it is a case of eastern barbarism on both sides...The U.S. is asked to assume control for the countries which have stolen the lands of these people all over the world and decline to take control because it is expensive."<sup>48</sup>

President Wilson was further challenged over the mandate by those ready to approve immediate military action in order to help the Armenians. One such advocate was Mississippi Senator John Sharp Williams who, in presenting the resolutions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), the Near East Relief Society, and Armenian National Union of America, called for "immediate action to protect Armenians whose very existence was in danger" and offered that the adoption of responsibility would only "afford to the Armenian people immediate protection."<sup>49</sup>

The mandate, in the view of many of the rejecters, was regarded as little more than a British imposition on the U.S. This was a view Admiral Bristol had once voiced, and in the course of time, similar to other warnings from the Admiral, gained more adherents. Senator Williams' Senate Resolution 106, urging President Wilson to send U.S. army and naval forces to the aid of Armenians also met the Bristol-influenced opposition of Senator Warren Harding, Senate Foreign Relations Sub-Committee Chair, as well as a few other senators.

47 *Gidney, James B. A Mandate for Armenia...*, p. 228.

48 *Gidney, James B. A Mandate for Armenia...*, pp.227-232.

49 *Gidney, James B. A Mandate for Armenia...*, pp.223.

Senator Henry Cabot Lodge on the May 27, 1920, introduced a senate resolution declining to grant President Wilson permission to accept the mandate. When the resolution was opened to debate two days later, Lodge commented:

...Let me say... that northern Armenia which was Russian Armenia, where they have their capital, the name of which I believe is Yerevan, is just at the point where attacks are made. England is there holding Mesopotamia; France is holding Syria; Italy has a great block of territory in the neighborhood, and Armenia is the point at which they must be protected, and not merely from the Turks but from the Kurds, and the Georgians—and there has already been fighting with the Georgians. It is the crossroads; as I have heard it described by somebody, there are three banks and a poorhouse there, and we have been given the poorhouse.<sup>50</sup>

Even the Americans' discovery of opportunities for new economic investments, particularly in oil-rich areas were not sufficient enough for developing a favorable approach to accepting an American mandate over Armenia, for the General Harbord Report carefully underlined the very high cost of such an undertaking. Following the debates, and undoubtedly with the inspirations of the General Harbord Report, on June 1, the U.S. Congress by 52 to 23 votes denied President Wilson the requested mandate authorization and refused the U.S. to assume any responsibility in the area.<sup>51</sup>

The Armenians were well aware that without the consent of the U.S. Congress, President Wilson could not extend them any support and under the existing circumstances, they would have to resort to other means to provide the military and financial backing for protection and repatriation. Admittance to the League of Nations appeared to be one of the two hopes left for the Armenians. They considered that this membership could furnish them with the protection America had denied. In case this could not be provided, support from France, established in Cilicia, was their other hope.<sup>52</sup> The League of Nations was also approached by numbers of societies the Armenophiles founded in the U.S. and in Europe to work for the Armenian cause. Most of these societies were founded when the official decline of commitment to the Armenians brought forth the need for more concerted private support for the Armenian case. One such prominent society in the U.S. was the Armenia-America Society founded by Walter George Smith, a staunch defender of Armenian independence and a member of the American Committee for Near East Relief. The goal of this society was "to unite in cooperation the many friends of Armenia for the purpose of ascertaining the needs of Armenia, of bringing these needs before the American people and securing satisfaction of those needs through American assistance."<sup>53</sup> This society collaborated with others such as the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia and the International Phil-Armenia League to form a pressure group, which was established by the end of 1920. The group carried out

50 Bryson, Thomas A. "Mark Lambert Bristol...", pp 9- 16.

51 Akgün. Seçil General Harbord'un Anadolu..., p. 158.

52 Gidney James B. *A Mandate for Armenia...*, p. 241.

53 Bryson, Thomas A., "The Armenia-America Society: A Factor In American-Turkish Relations, 1914-1924", *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society, June 1971*, pp. 85-86.

various actions to attract the attention of the League of Nations for the recognition of an Armenian homeland in territories belonging to the Ottoman Empire. However, the close ties maintained with the American Committee for Near East Relief as well as the joint efforts of the societies did not suffice in achieving their goal.<sup>54</sup> The League Council heard the Armenians' complaints at the end of October, after the Sevres Treaty, including the establishment of an independent Armenian state in Eastern Anatolia was signed by the Ottoman government, but was rejected by the Turkish nationalists. Nevertheless, this was to no avail, for the status of the League opinion was best expressed by the French delegate, Rene Viviani as follows: "We are a powerless Assembly, because we have been entrusted with a responsibility without having been given real authority."<sup>55</sup> The developments during the time the League spent in discussions served to bring complete futility to the problem: Armenians attacked Eastern Anatolia, were defeated by Turkish nationalists, retreated from Kars and were compelled to sign a treaty returning the Eastern Anatolian provinces they had occupied to Turkey. Within the weeks following the Gümrü (Alexandropol) Treaty concluded on December 3, 1920 the Bolsheviks annexed Armenia which became the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic<sup>56</sup> defeating White Russians commanded by Wrangel. In 1918 Wrangel led the Caucasus Army, and later became the commander in chief of first the volunteers and then<sup>57</sup> the entire of the White Forces in Crimea. Armenian hopes of admittance to the League completely disappeared when it became clear that the Soviet government did not allow for the interference of the League in the Caucasus.<sup>58</sup>

## FRENCH WITHDRAWAL FROM CILICIA

Cilicia, where a considerable Armenian population has lived before the 1915 relocation, was even previously referred to as "Little Armenia." When France gained control of Cilicia after the war, rather than installing French forces to confront the Turkish nationalists, it relied upon the Armenians, mostly repatriated deportees who had returned to the area as the end of the war approached. The proposal to arm Armenian volunteers was initially brought to Boghos Nubar by George Picot in London at the French Embassy in October 1916. Nubar, however, suggested to Picot that in order to obtain better cooperation, he should be entitled to give assurances to his people for "an autonomous Armenia for the race to reconstruct itself and for Armenian nationality to develop under protection of France."<sup>59</sup> After he was authorized by Picot and cabled to order his son, Arakel Nubar, in Egypt on October 27<sup>th</sup> to organize Armenian volunteers, it was not difficult for France to arm them to fight against the Turks.

A commission under the direction of *M. Le Commandant Romieu* was sent by the

54 Bryson, Thomas A., *The Armenia-America Society* ..., pp. 83-105.

55 Gidney James B. *A Mandate for Armenia*..., p. 244.

56 Karabekir, Kazım, *İstiklal Harbimiz*, Istanbul: 1960, pp. 902-910.

57 For more about Pyotr Nicolayevitz Wrangler, who in 1918 led the Caucasus Army, and later became the commander in chief of first the volunteers and then the entire of the White Forces in Crimea, see Peter Kenez, *The Ideology of the White Movement, Soviet Studies*, vol XXii, No. 1, 1980, pp. 58-83.

58 Bryson, Tomas A., "The Armenia-America Society...", pp. 84-86.

59 See Appendix 7.

French government to Egypt to organize the Armenian volunteer corps which would later be referred to as *La Legion d'Orient*, (later called *La Legion Armenienne*). It was declared by Romieu that the *Legion*, with the objective of obtaining the Armenians' freedom of Cilicia, would constitute the nucleus of the future Armenian army and under the French flag would fight against the Turks only in Cilicia. The *Legion* constituted the largest part of the French forces during the Palestine Campaign and received the tribute of British Field Marshall Lord Allenby. Consequently, with official permission granted by the order of George Picot, 208,000 Armenian refugees returned to Cilicia from Syria, Palestine and Egypt (Appendix 7). Volunteers among them were armed by France to fight against the Turkish nationalists when the Turkish Independence War started. Until Turkish-French struggles brought consecutive defeats to France, many Americans, especially members of Armenophile societies, thought of Cilicia as the potential Armenian "national homeland out of the former Ottoman territory."<sup>60</sup>

It should be pointed out that a "homeland" was a perceptible concession from the Armenians who had started the war with a large, independent Armenian state in mind. They eventually had to yield to accepting a considerably limited territory to be "home," and the continuing Turkish Independence War made even that not very likely to materialize. With this understanding, Boghos Nubar, complaining over the terms of the Serves Treaty not providing full Armenian sovereignty of Cilicia, in a memorandum dated December 9 (cited in Appendix 7), admitted that the Armenians would be "content by obtaining an autonomous administration in Cilicia under Turkish Sovereignty and French control." He, of course, was wrong in thinking that such an accomplishment could be solved through diplomatic channels and required nothing more than the Ottoman Sultan's proclamation (*irate*), for the sultan had lost his credibility with the Turks, particularly since Istanbul was formally occupied in March 1920.

In this context, as the Allies, after the opening of the National Assembly in Ankara, gradually accepted that control of Turkey was in the hands of the nationalists, French Premier Briand took the first step at the 1921 London Conference to negotiate with his Turkish counterpart from the Ankara Assembly on the withdrawal of French troops from Cilicia. The French attempt to compromise with the Turks, which materialized in the advancing months of the same year, was the beginning of the end of Armenian expectations from France and the termination of Armenian dreams of establishing a "national home" in Cilicia. The Franco-Turkish compromise also paved the way for the withdrawal of Italian forces from Antalya, leaving the British-supported Greeks alone in fighting the Turks.

## THE SÈVRES TREATY

The Paris Peace Conference, as intended, did provide a conclusion of peace treaties among the belligerent powers of World War I. Peace terms with the Ottoman Empire were the last to crystallize. Once determined by the Allies, they

60 Bryson, Thomas A., "The Armenia-America Society....", p.86.



were handed to the representatives of the Istanbul government at Sèvres as late as July 1920. Despite the official stance of the U.S., the Soviet government and the Turkish nationalists' resistance, the Sevres Treaty was accepted by the Ottoman Delegation on August 10. It included most of the favorable provisions the Armenians were anticipating. Most of all, the treaty provided the grounds for the long-awaited Armenian state, although without defined frontiers.

Article 88, with the words, "Turkey.... Hereby recognizes Armenia as a free, independent state," outlined Ottoman commitment to the Armenians and Article 89 included full authorization for the Allies, Ottomans, and Armenians and extended to President Wilson the option to arbitrate in determining the boundaries of this state (including the provinces of Bitlis, Erzurum, Trabzon, Van) as well as the agreement for demilitarization of the neighboring territories. Article 90 confirmed that Turkey would give up all rights over the mentioned territory while Article 91 stated that 15 days after the probable submittance to the Armenians of the territory mentioned in Article 89, an appointed commission would determine the definite frontiers. Article 92 focused on determining Armenia's frontiers with Azerbaijan and Georgia and Article 93 held Armenia's commitment to observe the principles that the Allies deemed essential to safeguard within its frontiers the rights of nations of different races, religions and languages. Through the framework of the provisions determined by the Allies, Armenia also agreed to certain concessions enabling free commercial opportunities to different nations.<sup>61</sup>

Although the above articles appear to be significant for the Armenians, the correspondence and applications of Boghos Nubar as the head of the Armenian National Delegation indicate that the Armenians were not content with the provisions and leaving to the Ottomans parts of Cilicia, which they regarded as their "national home."<sup>62</sup> Yet, the same articles, together with the rest of the treaty bringing military restrictions and the dismemberment of most Ottoman lands except for limited territory in Central Anatolia, turned the Sèvres Treaty into practically a death proclamation for the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly, U.S. Secretary Hughes defined the Sèvres Treaty as: "Its terms were more severe than those of the European peace treaties, not only depriving Turks of vast territories but imposing on them an even greater measure of foreign control than had been the case before war."<sup>63</sup>

The approval of the Sèvres Treaty by the Ottoman Delegation did not hold any political value at all for the Turkish nationalists, possessing full control of Turkey by then. In fact, the occupation of Istanbul by the Allies provided them the opportunity to base their resistance on the legal assurance of an elected assembly. The Grand National Assembly (GNA), adhering strictly to national sovereignty, convened in Ankara on April 23, 1920. The primary duty of the assembly, accepted by the entire body of chosen deputies, was to rescue the national frontiers under occupation. Chaired by Mustafa Kemal Paşa, the GNA

61 Uras, Esat, *Tarihçe Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, Istanbul: 1976- pp.660-61.

62 See Appendix 6,7.

63 Gordon, Leland James, *American Relations with...*, p 267.

immediately turned the Turkish guerilla forces into a regular army and launched an organized independence war. Needless to say, all commitments of the Istanbul government were regarded as null and void. The geographically unclear Armenian Republic, formally recognized by the Ottoman government, was immediately challenged by the nationalists, and by the beginning of December, 1919 Turkish forces secured the Turkey-Armenia frontier with the Gümrü (Alexandropol) Treaty, which was the first international treaty that the GNA signed. To the Armenians' dismay, this treaty, eliminating the western front for the Turkish nationalists, confirmed for the Allies that Serves Treaty was stillborn. Their attempts to modify this defunct treaty in order to reach a compromise with the GNA was the revelation of solitude awaiting the Armenians at the forthcoming peace conference.

## THE DESERTED ARMENIANS

This was not the first time the Armenians confronted the deploring reality of betrayal. From the emergence of the Armenian Question, "they had been used to promote western purposes only to be heartlessly cast aside when the purposes had been accomplished."<sup>64</sup> The statesmen of the great powers often refrained from fulfilling their commitments to the Armenians when the conditions ripened for display. In fact, the initial broken promise could be traced back to the Berlin Treaty of 1878 after which the great powers assured the Armenians of providing the application of reforms the treaty promised. Yet the Armenians only observed their leniency once England acquired the right to invade Cyprus in return for supporting the Ottomans against Russia.<sup>65</sup>

Another example from the later years involves America's attitude following the 1894-95 incidents in Samsun, which actually started a few years before, when Armenians, provoked by Armenian revolutionaries formed bands armed with native guns, raided villages, and incidences increased with Turkish retaliation to the point of bringing military forces to the area. While the climbing incidences gradually wiped away the remaining harmony between the Turks and Armenians, continuing violence and increasing casualties from both sides invited the intervention of Big Powers and<sup>66</sup> the Armenian issue was brought to the U.S. Senate for the first time. Americans were already informed about the conflicts through the exaggerated reports and mostly misleading correspondence of the American missionaries. In spite of the popular wish, the missionaries' commitments, and requests made by both houses of the U.S. Congress, President Cleveland declined to even protest to the Ottoman government, let alone send an investigation committee to the area.<sup>67</sup>

Yet still another demonstration of how Armenians were let down by the great powers involves the 1915 relocation. At the start of a new replacement following

64 Gidney, James B. *A Mandate for Armenia...*, p.75.

65 Karal, Enver Ziya, *Osmanlı Tarihi...*, p. 72.

66 Gürün, Kamuran, *Ermeni Dosyası...*,p. 112; see also: Sonyel, Salahi, *The Ottoman Armenians*, London: 1987, pp. 118-159.

67 Gidney James, *A Mandate for Armenia...*, p.208.

that of the May migration, Wangenheim, the German Ambassador to Istanbul had suggested to the U.S. Ambassador that some of the Armenians ought to be moved to the United States.<sup>68</sup> However, Ambassador Henry Morgenthau's proposal to provide "the wholesale emigration of Armenians to the United States....to prevent further bloodshed" was declared impractical<sup>69</sup> and was vetoed by the Department of State, although the Ottoman Interior Minister Talat Paşa gave "permission for the departure of all Armenians whose emigration Morgenthau could vouch for as *bona fide*."<sup>70</sup>

It should also be recalled that the secret treaties the Allies concluded during the war years, sharing the fertile and oil-rich Ottoman lands, were observed not to contain any area reserved for Armenians when the Bolsheviks revealed them to the world after the Russian Revolution.<sup>71</sup>

It is difficult to determine how sincere British Premier Lloyd George, author of the below lines, was at the time he wrote these words, for the name of Armenia did not even appear on the list of the nations admitted to the Paris Peace Conference:

From the movement war was declared, there was not a British statesman of any party who did not have in mind that if we succeeded in defeating this inhuman Empire, one essential condition of the peace we should impose was the redemption of the Armenian valleys [should be *vilayets*] forever from the bloody misrule with which they had been stained by the infamities of the Turk.<sup>72</sup>

Pertaining to the same matter, Armenian belligerency to the Turks was debated so intensely by the Allies that Boghos Nubar had to submit a protesting declaration reminding them of the Armenian contributions during the war:

..... Our sorrow and our disappointment are beyond expression. ...Armenians naturally expected their demand for admission to the Peace Conference to be conceded, after all they have done for the common cause....ever since the beginning of the war the Armenians fought by the side of the Allies on all fronts. Adding our losses in the fields to greater losses through massacres and deportations... Armenia's tribute to death is thus undoubtedly heavier in proportion than that of any other belligerent nation. For the Armenians have been belligerent de facto since they indignantly refused to side with Turkey.<sup>73</sup>

68 Morgenthau, Henry, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*..., p. 374.

69 Gordon, *Leland James*, PhD, *American Relations with...*, p.27.

70 Ahmet Vefa, *The Truth About Armenians*, Ankara: 1975, p. 25, from *The New York Times*, October 2, 1915 *Decimal File*, 867.4016/117 *Morgenthau to Secretary of State*, Sept. 3, 1915.

71 Kurat, Yuluğ Tekin, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Paylaşılması...*, p.13.

72 Gidney, James B., *A Mandate for Armenia*..., p. 74, from David Lloyd George, *The Truth About Peace Treaties 2 vols*, London: 1938.

73 *Armenian Allegations: Myth and Reality A Handbook of Facts and Documents*, Washington D.C.:1986 p17., *The Times of London*, January 30, 1919, see also Appendix 6.

To add to the humiliation they suffered during the Paris Peace Conference, the repeated requests from the Armenian delegation, expecting to receive exceptional treatment, for a brief meeting with Lord Curzon were repeatedly turned down by the Lord, with the excuse that he did not accept any of the delegations.

The January 5 1918 explanation from the British Premier for his country's war aims, which included the assertion also mentioned above, that Arabia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria were "entitled to a recognition of their separate national condition"<sup>74</sup> was overlooked as far as Armenia was concerned, and it was not validated while final peace terms were being determined.

The actual betrayal the Armenians confronted came with the conclusion of the Lausanne Peace Treaty.

### **ARMENIANS' CONTINUING ANTICIPATIONS FROM THE GREAT POWERS**

On November 20, 1922, the Peace Conference met at Lausanne to revise the defunct Sèvres Treaty. The Allies had made two vain attempts in the springs of 1921 and 1922 to modify the rejected treaty. It was the conclusion of the Turkish War of Independence which compelled the Allies to hold a conference at Lausanne with the victorious Turks to determine the terms of the new peace treaty to replace the Sèvres Treaty. The Ottoman Empire had collapsed before the conference opened. The invitation extended to the Ottoman representatives to attend the conference became the excuse for the Ankara Assembly to take the decision of ending Ottoman rule. Separated from the caliphate, the sultanate was abolished by the Turkish Parliament on November 1, 1922. The decision to end the Ottoman Empire left the former sultan only as the caliph; the Turkish Parliament appointed Abdülmecit Efendi to this position following the plight of Sultan Vahdettin, the last Ottoman sultan. The dual system of governance of the past two years having ended, the Turkish Delegation appeared at Lausanne as the sole representative of Turkey.

Among all the complicated matters such as the defining of Turkey's boundaries, the Straits, capitulations, Ottoman debts, etc., the Armenian Question was scheduled to be taken up within the discussions of the Minorities Session. Relevant to Armenian territorial requests, Armenian representatives were persistent that an Armenian "national home" be highlighted as the theme of the discussion. The term "national home" was carefully selected by the Allies to distinguish the prospective Armenian settlement to be established on Turkish territory, for expanding Russian Armenia would mean strengthening the Bolshevik state they found formidable.<sup>75</sup> Whatever the theme of the discussion may be, in regard to the commitments made to Armenians, the issue closely concerned each of the Allied powers. Yet, in relevance to strong ties acquired

74 Kurat Yuluğ Tekin, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Paylaşılması...*, p.17 from D.Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, New Heaven 1928 VI, p.152, Hovannisian, Richard G. "The Allies and ...",p.148.

75 Khatissian, Alexander, "The Lausanne Conference and the Two Armenian Delegations", *The Armenian Review* V.XIV, No.3-55, Sept. 1961, p.6.

through the aforementioned missionary installations and the mandate issue, U.S. involvement with the Armenians rewarded the others.

The U.S., similar to the previous peace conferences pertaining to the Turks, did not have official participants at the Lausanne Conference. Armenophiles and key figures of the Armenia-America Society did not find this agreeable. Months before the conference, they argued that settlements concerning American interests were not only moral obligations to the Armenians but involved U.S. interests and should not be made without official U.S. representatives. President Smith and Secretary Montgomery attempted in vain to garner the support of the U.S. President in writing him a letter with the following lines, pointing out the economic advantages of participation at the peace conference as a signatory power:

America's commercial and philanthropic investments and their probable developments in Turkey are of such a character and of such importance, as to give by themselves a warrant for America's taking official part in the Near East settlement. Our interest is second to those of no other power.<sup>76</sup>

Washington remained unresponsive to this appeal. Unable to accomplish what they thought they could, even before the peace conference had started, the Armenophiles and members of the Armenia-America Society started to notice that the idealism the Americans, in general, had espoused concerning the Armenian issue until the end of the War was being replaced by materialistic feelings. Nevertheless, the conference was not left unattended. Richard Washburn Child, Joseph Grew and Admiral Bristol attended as U.S. government observers. The Armenia-America Society representatives, Dr. Barton, the President of Near East Relief, and Dr. George Redlington Montgomery, the Director of the Armenia-America Society, as well as the representative of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America were at Lausanne as representatives of the church and charitable organizations. Their primary concern was to provide the fulfillment of the provisions concerning the Armenians. Dr. Montgomery, the spokesman of the latter group, was in charge of the project for creating a reservation for Armenians within the surroundings of Cilicia (Osmaniye). He regarded Cilicia as a region Armenians would readily go to although he was aware that the British support he expected would not work without the consent of the Turks. Yet, he was convinced that the legal status of this region was such that settling the Armenians there "... may be discussed without trampling upon the nationalistic demands of the Turks."<sup>77</sup> To the dismay of the American philanthropists, the French and Italians did not comply with his plan. Moreover, the American observers Grew and Child, noting the Turkish opposition, also refrained from supporting it.<sup>78</sup>

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76 Bryson, Thomas, *The Armenia-America Society...*, p.98.

77 *New York Times*, 18 Nov, 1922.

78 Bryson, Thomas, *The Armenia-America Society...*, p.100.

## THE LAUSANNE CONFERENCE AND THE LOSS OF ARMENIAN HOPES

The Armenian case was pursued by two different Armenian delegations at the Lausanne Peace Conference. The Independent Republic of Armenia was headed by the President of the Armenian National Council, a literary man and a poet, Avetis Aharonian. Accompanying him were two delegates, Alexander Khatissian, who became the second prime minister of the Republic of Armenia and Vahan Papazian, (doctor) a leading revolutionary who was also the chief representatives of revolutionary committees in Van, known more as an organizer rather than a fighter.<sup>79</sup> Boghos Nubar Paşa, the son of the former Prime Minister of Egypt, represented the Armenians of Turkey as the head of the Armenian National Delegation.<sup>80</sup> At the start of the Lausanne Conference, members of both Armenian delegations, which later were brought together under Boghos Nubar's presidency to form an "All Armenia Delegation" (*delegation de l'Armenie Integrale*)<sup>81</sup> toured Paris, London, Berlin and Moscow to explain their case and acquire supporters. To press the case, Armenian communities all over the world were instructed meanwhile to bombard the conference with inquiry wires seeking a solution.<sup>82</sup> Propaganda tours as well as wires from Armenian communities pouring into Lausanne raised the hopes of Armenian representatives in attending their related sessions believing that they were adequately supported in their goal.

Following their arrival in Lausanne, Armenian representatives this time pursued personal contacts with the key figures of the countries attending the conference. They felt confident about having the sympathy of the French, especially after conversing with Barrare and Bompard. Both French delegates had promised to speak to Lord Curzon to ensure that the Armenian "national home" issue was placed on the agenda. It was a fact that the French had rejected the proposal suggesting Cilicia for the "national home" and repeated their rejection even to Curzon, but their opposition was to the vicinity, not to the concept. On the other hand, to leave this autonomous "national home" under Turkish protectorate was a frequent suggestion, undoubtedly made with the anticipation of obtaining Turkish approval. However, they knew that sustaining the idea was initially subjected to the consent of the Turks, repeatedly refusing to make any sacrifices from the frontiers they outlined in the National Pact. The Turks, with the awareness that every autonomy ended with independence, were not sympathetic to an autonomous Armenian "national home" within Turkish frontiers. Accordingly, on December 4, underlining that "Turks have not made a single concession" so far on any matter discussed, Barrare suggested that in order not to raise so much noise in Ankara, the case should not be placed under the "Territorial" category, but under the one of the "Minorities."<sup>83</sup>

In the coming days, Armenian representatives continued applying to other Allied delegations to explain their anticipations. On December 6, Noradongian and

79 Sonyel, Salahi, *The Ottoman Armenians*...p. 257.

80 Khatsian, Alexander, "The Lausanne Conference and the Two Armenian Delegations", *The Armenian Review*, V.14, N.3-35, Catholic Historical Society, 82, June 1971, p.100.

81 Khatsian, Alexander, "The Lausanne Conference ...Autumn-Sept.1961....", p.3.

82 Gidney James B. *A Mandate for Armenia*..., p. 85.

83 Khatsian, Alexander, "The Lausanne Conference... Autumn-Sept.1961....", p.4.

Aharonian met with the Italian representative Garoni, recognized as a Turcophile, and were assured of the Italian support for the Armenian case. However, Garoni was not promising in taking any initiatives and noted that since the Armenians had worked on behalf of England during the war, the British should have the first say on the matter. His conviction was that best solution could be obtained by negotiating with the Turks directly.<sup>84</sup>

In resorting to the British, the letter Naradoungian received from Harold Buxton voicing their point of view was too conditional rather than encouraging. Buxton did confirm that the British government was going to defend an Armenian “national home,” but indicated that the degree of this support depended on the extent France, Italy and particularly America supported the case. He also specified that there was no certainty on Lord Curzon winning over the Turks since they received each and every proposal thus far made belligerently. He, like Garoni, advised the Armenians to make their own efforts to resolve relations with the Turks in order to facilitate the handling of the question. Meanwhile, the delegates received an indirect but an inspiring message regarding the placing of “national home” on the agenda. It was an explanation, which came from Harold Nicholson, Lord Curzon’s secretary, that Lord Curzon had originally set the “Armenian home in Cilicia” on the conference agenda before the opening, but it was left suspended when he encountered a heavy French opposition. The delegates’ spirits were further raised when they learned that the new premier Bonar Law’s policy on the conference and the Armenian issue differed from Lloyd George’s system of personal interference in foreign affairs, and that Curzon still was completely authorized and fully supported by the new government.<sup>85</sup>

Although the Armenian delegates expected and relied upon Russia’s support, they were exposed to silence both from Yerevan and Moscow. However, they received word from Chicherin that he defended the “United Armenia” thesis of joining the Russian Armenia with the prospective Armenian state in Turkish territories. Yet, he, too, specified that he did not think a compromise could easily be reached with the Turks, for Armenians had gone too far in fighting against them and serving as a tool of the Allies.<sup>86</sup>

Armenian representatives regarded the American delegates at Lausanne as perfectly reliable. Whether government officials or representatives of church and charity organizations, they were at Lausanne only as observers, but this did not decrease their credibility. They were extremely influential particularly among the Armenians and were often consulted before and during the conference. During the conference, Armenian delegates were under the impression that the Americans were constantly in touch with and were instructed by their government to defend the project of an Armenian “national home” made up of several Turkish provinces.<sup>87</sup> This prejudice, which continued until the end of the discussions, even led them to believe that the confirming statement Child made

84 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference... Autumn-Sept. 1961...”, p.6.

85 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference... Autumn-Sept. 1961...”, p.8.

86 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference... Autumn-Sept. 1961...”, p.9.

87 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference... Autumn-Sept. 1961...”, p.9.

on December 30 assuring the delegation and the British High Commissioner Rumbold of American support for the “national home” was one of the kind. It was clarified in the course of time, however, that this assertion was not true and that Child acted on his own initiative based on general instructions which included the defense of minorities and free travel in Turkey.<sup>88</sup> Such a conviction served to store American reliance among the Armenians. The delegates must have felt the same confidence when Admiral Bristol related to Khatissian, upon the latter’s visit, his opinion on the improbability of the Armenians and the Turks continuing to live side by side and that they ought to be separated by a “national home.” During the same visit, Admiral Bristol explained that the Turks were reluctant to concede their land and also were concerned that Armenians could become a tool for Russia. Admiral Bristol did not think the Turks, British and French regarded Cilicia as suitable vicinity for the creation of a “national home,” but promised to recommend the Turks conciliation as he advised the Armenian Delegation to make its own attempt for negotiations.<sup>89</sup>

Confronting all the above views of the different states were the Turks. The head of the Turkish Delegation, İsmet Paşa, was instructed to decline this expected proposal before his departure from Ankara. His firm rejection continued throughout the interviews and the discussions in the subcommittee. Declining an interview with the Armenian Delegation, İsmet, through a member of the Turkish Delegation, summarized the Turkish opinion, which remained unchanged until the end of the conference. This was not more than expressing that Turks had already signed an agreement settling frontier disputes with the Armenian Republic and territorially, and there was nothing to add to this. What the spokesman had specified was that Armenians within the Turkish frontiers were Turkish subjects, possessing equal rights with the rest of the Turks and naturally were free to live wherever they desired in Turkey, so there was no longer the need for a “national home.” He pointed out that the Turkish delegation also represented the Armenians in Turkey, so no other Armenian Delegation than that of the Armenian Republic was recognized by the Turkish Delegation.<sup>90</sup>

The efforts of the Armenian delegates, holding the interviews soon bore fruit: Before they all assembled at Lausanne, for the first time, acknowledgment of the *de jure* independence of Armenia was communicated to them by the English and French Foreign Ministers, Lord Curzon and Poincare. Furthermore, the Armenian case, focusing on an Armenian “homeland,” was placed on the conference agenda, to be brought up on December 11 in the Minorities Session, and the delegations were promised a hearing, if found necessary.

When the Lausanne Conference commenced, there was the general conviction that persuading the Turks to negotiate would not be too time consuming. Alexander Khatisian in his diary noted, “It seems the conference will take a long time, at least one month.”<sup>91</sup> Lord Curzon expected to conclude the treaty in a few weeks and be at home before Christmas. However, very soon after the

88 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference...”, p.5.

89 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference...”, p. 54.

90 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference...”, pp.6-9.

91 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference...”, p.10.



conference started, all participants became convinced that the provisions of the Sevres Treaty or any similar document would not even be debated by the Kemalists unless the Turks were recognized to have full independence and territorial integrity. It was obvious that the creation of an Armenian “national home” was going to be one of the determining issues pertaining to Turkish territorial demands. Nevertheless, in the early days of the conference, there was general optimism toward meeting this request of the Armenians. However, possibly due to the understanding reached through lengthy discussions concerning the mandate issue, U.S. state officials did not share this feeling. On December 9, only three days before the Minorities Issue came before the conference, Secretary Hughes expressed in a message he sent to Senator Lodge that “no Turkish territory could in any probability be obtained for this purpose without an intervention by force of arms on the part of some power and the maintenance by force of any territory which might thus be obtained.” This point of view was not applicable to philanthropist American representatives, who later accused the officials’ opinion as “trading Armenian rights for commercial concessions from the Turks.”<sup>92</sup>

On December 12, Lord Curzon addressed the Minorities Commission and pointed out that Soviet Armenia was already overcrowded with 1,250,000 Armenians, mostly refugees, and could not hold anymore. Pointing out that on the other hand, the six Anatolian provinces were almost completely stripped of their Armenian population, he noted that the Armenians of Cilicia joined the French when they evacuated the area. He continued his speech with the warning that Turkey was under the obligation of reserving a territory somewhere within the Turkish frontiers to serve as an Armenian “national homeland,” whether it be within the northern provinces or in the south, anywhere from Cilicia to the Syrian border.

Lord Curzon’s speech, followed by those of the Allied representatives’ and Child’s remarks was criticized by the Armenians (as well as Montgomery, Pitt and Barton) for not using the word “home” but “region.”<sup>93</sup> His promises for financial support from individual sources rather than the government also disturbed the Armenians, forgetting that he was not an official representative, therefore was not even entitled to make such a commitment.

The next day (December 13) İsmet Paşa, this time officially, indicated that the Armenians in Turkey possessed full equality with the Turks and were not deprived of any rights or subjected to any provisions restricting their security and prosperity.<sup>94</sup> Two days later, a subcommittee was organized to handle the Armenian issue, under Mondania, Italian Ambassador to Greece, including Laroche to represent France, Sir Horace Rumbold for England and Dr. Rıza Nur for Turkey. On the same day, Lord Curzon sent word to Noradungian that the Armenian case occupied his special attention and that he had addressed the Turks “with a powerful and threatening speech” telling them he would extend

92 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference...”, p.4.

93 Bryson T. *The Armenia-America Society...*, pp.101-102.

94 Khatsian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference...”, p. 62.

support for Turkish loans if they supported an Armenian “national home.” In return, he expected the Armenians to accept Turkish suzerainty.<sup>95</sup>

The session aimed to suit Armenian wishes, however, as discussions continued, it became more apparent that the Allies still were the supporters of the Armenians, but they were not willing to sacrifice anything or declare war for their cause. The subcommittee had scheduled to take up the question of an Armenian “national home” again on December 16 and 18. Meanwhile, the Armenian representatives, anticipating to persuade the Turks to compromise, intensified their approaches with members of different countries. During the interviews, clouds of despair slowly started to shroud the delegates, accustomed to elaborated commitments of the great powers. Nothing concrete developed through the talks reflecting sentiments. Perhaps the only realistic comment came from Venizelos, who on December 16 asserted that both the Armenian and Greek cases were political defeats. Complaining that they were both completely abandoned by the Allies, Venizelos advised Khatisian to choose one of the three possibilities he listed, which were to 1) strengthen Russian Armenia, which appeared to be the only hope for the Armenians; 2) pursue efforts in America to secure the continuation of financial, moral and political aid; 3) continue negotiations to keep the Armenian cause politically alive in London and Paris to be ready to take advantage of every probability while not relying on papers but on facts and keeping close ties with friends, “foremost among which, do not forget, to reserve a place to Greece.”<sup>96</sup>

This meeting represented the striking collaboration against Turkey by the two nations, once subjects of the Ottoman Empire, which were both exploited by the great powers, turned into archenemies of the Turks, played prominent roles in the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and were stranded alone at the end of the long war which cost them blood and prestige, all lost only to satisfy the ambitions of the Allies.

Meanwhile, twice declined by Chicherin, Noradongian was received by two other Bolsheviks, Rakowski and Midwani, and then by Barrere while Aharonian spoke with Mondania and Adamski, the Secretary of the Russian Delegation and later, with Grew and Nicholson, only to hear the same supportive but ambiguous words the others had uttered. None brought any positive results but the talks made them understand that none of the states involved was prepared to resort to arms for their sake. Aharonian even talked with İsmet Paşa and with the Swiss Professor Pittarde, there as an advisor. For a while, devising a resolution under the term “neutral zone” was brought up in order to pass the case while preserving Turkey’s territorial integrity as embodied in the Turkish National Pact. Turkish representatives stood firm against all proposals to replace an Armenian “national home,” more so a neutral zone, which, disregarding the principles of the National Pact, sought territorial concession from Turkey. Nevertheless different delegations the Armenian representatives conversed with on the following days again to no avail continued to assure them that the treaty could not be signed unless the Armenian Question was solved.<sup>97</sup>

95 Seha Meray, *Lozan Barış Konferansı, Ankara: 1977 vol. I book I*, pp. 185.

96 Khatisian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference...”, pp. 55-59.

97 Khatisian, Alexander, “The Lausanne Conference...”, p.59.

Finally, on the evening of December 23, the Armenian Delegation received communication from the General Secretary of the Lausanne Conference that it would be given a hearing on the December 26 at 3:30 p.m. When the representatives met on the assigned day, Noradongian in 13 minutes presented the carefully prepared report. Next, Aharonian's 15 minute explanation of the historical background and political importance of Armenian claims, hopes, expectations, confidence in the Allies was also listened to with utmost attention. The questions posed by members of the subcommittee were clarified by comprehensive answers. Aharonian and Noradongian noted that their unison reflected the "sentiment and the mind of all Armenian people, regardless of party, origin or Armenian communities of the world."<sup>98</sup> To the Armenians' dismay, the prolonged discussions in the following days only served to wear out the Allies' approach to an Armenian "national home," as the Turkish Delegation repeatedly explained that the Turkish government was the actual representative of the Armenians in Turkey. Moreover, before the hearing on December 26, the Turkish Delegation notified the subcommittee that it would not sit through the presentation of a delegation Turkey refused to recognize.

The zeal over the issue had greatly declined by December 30, when Child, through a formal statement, conveyed the consent of the American Delegation to a "national home" and expressed that Armenians and Americans had been assured of its discussion at the conference. The statement concluded by asserting America's persistence although "Turks favor a practical solution of the question"<sup>99</sup> The Turkish Delegation asserted that America was not officially represented and protested this statement. Yet on the same day, Montgomery presented before the subcommittee the proposal he had designed for the creation of a "national home" in Cilicia. Despite multiple proposals, the subcommittee, quite aware of the Turkish opposition, refrained from even opening it to discussion.<sup>100</sup>

The last meeting of the subcommittee on the Minorities Issue was held on January 06 when Mondania and Rumbold spoke consecutively to reflect positive views of their delegations on the establishment of a "national home" for the Armenians. The following speaker scheduled was the French delegate, but when he had the floor, Dr. Rıza Nur blocked him, as he reminded him that the Turkish Delegation, up to that point, listened to the presentations of countries under moral obligations to the Armenians, but refused to hear the presentation of the country that armed the Armenians and used them as political weapons against Turks. The Turkish Delegation left the session in protest after Dr. Nur's words. This was interpreted as a "scandal" by the American representatives as Grew noted in his diary that Curzon, Barrere and Mondania each confessed to him his conviction was that the establishment of a "national home" for the Armenians was no longer feasible.<sup>101</sup> However, Dr. Nur's protest served to focus the meetings of the next two days on the reality that Turks would never agree to the

98 Khatsian, Alexander, "The Lausanne Conference....",p. 55-56.

99 Khatsian, Alexander, "The Lausanne Conference....",p. 61.

100 Gordon, Leland James, *PhD, American Relations....*, p.33.

101 Bryson Thomas.,*The Armenia-America Society....*, p.100.

establishment of a “national home” or even its appearance on the treaty. Accordingly, all written material concerning the establishment of a “national home” for the Armenians was sent to the First Commission by Mondania on January 8, 1923.<sup>102</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The Armenian Question was not brought up during discussions after January 9, when Curzon touched upon it very briefly. Great Britain and the U.S. agreed on many matters from the capitulations to minorities, but could not reach a compromise on economic rights due to their clashing interests for oil. This constituted one of the major causes which brought an interim to the conference on February 04. Armenophiles during this interim until April 23, announced publicly that the treaty should not be signed unless it contained a definite solution for the Armenian issue.<sup>103</sup> However, they were aware that all they had at hand as a concrete development, since the earliest days of the problem starting with the false stimulations of the Armenian Revolutionary Committees and continuing with the pre-war, war and post-war promises of the great powers, was the Soviet Armenian Republic. Hovannes Katchaznoui, the first Prime Minister of the Independent Armenian Republic in the 1923 meeting of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnagtzoutioun) finally expressed his conviction as follows:

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation has nothing to do anymore.....It has only one more thing to do, a supreme duty to the Armenian cause, and to its own existence...it must end its existence. Our party has lost its *raison d’etre* – reason of existence and this is the bitter truth.<sup>104</sup>

This statement fortified the assertions of the Turkish Delegation throughout the subsequent discussions and when the Armenians, as well as other minority groups in Turkey, were placed under the supervision of the League of Nations. It was at that point that Forbes Adams from the British Delegation confessed that “it is quite useless to raise the question of Armenians in Turkey territorially.” Consequently, Rumbold’s remarks on the sufficiency of discussions on Minorities Issue and suggestion to end the session gained acceptance.<sup>105</sup>

Not a word about the Armenian “national home” appeared in the articles of the peace treaty signed on July 24, 1923. The Lausanne Treaty, with an additional protocol provided for the Armenians not within the Turkish frontiers at the time of the treaty, the right to return to Turkey as Turkish citizens in the following two years, but it did not include anything pertaining to a Armenian “national home.”<sup>106</sup> This was an unrepairable disappointment for the Armenians and particularly for the Armenophiles of America. *The New York Times* in evaluating the Lausanne

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102 Gürün, Kamuran, *Ermeni Dosyası...*, p. 302.

103 Khatsian, Alexander, *The Lausanne Conference...*, p.54.

104 *Bryson Thomas*, *The Armenia-America Society...*, p.101.

105 *Şimşir, Bilal*, *Armenians In the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, (1912-1926)*, *Istanbul:1984*, p. 79, from *The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnagtzoutioun) Has Nothing to do Any More, New York, 1955*

Treaty in September remarked that the treaty was concluded “as if the Armenians did not exist at all.”<sup>107</sup>

Americans, as observers to the Lausanne Conference were not in the position to sign the treaty. Hence, a separate document, the Turkish-American Treaty of Lausanne was signed a fortnight later on August 6. The failure in keeping the commitments to the Armenians did not raise as much opposition in Europe as it did in the United States. Following the Lausanne Treaty, some critics voiced that an Armenian “national home” was cast aside for valuable oil concessions.<sup>108</sup> This stirred up American public opinion. Grew, as one of the observers, felt the obligation to explain that the project failed due to the insurmountable opposition of the Turkish government. He tried to justify the unsatisfactory conclusion by explaining that, “No effort was left unmade, no argument left unused, but the powers represented at Lausanne were obliged to deal with the facts.”<sup>109</sup> On November 19, a “Memorandum Against Ratification by the Senate of the Lausanne Treaty” was issued by the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia and was signed by many prominent Americans such as Governor A. Smith of New York, Josephus Daniels, Walter George Smith, Herbert Croley of *The New Republic*, Bishop Thomas J. Shahan, Rector of Catholic University, and Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes. The signatories of this memorandum attributed their opposition primarily to their conviction that the U.S. government had traded Armenian rights for commercial concessions from the Turkish government and failed to obtain for Armenians a “national home.” Accordingly, Secretary Hughes voiced his conviction when he wrote to Senator Lodge that no Turkish property for this purpose could have been obtained without an armed intervention. Several years after the Lausanne Conference, Hughes, reflecting the awareness that this could not have materialized only by popular support, wrote:

..contrary to an impression which is somewhat widespread in this country, this government, while it has always exerted its influence in a humanitarian way, has not assumed political obligation with respect to the Armenians or other Christian minorities in the Near East. Treaties concluded by other powers undertook, however, to deal with such questions.<sup>110</sup>

The Turkish Parliament declared the republic shortly after the conclusion of the Lausanne Conference. The announcement of the new Turkish Republic on October 29, 1923 thoroughly discarded even the feeblest traces of the Ottoman administration from the horizons of this new state. The Lausanne Treaty was the official recognition of the new Turkish state by the world. None of the participants seemed to have understood or admitted this at the beginning of the conference. For example, Khatissian had noted that Turks had to be made to understand that conquering the Greeks was not conquering the Allies.<sup>111</sup> Yet, the conclusion of the Lausanne Conference and the treaty signed nullified all such convictions, as it underlined the closing of the Armenian Question for all signatories.

106 Şimşir, Bilal, *Armenians In the Ottoman Empire ...*, p.80.

107 Seha Meray, *Lozan Barış Konferansı? Ek protokol...* p. 14.

108 *New York Times*, 12 September, 1924.

109 Bryson Thomas, *The Armenia-America Society...*, p.101.

110 Gordon, Leland James, *American Relations with ...*, p.32.

111 Khatsian, Alexander, *The Lausanne Conference and the Two Armenian Delegations*, *The Armenian Review*, part I, p.5.

## APPENDIX 1

ABCFM  
Unit 5 Vol 6  
Reel 504

February 5, 1916

The Reverend James L. Barton  
14 Beacon Street  
Boston, Massachusetts

Sir:

There is herewith enclosed to you a paraphrase of a telegram from the American Ambassador at Constantinople, dated January 26th, communicating a message which the Armenian Patriarch requests be delivered to the Armenians in the United States, concerning the steps to be taken by them to most efficiently aid the Armenians in Turkey.

Your obedient servant,  
For the Secretary of State  
Second Assistant Secretary

(next page)

“The American Ambassador in Turkey, in a telegram dated January 26, 1916, states that the Armenian Patriarch requests that the following be communicated to the Armenians in the United States.

“First. They should contribute as generously as possible to the relief funds to be distributed through missionaries, and also to funds to be distributed through the Patriarchate and the Armenian people. Funds can be transmitted to the Patriarchate through the American Embassy at Constantinople.

“Second. Armenians in other countries should obtain from public utterances and demonstrations of a character calculated to jeopardize the safety and lives of Armenians in Turkey.

“Third. Armenians throughout the world should continue at all times to appeal to the humanitarian feelings of the allies of Turkey and of neutrals to aid in keeping alive the Armenians in Turkey until the arrival of normal times once more.”

APPENDIX 2

ABCFM  
Unit 5 Vol. V  
Reel 506

(TRANSLATION)

Sublime Porte  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
No. 80136/90

March 29, 1916

Note Verbale

The Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs has had the honor of receiving the note verbale which the Embassy of the United States of America was pleased to address to it on November 24, 1915, relative to the American missionaries Rev. Alpheus N. Andrus, Dr. Thom, and Miss Agnes Fenega, who were established at Mardin.

The Department of the Interior, to such a request for information in this connection was made, states in reply that these missionaries had direct relations with the Armenian Revolutionary Committee and the rebels of Madiat, and that the money and effects seized by the local authorities did not belong to them but some Armenians. These sums of money are at present deposited in the public treasury and the effects are cared for by the commission constituted for the purpose, to settle the property left by the Armenians.

As to the valuables and other objects belonging to these missionaries, they were delivered by the said imperial authorities to their representative or attorney, and no damage has been done to their real property.

These Americans traveled freely as far as Sivas, without being the object of any bad treatment by the Imperial authorities, who, on the contrary, even allowed them to stop for several days where they wished to do so.

Consequently, in view of the relations with the said missionaries carried on with the Armenian Revolutionary Committees, the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs regrets to be unable to comply with the request which formed the purpose of the said verbale.

To the Embassy of the United States of America

ABCFM  
Unit 5 Vol:V  
Reel 506

“By its note of April 18th, this Embassy informed the Sublime Porte that it could not allow such an allegation to pass unchallenged, and that therefore it is requested that any substantial evidence in the hands of the Ottoman authorities be furnished to it. In its reply dated March 13th, the Foreign Office merely states that the local authorities had established beyond all doubt the connection between these missionaries and the Armenian revolutionaries.

The Embassy is in receipt of a telegram from Sivas stating that Mr. Andrus, Miss Fenenga, as well as all the American Missionaries at Sivas except Miss Graffam and Miss Fowle, started from that place for Constantinople on 13th instant. This action is doubtless due to the taking over of the American Mission buildings at Sivas for hospital purposes which was reported in my telegram No. 1800 of May 12th.

With respect to the American Missionaries who remain at Mardin, I have the honor to refer to my telegram No. 1790 of May 8th. In view of the difficulties of travel at the present time, and the delicate state of health of Mrs. Andrus, these missionaries do not seem to wish to leave their station at present. On April 27th the Consul at Aleppo was telegraphically instructed to keep in close touch with these ladies, and in case of need to send a canvass to bring them to Aleppo. No reply has yet been received from Mr. Jackson.

I have the honor to be, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

Enclosures  
Embassy to Porte April 18, 1916  
Porte to Embassy May 13, 1916

(signed) Hoffman Philip



ABCFM  
Unit 6 Vol:VI  
Reel 506

No. 1386  
Note Verbale

April 18, 1916

The Embassy of the United States of America has the honor to acknowledge receipt of the Note Verbale of the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated March 29, 1916, No. No.80136/90, relative to the case of three American missionaries who were compelled to leave Mardin and proceed to Sivas, and to state in reply that the contents thereof have been communicated to its Government.

This Embassy cannot, however, allow to pass unchallenged the allegation contained in the said note verbale to the effect that these three American citizens were carrying on direct relations with the Armenian Revolutionary Committee and the rebels at Midiat. That these three Americans should have been engaged, even indirectly, in any undertaking inimical to the imperial Ottoman Government or tending to disturb local peace and order, this Embassy cannot readily believe, and it therefore requests the Imperial Ministry to furnish it with any substantial evidence to such effect which may have been submitted to the Sublime Porte by the local authorities.

To Thsde Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Sublime Porte

ABCFM  
Unit 5 vol:V  
Reel 506

“The Foreign Office states that the Ministry of the Interior has informed it that these three Americans carried on direct relations with the Armenian Revolutionary Committee and with the rebels at Madiat, and that the money and valuables seized by the local authorities (see the latter part of this Embassy’s note verbale No. 923 of November 24, 1915) belonged to certain Armenians and not to the missionaries.

As to the valuables and other effects of these three missionaries, the local authorities are stated to have delivered these articles to the duly authorized representative of the mission, and it is added that no damage has been done to their real estate.

The notes concludes with the statement that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regrets that it is unable to comply with the request of this Embassy that the two remaining missionaries be allowed to return from Sivas to Mardin. I have discussed this matter with Mr. W W. Peet, who, while utterly repudiating the charges of the Ottoman authorities, joins me in the opinion that it will be best for the remaining American missionaries, five women, who are still at Mardin, to come to Constantinople, and to have Mr. Andrus and Miss Fenenga join them at some place on the railway line most easily attainable from Sivas, and come here with them. A telegram to this effect has been sent to Mardin, with a request for a telegraphic reply as to when these five ladies will be able to start.

The substance of the enclosed note and of the decision of Mr. Peet and the Embassy is being communicated to the Department by telegram.”