

1915

BEFORE AND AFTER

by

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COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE

ON THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE TURKISH GENOCIDE
OF THE ARMENIANS

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1915 . . . BEFORE AND AFTER

INTRODUCTION

The year 1965 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the massacre of over one million Armenian men, women, and children in Turkey by order of the Turkish Government. Talaat Pasha, who as Minister of the Interior, signed the orders for the massacre of Turkey's Armenian minority, made it clear that his government's objective was a purely political one. The noted historian, Arnold Toynbee, in his *Armenian Atrocities: The Murder of a Nation* (1915) quotes Talaat as boasting, "After this, there will be no Armenian question for fifty years."

What was the "Armenian Question?" What events led Turkey to decide that "the only way to solve the Armenian question is by eliminating the Armenians"? To find the answers, we have to go back some 500 years.

FIVE CENTURIES OF TURKISH RULE

Following the conquest of Constantinople by Sultan Mohammed II in 1453, the Ottoman Empire became firmly established and countless Christian and non-Christian nations in the Near East, the Balkans, and North Africa eventually found themselves under the rule of the Ottoman Turks—an alien nomad army which had swept into Asia Minor from the East and counted Armenia among her earliest conquests. Asia Minor, traditionally Armenian and Greek, became the "homeland" of the Turks, the center from which they ruled their vast empire. The Armenians, Greeks, and other non-Turks were the "Rayah", the "cattle"—second class citizens without equal protection under the law and subject to continuous mistreatment.

"POWER POLITICS"

The Nineteenth Century, marked by the rise of nationalism, the "shrinking" of the world, and "power politics", brought chaos to the Ottoman Empire. The sultans' incessant wars with Russia and others brought about a continuing decline of power, social and economic decay, and European demands for "reforms" in Turkish-held territories. The Turks reacted with unprecedented massacres—of Bosnians, Serbians, Greeks, Macedonians, Bulgarians, Rumanians, Arabs, and Armenians. Power politics and internal wrangling prevented the five Great European Powers—France, Great Britain, Austria, Italy, and Russia— from presenting a united front in their demands for "reforms," for humane treatment of the Sultan's subjects. Their own territorial ambitions and concern over "control of the Dardanelles" overshadowed the fate of the millions in the captive nations whose national aspirations had been aroused by the promises and lofty pronouncements of the Powers. The Turkish minorities—including the Armenians—had become pawns in the game of power politics . . . a game which eventually cost the minorities a total of over three million lives.

THE "ARMENIAN QUESTION" IS BORN

The "Armenian Question" specifically can be considered as starting with the Russo-Turkish War (1877–78) although Armenia had already suffered periodic massacres thanks to the game of European "demands" and Turkish reprisals. Article 16 of the Russo-Turkish "Treaty of San Stefano" (March 3, 1878) provided for reforms in Turkish Armenia. British and Austro-Hungarian diplomatic intervention, however, resulted in a new treaty at the Congress of Berlin in which a number of significant "trades" were made. Bulgaria, promised full independence at San Stefano, had both her independence and her territory considerably reduced. Serbia and Macedonia remained Turkish and Bosnia and Herzegovina went under Austrian mandates. Great Britain received Cyprus from Turkey; Russia received a good portion of Armenian territory . . . and Armenia's rights were forgotten. San Stefano's promise of reforms to be guaranteed by the presence of Russian troops became a vague assurance from the Turks with no enforcement provisions. Gladstone denounced Disraeli's acquisition of Cyprus as "an act of duplicity unsurpassed and rarely equalled in the history of man." The Duke of Argyll prophesied that Britain had, in exchange for Cyprus, exposed the Armenians to greater hatred from their tyrannical rulers without an ounce of security. Europe—notably Britain and Russia—had made the plight of the Armenians an international question, had brought it to the conference tables, had extracted promises from Turkey, and then had agreed to water down the promises into meaningless nothings in exchange for territory.

THE 1894-96 MASSACRES

Realizing that the Armenians' "Christian brothers in Europe" cared little for the Armenians and their fate, but merely used them as a political tool, the Turkish Sultan decided that he would solve the Armenian question once and for all, and thereby deprive Europe of its wedge. Besides, the Armenians—living in the midst of their conquerors, but generally better-educated and more successful economically—were a helpless and convenient scapegoat for the Turks whose empire had been carved up by wars, revolutions, and European "diplomacy". There began a policy of systematic reprisals, culminating in 1894-96 with the first of the great "Armenian Massacres", in which over 300,000 Armenians were killed. Abdul Hamid, "The Bloody Sultan", had taken a giant step toward the annihilation of the Armenians, knowing that the often-threatened intervention by Europe would never come. Thus, although countless diplomatic exchanges, agreements, promises, threats, and counter-threats marked the period from 1878 to 1896, the question of reforms in Turkish Armenia remained a dead issue at the close of the Century.

THE YOUNG TURKS

In 1908, came the "Young Turks" and their revolution. Sultan Hamid was overthrown, a constitution was established, and the equality of "all Ottoman peoples" was declared. The Armenians saw the promise of a new day. Revolutionary aspirations—born of the frustration of European abandonment and in reaction to Turkish persecution—were set aside and Armenians joined with Turks in creating a new nation in which parliamentary processes were to replace the scimitar. The Armenians had sought—and were now promised—equal rights as Turkish citizens.

HOPES SMASHED AGAIN

In less than a year, however—in April, 1909—there occurred the massacre of 30,000 Armenians in Adana, blamed on Hamidian "reactionaries" by the Young Turks, but in reality planned by the Young Turks to reinforce fear of "the old order" and, thereby, to assure Armenian loyalty. Before long, the Young Turks' chauvinism led them into the Italo-Turkish War and into the Balkan Wars which resulted in further dismemberment of the Empire—notably in the Balkans, North Africa, and the Mediterranean islands.

PROMISES . . . AGAIN

Weakened Turkey agreed on February 8, 1914, to a comprehensive program of reforms in Turkish Armenia—a program proposed by Russia

and approved by the other powers. Under the plan, two European inspectors were to supervise the carrying out of reforms in the Armenian provinces. The two inspectors, a Dutchman and a Norwegian, had barely arrived when World War I broke out and Turkey renounced the agreement it had signed.

While Abdul Hamid had not had time to finish the job of eliminating the Armenians, his successors, the Young Turks, now found themselves free from European restraint and with a free hand to "solve the Armenian question once and for all."

TURKEY ENTERS THE WAR

With German promises of Turkish control of the Transcaucasus and portions of North Africa, Turkey entered World War I in August, 1914, as an ally of Germany against Britain, France, and Russia. Turkey was to bring to the German cause the great advantages of a "Jihad"—a Holy War—encompassing all the Moslem peoples of the Near East, a promise which proved to be a fiasco, since the War saw the Arabs joining the Entente against their Turkish oppressors. Another "proposal" of the Turks—a fantastic one—was to later provide a pretext for the already-planned Armenian massacres. At the very moment Turkey entered the War, Young Turk leaders approached Turkish Armenian leaders to seek their aid in organizing a rebellion of the large Armenian population in the Russian Caucasus. The Turkish Armenian leadership gave the only reply possible—that they, as Turkish subjects, would fight for Turkey and promise the full loyalty of their people in Turkey, but that the Armenians of the Caucasus, as Russian subjects, had an equal obligation to remain loyal to Russia. The Armenians were falling for no Turkish traps; they advised against Turkey entering the War at all; when it was inevitable, they assured the Turkish government of the only thing they had power over—the loyalty of the Turkish Armenians. Forever hopeful of a "new era" of Turko-Armenian *brotherhood*, the Armenians did, in fact, deliver. Although they had suffered greatly, their leadership was too realistic to do anything that might provide an excuse for total annihilation. They had already fought loyally in Turkey's North African and Balkan Wars and able-bodied men again willingly entered the "fatherland's" service.

THE "PLAN" GOES INTO ACTION

But the Young Turks had already devised their plan of extermination. Armenian "soldiers" were being organized into labor battalions—ill-fed, ill-clothed, beaten, driven mercilessly, killed on convenience and whim. Next, on April 24, 1915, came the arrest—and murder—of 250 Armenian leaders, the cream of the intelligentsia. Finally, the orders were issued by Talaat Pasha for the "deportation" of the Armenian population of Turkey—

the old men, women, and children who were left. Often they were massacred on the spot; many were driven south into the Mesopotamian and Syrian deserts, where they fell prey to marauding tribesmen and to the "guards" assigned to these "caravans to nowhere"; and, of course, disease and starvation took their toll. None were intended to survive these death marches. "Their destination is the void" had been Talaat's reply to an inquiry from a Turkish official in the interior.

TOYNBEE AND TURKISH "LOGIC"

Writing as early as 1916—when the full scope of the massacres was not known and hundreds of thousands were still in the deserts on the brink of death—the noted historian, Arnold Toynbee, gave the following account of what was happening:

"The Armenian inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire were everywhere uprooted from their homes, and deported to the most remote and unhealthy districts that the Government could select for them. Some were murdered at the outset, some perished on the way, and some died after reaching their destination. The death-toll amounts to upwards of six hundred thousand; perhaps six hundred thousand more are still alive in their places of exile; and the remaining six hundred thousand or so have either been converted forcibly to Islam, gone into hiding in the mountains, or escaped beyond the Ottoman frontier. The Ottoman Government cannot deny these facts, and they cannot justify them. No provocation or misdemeanor on the part of individual Armenians could justify such a crime against the whole race."

Toynbee goes on to discuss and dispel the three major contentions of the Turks and their friends in excusing the massacres:

1. The first contention is that the Armenians took up arms and joined the Russians as the latter crossed into Turkey. The so-called "Revolt of Van" is often cited. Toynbee points out that: (a) deportations and massacres had already begun in several areas before Russian troops ever crossed into Turkey; (b) the "revolt" at Van was a defensive action organized by the Armenians only after literally hundreds of outlying villages had already been totally annihilated, much of the local Armenian leadership arrested and murdered, and Turkish attacks on Van already begun; (c) defenses elsewhere—e.g. at Shabin-Karahissar, at Sassoun, and at Musa Dagh—were courageous acts of despair which followed Turkish massacres at other villages or were organized as direct reactions to Turkish attacks. Toynbee cites authoritative chronological data to prove his case.

2. The second contention is that there was planned a general revolt of Armenians throughout the Empire at some militarily inopportune time and

that the Government had to crush this revolt "before it happened." The sick logic of "preventive" massacres—of women, children, and old men— is too evident to merit much comment by Toynbee, who points out that the able-bodied men had already been mobilized into the Turkish Army and the Armenian leadership murdered at the very beginning of the war.

3. Finally, the Turks point to the role of Armenian troops in the Russian Army, explaining that naturally the Turks reacted at home for the set-backs received at the hands of Russo-Armenians. This Toynbee describes as "the most monstrous" of any of the allegations, "for these Armenian volunteers owed no allegiance to the Turks at all, but were ordinary Russian subjects . . . the loyalty of the Russian Armenians to Russia cast no imputation upon the Ottoman Armenians and was no concern of the Turks."

GENOCIDE . . . PURE AND SIMPLE

Thus, Toynbee points out that, while the Turkish arguments are all centered around the War and "military necessity", none of them hold up under examination—neither as justification nor as motivation. The motive was political—pure and simple. It was Genocide. Indeed, it was the massacre of the Armenians that was to motivate Professor Raphael Lemkin to coin that term and to work toward the eventual UN adoption of the Genocide Convention, which makes such minority-destruction an international crime.

Then—U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, Henry Morgenthau, affirms the political nature of the massacres:

"Undoubtedly religious fanaticism was an impelling motive with the Turkish and Kurdish rabble who slew Armenians as a service to Allah, but the men who really conceived the crime had no such motive. Practically all of them were atheists, with no more respect for Moham-medanism than for Christianity, and with them the one motive was cold-blooded, calculating state policy."

AMBASSADOR MORGENTHAU'S STORY

U.S. Ambassador Morgenthau, in his book "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story", points out that the Young Turks felt that the early Ottoman conquerors had made a "fatal error" in not destroying completely the native populations in Bulgaria, Rumania, Serbia, and other countries. They reasoned that, had this been done, there would have been no possibility of these territories becoming independent, as they eventually did. They decided, therefore, to eliminate completely the possibility that Armenia might someday be wrested from them. They would depopulate it of Armenians, by killing most of them and by kidnapping and bringing up as Turks those young enough not to remember their parents.

On the "revolt of Van", Morgenthau estimates that about eighty surrounding villages were destroyed and 24,000 people killed before the defense of Van was organized. After describing the events leading to the defense and the heroic five week stand against five to one odds, Morgenthau concludes:

"The famous 'Revolution', as this recital shows, was merely the determination of the Armenians to save their women's honour and their own lives, after the Turks, by massacring thousands of their neighbors, had shown them the fate that awaited them."

The entire chronology of the massacres is recorded by the American Ambassador, much of his information coming from American consular officials and missionaries in the interior. He cites the formation of the labor battalions and the eventual destruction of them, the systematic arrests and murders of the remaining able-bodied men, the unbelievable tortures accompanying "arms-searches", the deportations, the killings, the starvation, the looting and raping, etc.

On the matter of the so-called "arms searches" and the accompanying brutality, Morgenthau describes how a Turkish official "made no secret of the fact that the Government had instigated them," i.e. the tortures. The same official told him that nightly meetings of the Committee of Union and Progress, the Young Turks' ruling clique, were devoted to "constantly ransacking their brains in an effort to devise some new torment", and that they "even delved into the records of the Spanish inquisition and other historic institutions of torture and adopted all suggestions found there." The following were a few of the tortures used to extract "confessions" of "revolutionary activities": the infamous bastinado or whipping of the soles of the feet; the pulling out of beards, eyebrows, etc.; the tearing off of pieces of flesh with red-hot pincers; the actual nailing of feet and hands to a wooden cross; and the nailing of horseshoes to the feet of victims.

Mass methods soon replaced the more time-consuming tortures described above, and Morgenthau describes some of the means used to dispose of the remaining male population in this "first step". At Ankara, for instance, men were tied in "bunches" of four and attacked with axes, saws, clubs, etc. "Such instruments," Morgenthau comments, "not only caused more agonizing deaths than guns and pistols, but, as the Turks themselves boasted, they were more economical, since they did not involve the waste of powder and shell."

The orders for the "deportations" of the women, children, and old men followed. "When the Turkish authorities gave the orders for these deportations," says Morgenthau, "they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race; they understood this well, and, in their conversations with me, they made no particular attempt to conceal the fact." He places the number

who "started on this journey to the Syrian desert" between April and October, 1915, at 1,200,000. "Perhaps a million" died, he estimates. After describing the agonies of the death-caravans, Morgenthau states:

"I have by no means told the most terrible details, for a complete narration of the sadistic orgies of which these Armenian men and women were the victims can never be printed in an American publication. Whatever crimes the most perverted instincts of the human mind can devise, and whatever refinements of persecutions and injustice the most debased imagination can conceive, became the daily misfortunes of this devoted people. I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this. The great massacres and persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared to the sufferings of the Armenian race in 1915."

Morgenthau's recorded conversations with Talaat are a study in themselves—a study of a man to whom the destruction of an entire people was not simply a matter of state policy, but a source of personal satisfaction. Talaat even went so far as to request (unsuccessfully) from the American Ambassador a list of Armenians covered by American insurance companies, since "there are no survivors and the state is the beneficiary now."

It should be understood that Morgenthau's efforts in behalf of the Armenians were primarily personal and as an unofficial representative of American groups organized to extend relief to Armenian refugees. His official capacity was that of a neutral ambassador, since the U.S. did not enter the War until 1917. As such, he was legally unable to "intervene in the internal affairs of a belligerent power", especially in view of American reluctance to get involved in the War. Exponents of American neutrality argued that, as a neutral power, America was in a better position to extend relief to the survivors of the massacres. Those favoring an immediate declaration of war against Turkey—including Theodore Roosevelt—labeled American neutrality as shameful.

OTHER EYE-WITNESSES TO HORROR

Armin T. Wegner, a German eye-witness to the massacres, provided the following shocking picture in an open letter to U.S. President Wilson:

"Parties which on their departure from the homeland of High Armenia consisted of thousands, numbered on their arrival in the outskirts of Aleppo only a few hundreds, while the fields were strewed with swollen, blackened corpses, infecting the air with their odor, lying about desecrated, naked, having been robbed of their clothes, or driven, bound back to back, to the Euphrates to provide food for the fishes.

Sometimes gendarmes in derision threw into the emaciated hands of starving people a little meal which they greedily licked off, merely with the result of prolonging their death-agony. Even before the gates of Aleppo they were allowed no rest. For incomprehensible and utterly unjustifiable reasons of war, the shrunken parties were ceaselessly driven bare-footed, hundreds of miles under the burning sun, through stony defiles, over pathless steppes, enfeebled into the wilderness of desolation. Here they died—slain by Kurds, robbed by gendarmes, shot, hanged, poisoned, stabbed, strangled, mown down by epidemics, drowned, frozen, parched with thirst, starved—their bodies left to putrefy or to be devoured by jackals.

Children wept themselves to death, men dashed themselves against the rocks, mothers threw their babies into brooks, women with child flung themselves, singing, into the Euphrates. They died all the deaths on earth, the deaths of all the ages."

The official British Government report, "*The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire*," which Toynbee compiled and analyzed (and from which his refutation of the Turkish arguments referred to above were taken), provides over 150 official documents and eye-witness reports—including many from neutral and even German sources—on the events which shocked the world and which prompted H. A. Gibbons, a noted American correspondent of the period to call them "The Blackest Page of Modern History". These are but a few passages from this official chronicle of horrors:

"... The girls have been outraged mercilessly; we have seen their mutilated corpses tied together in batches of four, eight or ten, and cast into the Euphrates. The majority had been mutilated in an indescribable manner."

"... It was a very common thing for them to rape our girls in our presence. Very often they violated eight or ten-year-old girls, and as a consequence many would be unable to walk, and were shot."

"... She told Prince Argoutian ... that she shuddered to recall how hundreds of children were bayoneted by the Turks and thrown into the Euphrates, and how men and women were stripped naked, tied together in hundreds, shot and then hurled into the river."

"... He told how, at each village, the women had been violated; ... how children had had their brains battered out when they cried or hindered the march."

"... The condemned were stripped of all but their underclothing and led to the brink of a great ditch. There they knelt with their hands bound behind their back and were despatched by axe-blows on the head."

Accompanying the massacres, there was senseless destruction of property.

Thousands of churches, convents, monasteries, schools, libraries, and other buildings were completely destroyed. Millions of books, ancient manuscripts, paintings, sculptures, and other irreplaceable monuments of the 3000 year-old Armenian Civilization were lost forever.

THE EVIDENCE

There is incontrovertible evidence that the extermination plan was conceived by the Turkish government and carried out by government orders. As we have already indicated, Henry Morgenthau, the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey from 1913-16, records in his memoirs countless conversations with Talaat, Enver, and other Turkish leaders as well as with German officials in Turkey that indicate clearly that the plan for massacre was developed years before the war and was executed as an official act of the Turkish government with the full knowledge and sanction of her German allies—who were observers and at times active participants in a “practice run” for their own World War II attempt at Genocide.

A conscience-stricken Turkish official, Naim Bey, in his own memoirs, also provides ample evidence of the official responsibility. Copies of official orders have been preserved which in their insensitive cruelty defy imagination:

Order No. 691. To the Government of Aleppo, Nov. 23, 1915:

“Destroy by secret means the Armenians of the Eastern Provinces who pass into your hands there.” s/ Minister of Interior, Talaat.

Order No. 830. Dec. 25, 1915:

“Collect and keep only those orphans who cannot remember the tortures to which their parents have been subjected. Send the rest away with the caravans.” s/ Minister of Interior, Talaat.

Order to the Government of Aleppo. Sept. 16, 1915:

“It was at first communicated to you that the Government, by order of the Jemiet (Committee of Union and Progress, L.S.) had decided to destroy completely all the Armenians living in Turkey. Those who oppose this order and decision cannot remain on the official staff of the Empire. An end must be put to their existence, however criminal the measures taken may be, and no regard must be paid to either age or sex nor conscientious scruples.” s/ Minister of Interior, Talaat.

THE TOLL

BY LATE 1916—IN ABOUT ONE YEAR—ONE MILLION ARMENIANS HAD PERISHED AND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS WERE REFUGEES—PLAGUED BY DISEASE AND STARVATION—IN THE CAU-

CASUS AND IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES. MORE WERE YET TO DIE . . . IN THE CAUCASUS, IN CILICIA, AND ELSEWHERE.

AFTERMATH: BETRAYAL

France's Premier Briand, on January 10, 1917, had named as an objective of the war "the liberation of the populations subjected to the bloody tyranny of the Turks." British Premier Lloyd George proclaimed on January 8, 1918, "We insist . . . that Armenia, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine have the right to separate national existence." The twelfth of President Wilson's famous "Fourteen Points" provided that "the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured undoubted security of life and absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development." And many other promises were made to Armenia.

Before the War was over, Armenia was to earn the title of "The Little Ally"—not because of the massacres, but because of what followed. The Russian Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent withdrawal of the Russian Army from the War, left the defense of the Caucasus and the oil-rich Baku oil fields wholly on the shoulders of the Armenian battalions there. Fighting against considerable odds, the Armenian troops—most of whom had lost relatives in the massacres—defeated the Turks in three major encounters and brought about the establishment, on May 28, 1918, of an independent Armenian Republic in the Caucasus, i.e. in formerly Russian Armenia.

Finally the War ended. Turkey surrendered on October 30, 1918, and Germany on November 11. With a free Armenian Republic in the Caucasus as their spokesman and a heavy backlog of promises from the victors, the Armenians looked forward to the return of their Turkish-held territories.

The strange and complex events that followed the War, however, were to prove disastrous to the Armenian question and are presented here in chronological order in an effort to introduce some clarity into the picture.

Jan. 30, 1919—The Paris Peace Conference "agreed that Armenia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, Palestine, and Arabia must be completely severed from the Turkish Empire . . ."

March, 1919—President Wilson's espousal of the Armenian Cause had put America in the position of a natural friend and protector. Thus, on March 3, the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia—which counted among its members such men as William Jennings Bryan, Ambassador James W. Gerard, Elihu Root, Henry Cabot Lodge, Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, Samuel Gompers, Alfred Smith, Bishops Manning and Rhinelander, Rabbi Wise, Cardinal Gibbons, and others—presented to the President petitions signed "by 25,000 Ministers, Rectors, and Priests," and by "100 Bishops, 45 Governors of the States of the Union, and 250 college and university Presidents," all calling for American leadership and assistance in

strengthening Armenian independence, insuring the return of the six Turkish Armenian provinces to Armenia, and securing adequate reparations for Armenian losses in the War. Since U.S. promises of military and other assistance to Armenia prompted (or provided an excuse for) British withdrawal from the region, France sought and received from the U.S. Government, on March 24, an assurance that "there can be no question as to the genuine interest of this government in the plans for Armenia." Meanwhile, a "storm" was brewing in Turkey's interior, where Mustapha Kemal's rebel Turkish army refused to put down its arms and return to allied-occupied Constantinople.

May 21, 1919—Britain proposed a U.S. mandate over Armenia and certain other Turkish-held areas.

Sept.-Oct. 1919—Senator Williams of Mississippi introduced a resolution on September 8, 1919, authorizing the President to send troops, arms, and munitions to Armenia. A senate sub-committee under Senator Harding "studied" the matter for a month, while Armenia fought for survival.

April, 1920—The San Remo Conference officially proposed (1) that the U.S. accept the Armenian mandate, (2) that, whatever the U.S. decision on the mandate, President Wilson define the boundaries of Armenia, and (3) that the President's arbitration of the Turko-Armenian boundaries be recognized in the Peace Treaty with Turkey.

Meanwhile, on April 23, Kemal Attaturk established his rebel "Provisional Government" in Ankara in defiance of the Western Powers, and, in Cilicia, Kemalists massacred more than 20,000 defenseless Armenians.

May 24, 1920—The Senate Sub-committee's report having been delayed eight months while its chairman campaigned for the Presidency, Democratic President Wilson finally appealed to the U.S. Senate to accept the mandate over Armenia, but, on June 1, partisan political squabbles and isolationist sentiment combined to bring about a negative vote in the Senate on the President's request.

August-Sept., 1920—Turkey signed the Treaty of Sevres on August 10, thereby recognizing Armenian independence and accepting President Wilson's boundary decision. The rebel Kemal, however, rejected the treaty signed by the government in Constantinople and joined with the Soviets in an attack on the infant Armenian Republic in the Caucasus.

November-Dec., 1920—On November 24, President Wilson officially conveyed his boundary report granting some 40,000 square miles of Turkish-held Armenia to the Armenian Republic. Just days later, however,—on December 2—with no outside help, Armenia succumbed and the Kemalist Turks and Communists divided the spoils.

March-April, 1921—Italy and France—plagued by other problems and attracted by promises of trade preference and the like—entered separate

agreements with Kemal's "Nationalist Government"; arms and munitions were traded for economic gains; British and American businessmen started working toward Near East oil and railroad concessions.

September 9, 1922—Smyrna was burned by Kemalists and thousands of Greeks and Armenians were killed, while Attaturk proclaimed the sight as "a sign . . . that Turkey is for the Turks."

April-July, 1923—French and Italian maneuvering, British vacillation, and American isolation combined to bring about "the great betrayal" at the Lausanne Peace Conference in which the defiant Kemalist rebels—representing a defeated nation—called the plays. On July 24, the Lausanne Treaty was signed between the "Great Powers" and "new" Turkey—with no mention of Armenia or Armenian rights! The destruction of Caucasian Armenia was a *fait accompli* and the Armenian delegation had been refused the right to be heard. The repeated promises formalized at Sevres and Armenia's just claims against Turkish-held territory, claims officially recognized by President Wilson's arbitration, were ignored. Armenia received only expressions of sympathy; and—let us not forget—her refugees, her scattered survivors, were fed and clothed by her "Christian brothers" in the West. Thus, a crust of bread palliated the conscience of the Powers, and the Armenian Question had been buried . . . for the time being.

For the record—and to America's credit—it must be noted that there was a wave of protest in America against the Lausanne Treaty. Led by Gerard, Gompers, and others who had been active with the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia, an influential Committee opposed to the Lausanne Treaty waged a three-year fight against American ratification. In 1924, the Democratic National Platform called for the fulfillment of President Wilson's territorial award to Armenia. Finally, public opinion prevailed and, on January 18, 1927, the Senate rejected the Lausanne Treaty. Although the Senate's action represented a refusal to be a legal partner in "The Great Betrayal", it had little practical significance for the Armenians, who had seen the Caucasian Armenian Republic destroyed, while the bulk of their historic territories, including the 40,000 square miles of "Wilsonian" Armenia, remained in Turkish hands. Legal minds may argue, however, that America's rejection of Lausanne means that America is still very much committed to the Wilsonian boundaries.

POSTSCRIPT

ARMENIA HAD BEEN BETRAYED—by the failure of the British, French, and Italians to act in concert against defeated Turkey, by the failure of America to accept the mandate, by the unholy union of the Kemalists and Soviets, by the fact that she had no oil to give to British and American

interests. Armenia was the innocent victim of Turkish racism and European power politics.

The Armenian Question might have been solved at several points . . . first, if the San Stefano guarantees had not been altered at Berlin, and later, if the Sevres Treaty had been enforced by a united Europe. Europe, however, lacked the needed unity of purpose, and the Armenian Question remained unsolved.

The Armenians didn't even have the satisfaction of a Nuremberg. No world court or allied tribunal tried the Young Turk leaders for their crimes against the Armenians. What justice was exacted was at the hands of the Armenians themselves. Talaat Pasha was shot down on a Berlin street in 1921 by a young Armenian, and, one by one, most of the others—Djemal, Behaddin Shekir, Djivanshireh, etc.—were tracked down and executed. Thus, young Armenians were forced to do what an indifferent world had failed to do—to punish mass-murderers responsible for a million deaths and for the uprooting of an entire nation from its ancestral homeland.

The post-W.W. II period has seen a guilty nation, Germany, not only have its criminals tried, but openly express its remorse by an extensive program of reparations not only to the people it had victimized but to a new state which they have created. Today, German children are taught the horrors of racism and Genocide; monuments have been erected to the victims; German officials participate in memorial programs; a nation is bearing its guilt honorably and doing all it humanly can to compensate for its crimes.

But in fifty years, only a few faint voices among the Turks have spoken out against the crimes of 1915. No modern Turkish political leader has ever done so. Instead, foreign inquiries are met with the long-refuted stories of "insurrection", "disloyalty", etc. Sometimes, the argument is that the Armenians were removed from areas of military activity "for their own protection" and that some "unavoidable excesses" were committed in the process, supposedly by Kurdish tribesmen alone. At other times, the story is that the Armenians turned on and massacred the Turks!!! The Turkish propagandists display vivid imaginations, but are sorely lacking in consistency.

As for monuments, mention has already been made of the Turks' senseless destruction of everything Armenian. Historic Armenian place-names have been replaced with Turkish names; guides try to pass off the magnificent ruins of the medieval Armenian capital of Ani, with its thousand churches, as "Turkish"; Turkish children learn little of the Armenians, except perhaps that they were "terrorists". Only in Istanbul, where the presence of so many Europeans discouraged wholesale massacres, does any Armenian cultural life survive. Even there, however, the 1956 government-inspired

"anti-Greek" riots saw many Armenians and Jews suffering along with the Greeks. Today, many Armenians have Turkified their names or taken on non-paying Turkish business "partners" to escape official and mob harassment. There seems to be little change in the Turk. His "Westernization" appears to be only a thin veneer, which has helped him receive billions in American aid since 1947. The waste and inefficiency in this regard is not relevant here. Neither is the fact that Turkish "democracy" is marked by speech and press control and suppression of political opposition; nor are the recent evidences of a Turko-Soviet rapprochement.

The point is simply this: that Armenia's just claims and rights to justice and dignity are still unanswered, and an unrepentent Turkey still holds Armenian territories. Talaat Pasha promised in 1915 that "after this, there will be no Armenian Question for fifty years". Perhaps he was right . . . the world seems to have almost forgotten.

BUT NOW—IN 1965—THE TURK'S FIFTY YEARS ARE UP! The Armenians have survived. The tattered refugees of yesterday brought to America and other hospitable lands their traditional love of education. Now the intellectual and creative accomplishments of a refugee nation have won respect throughout the world. The Armenians are back on their feet and are serving notice to the Turks that the time has come to right the wrongs. The Armenian himself is demanding justice. **HE WILL BE HEARD!**