

*Madame de France, Paris, 1873-1927*

# ARMENIA AND HER CLAIMS TO FREEDOM AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

## MEMORANDUM

OF

ARMENIA AND HER CLAIMS TO FREEDOM AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE PRESENTED TO THE DEMOCRATIC MID-EUROPE UNION BY DR. G. PASTERMADJIAN, SPECIAL ENVOY OF HIS HOLINESS, THE CATHOLICOS OF ALL ARMENIANS, AND BY MIRAN SEVASLY, CHAIRMAN OF THE ARMENIAN NATIONAL UNION OF AMERICA AND REPRESENTATIVE IN THE UNITED STATES OF THE ARMENIAN NATIONAL DELEGATION



PRESENTED BY MR. LODGE

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## PART I.

### TURKISH ARMENIA AND THE ARMENIANS IN TURKEY.

We firmly believe that by her participation in the present world war the United States will powerfully contribute toward cutting the Gordian knot which goes by the name of the eastern question, with the solution of which the fate of the Armenians is closely bound up.

More than a century ago, Volney, an eminent French thinker and philosopher, in an imperishable book, *Les Ruines*, heralded the approaching fall of the Ottoman Empire in these striking words: "The hour of destiny has arrived; the catastrophe is about to commence." He predicted the uprising of all the subject races of Turkey, including the Arabs, the Armenians and others, and his graphic description of the condition of the Turkish Empire, the excesses of the dominant Turk, the sufferings of the conquered races, and the grievances of the latter against their "masters" were as true in an aggravated form on the threshold of the present war as they were when the great philosopher penned it.

Still the Ottoman Empire survived a century and its emasculation has been gradual. This was chiefly due to the conflicting interests in the "great powers" of Europe in the East, to the political credo prevailing in the chancelleries of Europe that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was essential for the maintenance of the European equilibrium in the Near East, without which Turkey would have been outlawed long ago and the several historic, progressive races comprising it emancipated from the yoke of a dominant unspeakable military caste.

An empire that extended from the Caucasus to the Danube and from the Bosphorus to Carthage is reduced to a territory that comprises a strip of territory in Thrace, Asia Minor, Armenia, Syria, and Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Arabia. In turn, Greece, Roumania, Montenegro, Serbia, and Bulgaria were emancipated from Turkish domination. This gradual shrinkage should not be wondered at. The Turks conquered but never assimilated the progressive, historic, and civilized races of the Near East, whom they always designated by the villifying name of *Raia*. By the very tenets, moreover, of Turkey's state doctrine, the conquered races were considered "flocks" which have been sent by the Almighty to be fleeced, plundered, raped, and massacred whenever they protested against an unspeakable tyranny.

We desire to remark here that Islamism, as understood and applied by the Turks, is not only as an author qualified it "a brain disease," but it is also an essentially economic question. It is a sort of league made up of all the Turkish elements that are unprepared for the struggles of modern, strenuous life. They are all animated

by one identical belief, that they possess the unquestionable right to be idle and that they are entitled to make the Armenians and other conquered races work for them, since by their "divine" law these are subjects reduced to a state of a "flock" to be fleeced.

This idea is the keynote of the whole eastern question.

Ever since western Europe, through an aberration of a political mind, allowed in 1453 the Turks to supplant the cross by the crescent at Constantinople the struggle in the Near East has been continuous between progressive humanity on the one hand and obscurantism and medieval barbarity on the other. There never has been a Turkish Government in the true sense of the word, a government such as is conceived in western Europe or in the United States. "Massacre and plunder" has been the invariable Turkish method of suppressing complaints of the subject races or for despoiling them for the benefit of the dominating race. The massacre of Chios in 1821, of Lebanon in 1862, of Batak in 1876, and the appalling ruthless massacres of Armenians of the Empire, extending from 1894 to 1896 and in 1909 and culminating in the deportations and extermination of the same race in 1915 and thereafter, establish the veracity of this statement.

The expulsion of the Turks from Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Roumania, and from the Balkan Peninsula did not solve the near eastern question in toto. There remain Arabia, Armenia, Egypt, and Palestine unredeemed.

The alliance between Prussian militarism and Turkish obscurantism appears to keen observers a natural one. It is founded on a community of interest. Sultan Abdul Hamid inaugurated the understanding with the Kaiser so as to suppress more efficaciously all the non-Turkish elements of the Empire and to counteract the reforming spirit in the internal affairs of Turkey, with which the western powers were animated for the purpose of upholding the "integrity" dogma by strengthening the remaining conquered historic races within the Empire.

This has been the dominant policy of the great powers since the Crimean power—a patchwork that crumbled as time proceeded, while it could not and did not modify Turkish mentality in the least.

The charter of Gulhane and of the Hatti Humayoun, issued through the "spontaneous good will" of the Sultan, and which claimed to place Christian and Turk on the same level and to secure to the former the elementary right that every citizen is entitled to possess—security of life, property, and honor—have remained a dead letter. Every bill of right conferred by the different Sultans during the nineteenth century on his Christian subjects has been preceded or followed by a recrudescence of persecution or massacres fomented and organized by the authorities. These were intended to be "manifestations" for the information of the European public against the recognition of civic rights to the subject races.

We need not rehearse here the whole sickening story of the unredeemed pledges of reform, which is admirably exposed in the work of Mr. Edward Engelhard, *La Turquie et le Tanzimat*, where the French diplomatist and erudite conclusively establishes that "reforms" in Turkey were an exotic plant "adopted" by the Turkish statesmen so as to throw dust in the eyes of Europe, which was clamoring for them, and for the purpose of warding off an impending danger in the way of a European intervention.

The promulgation of the Turkish constitution of 1876—revived in 1908—has also been attributed to the same inherent causes, to the application of the same policy of prevarication, fraud, and make-beliefs as the events of the last 30 years have amply demonstrated. We need only recall that the Adana massacres of 1909, a year after the promulgation of the so-called Turkish constitution, were carried out by the soldiery under the command of Turkish officers, some of whom had obtained their military training in Germany.

While the Turkish rulers were, on the one hand, hoodwinking Europe with formal promises of reforms and with declarations conveying assurances regarding the betterment of the condition of the Christian populations of the Ottoman Empire, they were, on the other hand, systematically carrying on a policy of extermination of the non-Turkish elements. This has been especially so since the Paris treaty of 1856, which recognized the "integrity of the Ottoman Empire" as an essential article of international faith. When in 1862 the governor of Erzerum, Khaireddin Pasha, a Tunisian in the service of Turkey, reported to the Sublime Porte that the Armenians of Van, and Erzerum were emigrating in great numbers to escape the excesses of the Turkish officials, the depredations and acts of plunder committed by the Kurds and other predatory tribes, the grand vezir, Aali Pasha, the "great reformer," wrote back to instruct the governor "not to interfere in state affairs, that the Armenians can abandon their country and emigrate, as they will easily be supplanted by Mohammedan population from without."

To the policy of the extermination of non-Turks, Turkish statesmanship adhered to ever since with pertinacity until the war, when it considered this a favorable opportunity of giving it the finishing touch. We need only recall the awful story of the Armenian general massacres and deportations, the details of which are faithfully recorded in the archives of the State Department.

✕But we desire to throw a retrospective glance. In 1876, at the time of the Turco-Russian War, the grievances of the Armenians in Turkey may be summarized as follows:

1. The practical absence of political and civil equality.
2. The discrimination against non-Moslem evidence in the Turkish courts of justice.
3. The systematic pillage and destruction of Armenian villages, the sacking of Armenian public edifices, the perpetration of all kinds of crimes and oppressive acts by the police, by officials, and by nomadic tribes aided and abetted in this by the authorities.
4. The venality of justice.
5. The systematic efforts to crush and ruin the peasant classes (1) by heavy taxes, (2) by expropriations, (3) by forcing them to abandon their holdings.
6. By forced conversion to Islam.
7. The systematic kidnapping of Armenian maidens and their incorporation in Turkish harems.

These were the elements that constituted the Armenian question. They are minutely set forth in numerous documents, in the reports of British consuls from 1840 to 1881, in the French Yellow Books, in the statement of travelers, and reliable and unbiased witnesses, and form an arsenal of facts and documents scientifically compiled in 1890 by Mr. Robin Jacquemys in his *L'Arménie, les Arméniens*

et le Traites, published in the Review of International Law of Bruxelles.

The Armenians hoped and waited and waited and hoped for the redress of their grievances by constant appeals to their "masters." The Turkish rulers instead of alleviating these bitter complaints, aggravated them and in truth none had been removed up to 1914, constitutions, bills of rights, and declarations to the contrary, notwithstanding.

The enmity of the Turk to commerce and civilization is easily demonstrated. Armenia by her industry, resources, and genius once supported a population of over 20,000,000, yet since it was brought under Turkish rule its natural resources remained undeveloped, pasture and arable lands were abandoned and falling out of cultivation, rivers choked up, roads broken, so that the country was fast becoming a dreary waste. To a similar pitiful condition were reduced the Balkan States. But since the Tartar foot departed from these countries even the most enthusiastic supporters of Turkey have been compelled to confess their admiration in many ways for these gallant little States.

Despairing of obtaining redress from their masters, the Armenians took occasion on the approach of the Russian Army to Constantinople in 1876 to appeal to Imperial Russia.

The treaty of San Stefano, in its article 16, makes special reference to the Armenians, and the treaty of Berlin, which substituted it, places the protection of the life, property, and honor of the Armenians under the collective control and guaranty of Europe.

The Anglo-Turkish convention of 1878, by which the administration of Cyprus was transferred to Great Britain, established a sort of British protectorate over Asia Minor, and while it resulted in the withdrawal of the Russians from Erzerum, it did not in any way benefit the Armenians. England ceased to send military consuls to Asia Minor in 1882 and the country was again exposed to the tender mercies of a hostile government. In a sense, the Berlin treaties and the Cyprus convention have done more harm than good. They raised hopes in the minds of the Armenians which were not realized, and the Turkish statesmen used every effort and strained every nerve to stamp these hopes out, either by exiling as many Armenians as they could from the soil of their ancestors or by fostering and encouraging Kurdish depredations, Circassian inroads, or by harassing religion and the schools.

The nomenclature of these outrages and misdeeds in Armenia are too long to be recited here, but the intolerable griefs and sufferings had culminated to such a point that the Armenians felt bound to appeal again to Europe by periodicals and publications in English and French or by sending deputations to Governments of the great powers, who had assumed the obligation of protecting this historic race. The Armenians were clearly realizing that unless drastic measures were taken by the concert of Europe they were doomed to extermination in the Ottoman Empire. Legitimate meetings, organized by the Armenians within the empire and without, were taken advantage of by Abdul Hamid to organize the general massacres of 1894 to 1896, the details of which are amply recorded in the official Blue Books and Yellow Books. After the massacres there was some hope of the introduction of positive reforms in the Armenian Prov-

inces, but one of the greatest stumbling blocks for the realization of a reform program was the Government of Germany, who in return for a concession of a railway to Bagdad and other benefits, practically acquiesced in the policy of setting at naught the reforms intended to benefit not only the Armenian, but all the other inhabitants. The attempt made by England under Lord Salisbury to coerce the Turkish Government was also frustrated by the Government of the Czar. The diplomatic history of the last 30 years in connection with the solution of the Armenian question amply reveals that the Porte adroitly took advantage of the want of harmonious cooperation among the powers to play havoc with the Armenian population of Turkey for the purpose of creating a Turkey for the Turks exclusively. We need not refer in any detail to the so-called constitution of 1908, which was a snare and make-belief and which resulted in the Adana massacres, to which reference is given above, and to the deportations of a large section of the Armenian people during the year 1915 and thereafter, with the appalling and tragic results which have stirred the conscience of the civilized world.

## PART II.

### THE SITUATION OF THE ARMENIANS, INCLUDING TRANSCAUCASIA AND TURKEY, PRIOR TO THE PRESENT WORLD WAR.

When the present international war commenced, the number of Armenians living in the three Empires among which the country of Armenia is divided, viz, Russia, Turkey, and Persia, amounted to 4,276,000. Out of this number 3,406,000 inhabited on the soil of the historic land of Armenia, while the remaining 870,000 were scattered in different parts of the three Empires aforementioned. This circumstance demonstrates per se how the Armenian has tenaciously stuck to the land of his ancestors, notwithstanding the indisputable historic fact that no other nation on earth has undergone such vicissitudes and has shed so much of its precious blood for its national existence, ever since the fourth century *anno Domini* to the present day, during which long period it has become the standard bearer in the Near East—on the confines of Asia and Europe—of the ideas of civilization, liberty, and Christendom. Whereas other neighbors of the Armenians, who were exposed to the same fate, like the Jews and the Assyrians, do not present to-day the same conditions. The number of Israelites at present is more than 10,000,000 throughout the universe, but hardly 100,000 of these are on the soil of their historic fatherland; while the number of Assyrians, who in the distant past was computed by historians at about 30,000,000 souls, is at present reduced to hardly half a million survivors within the limits of the Ottoman Empire. But this number again has abandoned the land of its sires to find refuge in the mountains of Armenia and in the neighborly friendliness of the Armenians.

Let us now briefly set forth in what proportions the Armenians are located in the three Empires above referred to. The statistical information regarding the Armenians in Russian Armenia has been obtained from the official Russian census returns published in January of 1915, whereas what concerns the number of Armenians in Turkish Armenia are derived from the official archives of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople prepared in 1912. The num-

ber of Armenians in Turkey in the year 1914 may be summed up as follows:

A. Within the limits of the country known as Turkish Armenia, the numbers are given against each of the Provinces that constitute the Armenian Provinces, to wit:

1. Vilayet of Erzerum.....	215,000
2. Vilayet of Van.....	185,000
3. Vilayet of Bitlis.....	180,000
4. Vilayet of Harpoot.....	168,000
5. Vilayet of Diarbekir.....	165,000
6. Vilayet of Sivas.....	165,000
7. Vilayet of Adana and Marash country, known as Cilicia.....	407,000
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>1,425,000</b>
Armenians inhabiting Constantinople, Smyrna, Thrace, and other parts of Turkish Empire.....	678,000
<b>Grand total.....</b>	<b>2,103,000</b>

B. Armenians in Russia in 1914:

1. Within the limits of Transcaucasia Province of Erivan.....	750,000
2. Elizabetopol.....	450,000
3. Tiflis.....	400,000
4. Kars.....	130,000
5. Baku.....	128,000
	<b>1,858,000</b>
Northern part of the Caucasus and throughout Russia.....	150,000
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>2,008,000</b>

C. Armenians in Persia:

1. In the Province of Aderbeijan.....	120,000
2. In other parts of Persia.....	45,000
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>165,000</b>

From the above statistical returns it will be seen that no less than 3,403,000 Armenians were living on the soil of their fatherland on both sides of the Turco-Russian frontiers at the time when the present world war broke out. And by reason of her geographical position, Armenia became again the battle field of warring nations, and the Armenian people, faithful to their historic traditions and to their progressive past, at the very risk of their national existence, threw their lot on the side of the cause of justice and of civilization. The blood of the sons of Armenia was shed in torrents, in a way not commensurate with their numbers. Doubtless the historian of the future will record the indisputable fact that in this gigantic struggle among the warring nations, the smallest but the oldest of races, the Armenian, has proportionately offered greater sacrifices in blood on the altar of human liberty.

Before dilating upon the present claims of the Armenians, for the realization of which they have undergone such heavy sacrifices, may we be permitted to picture the conditions of the Armenian at the outlook of this war in the three empires between which Armenia is partitioned.

We will deal with each section separately.

*Persian Armenia*, which forms a part of the Persian Province of Aderbeijan, has been under Persian domination since the fifth century anno domini, although at different periods subsequent, it was

united with the Armenian Kingdom of Van under the Arzrouni dynasty. The Armenians in Persian Armenia are the survivors of a much larger section of the race whose number has been depleted by reason of the successive conquests and raids of migratory tribes like the Tartars, Mongols, and Turks, that over ran that part of the country in their successive onward marches toward the heart of Asia Minor. Notwithstanding the smallness of their number, the Armenians in Persia play a vital part in various walks of life. They have held important public offices; they have given statesmen, ambassadors, and military leaders to Persia; and the mercantile activity of that country with many quarters of the globe is in their hands. We may mention the names of the late Malcolm Han, ambassador to the Court of St. James; Nariman Han, ambassador to Vienna; Ohannes Han Masseghian, ambassador to Berlin, and others, who each and all were Armenians in the service of Persia. We think it is not out of place to recall the part played by Armenians in the reform and constitutional movement, one of whose principal leaders was an Armenian, Eprem Han and his associates, who were instrumental in introducing in the body politic of that Asiatic land the western ideas of progress and democracy and did not disdain to sacrifice their very lives for their realization.

In the fifth century, when the Persians were at the height of their power, they made attempts to impose on the Armenians by sheer violence their religious beliefs and compel them to forsake their national ideals. The struggle lasted about a century; and finding after protracted wars that it is impossible to make Armenians relinquish the tenets of their Christian faith and nationality, they altered their attitude and adopted a more tolerant policy toward them. For centuries ever since the Persians and Armenians have lived together as peaceful neighbors without the sanguinary conflicts which have characterized the Turco-Armenian relations since the Turkish conquest of part of Armenia. Although the Persians have mostly embraced Mohammedanism, but descending from an Aryan stock like the Armenians and being possessed of ancient culture and civilization, they have not displayed toward the Armenians the savagery and brutal conduct with which the Touranian races, to which the Turks belong, have familiarized the civilized world ever since they supplanted the cross by the crescent in the Near East.

Notwithstanding these somewhat bearable conditions prevailing in Persian Armenia—so contiguous to the Armenian Province of Van—the Armenians of Salmas, Khoi, and Makou, the principal Armenian-Persian centers in Aderbaijan, all aspire to see that part of their country one day united and form an inseparable part of a Magna Armenia.

*Russian Armenia.*—The part of historic Armenia which is under Russian sway is included in the Transcaucasian Provinces of Russia. It was conquered by the Russians in the early part of the nineteenth century and wrested from Persia. Before the Russian conquest Transcaucasia was divided between a number of Khanates and Melikates (small self-governing principalities). The Khans were Tartars by origin and ruled mostly over Tartars, while the Meliks were Armenian feudal lords, and their domination extended over the Armenian districts of Carabagh. All these different principalities were tributary to the Persian Government. Neighboring these de-



pendencies to the northwest there existed a Georgian Kingdom, including the present Provinces of Tiflis and Kubias. Georgia, being squeezed in between two powerful Moslem countries like Persia and Turkey, and subject to permanent attacks from these quarters, appealed, toward the end of the eighteenth century, to the Empress Catherine for protection and help. At this juncture, in the year 1787, the Armenian Meliks of Carabagh took occasion to send a delegation to the Russian court praying for Russian assistance against Tartar neighbors, who were in constant conflict with them. The Russian Government promised immediate help to both Armenians and Georgians, and, moreover, undertook, in so far as the Armenians were concerned, to free them from Persian domination and to organize a new Armenian State made up of the Armenian Provinces under the suzerainty of Russia.

Encouraged by these promises, both Armenians and Georgians placed all their military forces at the disposal of Russia and powerfully contributed to bring about the conquest of Transcaucasia from Persia. But, unfortunately, the solemn promises of the Empress Catherine were not fulfilled and the conquered territory was brought under Russian sway. It was through the enforcement of this method that Georgia and part of historic Armenia, including Echnadzin, the seat of the supreme head of the Armenia church and nation, were annexed by Russia.

The policy of Russia ever since these conquests appears to have had a single purpose, viz. to Russianize and assimilate the Armenians and Georgians. The Georgians, being members of the Eastern Greek Church, and hence of the same religious denomination as the Russian, were more easily amenable to Russification than were the Armenians, who, having a national separate church of their own, were more jealous of their national traditions. This circumstance provoked the enmity of the Russian Government toward them. The policy of Russification was strengthened more and more, and in 1903 the Armenian schools were closed and all national Armenian property confiscated by an imperial ukase issued by the now deposed Emperor Nicholas II. The Armenians did not, however, willingly submit to these arbitrary acts and opposed violence to violence, and in certain sections of the Transcaucasus several Armenians were killed by Russian soldiers. The illustrious Khrimian, the Catholicos of all Armenians and the idol of the nation, scorning exile to Siberia at the age of 80, in an historic document addressed to the Omnipotent Czar of All Russia, declared that he, as the custodian of the centuries-old heritage of the Armenian Nation, refused to abide by such an unjust decree. As a result, the prisons in the Transcaucasus were filled with hundreds of Armenians, and many others belonging to the intellectual classes were exiled to Siberia. But the Russian administration did not rest here. It went further. It incited the Tartars of the Transcaucasus against the Armenians. It distributed firearms among the Tartars of Bakou and Elizabethpol and gave them carte blanche to plunder and kill their Armenian neighbors, and organized pogroms as it did with Russian Jews.

In February, 1905, the Tartars of Baku and elsewhere began their unprovoked onslaught on the Armenians under the very eyes of the Russian police, who remained passive observers of these sanguinary scenes. These attacks were extended suddenly to other centers like

Elizabethpol, Shoushi, Eriven, and Nakhichean, and took the Armenians by surprise. The Armenians were aware that the reactionary policy of Russia, which had prevailed since the advent to the throne of Emperor Alexander III, was anti-Armenian in its essence. They also knew that after the general massacres of the Armenians in Turkey in 1895 and 1896, Count Lebanoff, the Russian foreign minister, declared Russia was eager to have Turkish Armenia, but without the Armenians, whom he did not care to save. All these circumstances notwithstanding, the Armenians in Russia could never imagine that a Christian power like Russia would countenance and authorize the Mohammedan element in the Transcaucasus to assume a hostile attitude toward them. But the facts were staring the Armenians in the face. There was no time to lose. They at once organized themselves for self-defense and Transcaucasia became the theater of a civil war between these two elements which lasted a whole year under the very eyes of the Russian authorities, who only interfered when they realized that the Tartars were being worsted by the Armenians. The Armenians lost 1,556, while the loss of the Tartars during these frays amounted to 5,685 men, and this disproportion of the fallen is due to the admirable organization of the Armenians, who, notwithstanding their being somewhat numerically inferior to their assailants, were able on the spur of the moment to organize their forces for self-defense. But the material injuries inflicted on the Armenians were much greater than those borne by the Tartars.

It would, however, be fair to state here that, notwithstanding the Russian bureaucratic methods of government and all its deficiencies and its hostile policy toward the Armenians, the latter nevertheless enforced in the Transcaucasus certain elementary rights of existence of which they have ever been deprived in Turkey—which enabled them to develop their moral and material resources, to increase in numbers, and to become the most forward element of the Transcaucasus in all the branches of human activity. In proof of this we desire to recall that in 1836 the number of Armenians under Russian domination amounted to about 300,000 as against 500,000 Georgians and 700,000 Tartars. In 1915, according to official statistics, the number of Armenians swelled to 1,858,000, that of the Georgians to 1,450,000, and of the Tartars to 2,040,000. The large increase of Armenians may be also explained by the influx of Armenian refugees from Turkey; but the real cause of this increase is due principally to the fact that the Armenians are a prolific race, with strong family virtues. The official Russian statistics demonstrate that the rate of increase per year of these different races is as follows:

	Per cent.
Armenians .....	2.5
Georgians .....	1.5
Tartars .....	.9

We can not close this chapter without alluding to the intellectual and cultural progress of the Armenians under Russia. (There in the Transcaucasus throve in a marked degree Armenian literature which produced a galaxy of writers, poets, novelists, historians, whose writings are to some degree permeated with the ideas of the most liberal Russian leaders of thought.) These ideas in return brought to bear the weight of their influence on the minds of their Armenian

compatriots across the border into Turkish Armenia, toward whose struggles for emancipation from the Turkish yoke the Armenians of Russia greatly contributed.

When the present war broke out the Armenians of Russia forgot for a moment all the just complaints against Russian bureaucracy and, without hesitation or equivocation, espoused the cause of the allies, including Russia, with the firm conviction that the victory of the allies would end their sufferings and would recognize their inalienable rights to self-government. Besides contributing 160,000 men to the Russian Army, they organized several volunteer corps, whose deeds of valor on the battlefield were officially recognized by M. Sazanoff, the foreign minister, in his address to the Duma.

Without the contribution of the Armenian contingents to the Russian Army in the Caucasus the Turkish offensive against the Transcaucasus in 1914 and 1915 would have been crowned with success, more especially having regard to the fact that the sympathies of the Tartar and Georgian population of the Transcaucasus were manifestly pro-Teutonic and pro-Turk. The success of such an offensive in the years 1914 and 1915 would have enabled the Turkish armies to secure a footing at Baku, and all its oil wells and Persian Afghanistan—the gates to India—would have been placed at the mercy of the Germanic-Turkish forces. This active participation of the Russian Armenians at this crucial phase of the world war was publicly recognized by the Young Turk leaders, who invoked this circumstance to justify the Turkish savageries perpetrated against the Armenians of Turkey.

Let it be said, moreover, that after the disruption of Russia, through the triumph of bolshevism and the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the Caucasian front in January, 1918, it was the Armenian contingents solely that held the line against the Turkish onslaughts and thereby helped the Mesopotamian wing of the British Army by preventing the Turkish troops on the Caucasian front from joining the Turkish armies operating against the British. The Armenians held the line until September, 1918, and it was after hard-fought battles that the Turks were able to reach Baku, the British expeditionary forces sent to join hands with them not arriving in due time, and those that did arrive were insufficient in numbers.

These services have been officially acknowledged in official dispatches by the British Government, and we take occasion to reproduce the following extract from a letter, dated the 3d of October, 1918, signed by the undersecretary of state, Robert Cecil, and addressed to Lord James Bryce:

The Baku Armenians were not only an isolated remnant, but no doubt their task was made impossible from the outset by the disorganization which prevailed and had thrown open to the Turks the Transcaucasian Railway leading to the gates of the city. Whatever may have happened at Baku, the responsibility can not be laid at the door of the Armenian people.

The national delegation, commissioned by his holiness the Catholicos in 1913 to obtain from the civilized world that justice to Armenia which has been delayed with such terrible consequences, have given many proofs, under the distinguished presidency of his excellency Beghos Nubar Pasha, of their devotion to the cause of the allies as being the cause of all peoples striving to free the world from oppression.

The council at Erivan threw itself into the breach which the Russian breakdown left open in Asla, and after organizing resistance to the Turks in the

Caucasus from February to June this year was at length compelled by main force to suspend hostilities. Great Britain and her allies understand the cruel necessity which has forced the Armenians to take this step and look forward to the time, perhaps not far distant, when allied victories may reverse their undeserved misfortunes.

Meanwhile, the services of the Armenians to the common cause, to which you refer in your letter, have assuredly not been forgotten; and I venture to mention four points which the Armenians may, I think, regard as the charter of their right to liberation at the hand of the allies:

(1) In the autumn of 1914 the Turks sent emissaries to the national congress of the Ottoman Armenians, then sitting at Erzerum, and made them offers of autonomy if they would actively assist Turkey in the war. The Armenians replied that they would do their duty individually as Ottoman subjects, but that as a nation they could not work for the cause of Turkey and her allies.

(2) On account, in part, of this courageous refusal the Ottoman Armenians were systematically murdered by the Turkish Government in 1915. Two-thirds of the population were exterminated by the most cold-blooded and fiendish methods—more than 700,000 people—men, women, and children alike.

(3) From the beginning of the war that half of the Armenian Nation which was under the sovereignty of Russia organized volunteer forces and, under their heroic leader, Andranik, bore the brunt of some of the heaviest fighting in the Caucasian campaigns.

(4) After the breakdown of the Russian Army at the end of last year these Armenian forces took over the Caucasian front and for five months delayed the advance of the Turks, thus rendering an important service to the British Army in Mesopotamia. These operations in the region of Alexandropol and Erivan were, of course, unconnected with those at Baku.

I may add that Armenian soldiers are still fighting in the ranks of the allied forces in Syria. They are to be found serving alike in the British, French, and American armies, and they have borne their part in Gen. Allenby's great victory in Palestine.

From the above-mentioned uncontrovertible facts it is conclusively established that the Armenians from the beginning of the war, and notwithstanding the justifiable mistrust which they have maintained toward the aims of Russian imperialism, have stood by and been loyal to the allied cause in the Near East, and they rendered not only appreciable military service but also jeopardized their very existence in Turkey, where more than a million of Armenians, men, women, and children, were ruthlessly massacred and exterminated by reason of their proally attitude.

### PART III.

#### WHAT ARE THE CLAIMS OF THE ARMENIANS?

Having regard to the historic past of the Armenians, and to the fact that even at present they constitute the most civilized and progressive and producing elements in the environments in which they live, they expect their final deliverance as the result of the present war.

As before stated, half of the Armenian population inhabited within the limits of Russian Transcaucasia, while the other half, numbering about 2,100,000, were in Turkey. Faithful to its past methods, the Turkish Government, taking advantage of the opportunities presented by the present war, attempted to solve the Armenian question by exterminating that part of the Armenian population which was in a majority within the frontiers of its historic fatherland.

It is estimated that the number of Armenians slaughtered in 1915 by the agents of the Turkish Government amounted to from 600,000 to 1,000,000. Let us suppose for a moment that not a single Armenian out of the 2,100,000 has escaped the hands of the Turkish executioner.

We claim that however reduced the number of Armenians may be to-day their homelands of 1914 should belong to the survivors.

According to laws of all civilized people, including the Sheri law, no murderer can inherit the property of the victim of his crime. That inheritance or estate must pass not to the murderer but to the next of kin of the victim.

We leave to the future to determine the exact number of Armenian victims as the result of the massacres and so-called deportations of 1915. We are not, however, far from the truth in asserting that at least 1,000,000 Armenians have been saved out of the 2,100,000 Armenians who inhabited Turkish Armenia in 1914. This million of survivors includes the 300,000 Armenians who have sought refuge in the Transcaucasus, as also about 200,000 Armenians who have migrated to America, Egypt, and Europe.

To this million must be added the 2,000,000 Armenians of the Transcaucasus. These 3,000,000 Armenians are those who can lay claim to the heritage of which the present Turkish Government has attempted to deprive them by methods known to all.

The Armenian people venture to hope that this appalling crime is going to be the last act in the sanguinary history of the Ottoman Empire, which has for the last five centuries exposed to ruin and desolation and massacre the cradles of civilization and religion. It is impossible to conceive that the present civilized world will permit a race with such a criminal record and government to continue unrestrained and unpunished to exterminate peoples superior to it in culture and usefulness, such as the Armenians, the Greeks, the Arabs, and the Jews.

The complete liquidation of the Ottoman Empire should be involved, and it will be incumbent on the Arcopagus of nations to handle the same at the coming peace congress, together with the solution of the Armenian question. The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire should have been brought about a century ago, soon after the Greek war of independence, and mankind would thereby have been spared much innocent blood. We are convinced that the participation of the United States in the present war will be instrumental in bringing about a solution of the near eastern and Armenian questions, not by the methods of an antiquated European diplomacy, but in a spirit of fair play to satisfy the just claims of the various long-suffering people of the Near East concerned.

Before dealing with the Armenian question let us be permitted to submit the *modus procedendi*, which in our opinion must be followed in order to insure a radical and equitable solution of the entire near eastern problem.

The allies have on many occasions proclaimed the right of nations to self-determination. On the basis of this fundamental principle, the peoples and races inhabiting the Ottoman Empire are entitled to receive from that morally and materially bankrupt State a territory as their share proportionate to the numbers which each of them had prior to 1914, and not according to the respective number of their present depleted populations, for the simple reason that human conscience can not in any way sanction the murders and forced deportations premeditated and carried into effect by the Turkish Government for the purpose of "reducing" the number of the non-Turkish population of the Empire. It follows that if 500,000 Armenians

have survived out of a population of 2,100,000 the former are fully entitled to such territory as should be allotted to the 2,100,000 Armenians who were in existence in 1914. Otherwise we would be putting a premium on crime.

Let us now consider which are, in their respective numbers, the populations composing the Turkish Empire, and in what way or manner can satisfaction be given to its different elements on historical and ethnological grounds.

After the Balkan War the Turkish Government held sway over a territory covering an area of about 1,800,000 square kilometers in round figures. This area does not include the deserts of Mesopotamia and Arabia, but only the inhabited territories which constituted the Ottoman Empire "Vilayets" (Provinces).

In this immense territory of 1,800,000 square kilometers, which covers an area about four times the size of France, was a population of between eighteen and twenty millions. Armenia, alone, in the past, as history tells us, had a prosperous population of 26,000,000, whereas Mesopotamia, now with hardly 806,000 inhabitants, had in the distant past 28,000,000 souls. These 18,000,000 of inhabitants were made up approximately as follows:

Arabs (including Syrians).....	5,900,000
Armenians.....	2,100,000
Greeks.....	1,800,000
Other Christian races.....	1,200,000
Kurds.....	700,000
Kizilbaches.....	500,000
Jews.....	400,000
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Non-Turkish races.....	12,600,000
Turks.....	5,400,000
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Total.....	18,000,000

These 5,400,000 Turks comprise Circassian and Mahommedan tribes who have migrated from the Caucasus into Asia Minor, and whose number is about 300,000, as also some other minor races whose origin is not Turkish and whose religion is not Mohammedan but whose vernacular is Turkish, like the Tahtadji tribes in the Cilician regions.

The inference to be drawn from these figures is that the Turks, who are the dominant race in the Empire, constitute one-third of the entire population, a minority who prey on a majority. There was a time when the Turkish race, or rather the military caste that goes under this name, did not represent even the one-twentieth, nay, the one-hundredth of the entire population of the Empire. This was five centuries prior, when the limits of the Empire extended from the Persian Gulf to Algeria and from the outskirts of Vienna to Egypt in the south.

In this phase of Turkish history the "subject" races were comparatively much less exposed to exploitation by having to "feed" their then masters than they are now when it is computed that every two non-Turks—subjects of the Empire—have to feed and maintain one parasite Turk. This is one of the secrets of the decay of the Ottoman Empire.

Let us now consider how the national claims of Armenia should be adjusted and the national aspirations realized. Armenian territory in Turkey includes the six Armenian vilayets and the Province of

Cilicia, in accordance with the solemn declaration contained in diplomatic documents of the six great powers of Europe:

The areas covered by these administrative divisions are as follows:

	Square kilometers.
Vilayet of Erzerum .....	49,700
Vilayet of Bitlis .....	27,100
Vilayet of Van .....	39,300
Vilayet of Harpoot .....	32,900
Vilayet of Diarbekir .....	37,500
Vilayet of Sivas .....	62,100
Vilayet of Adana .....	39,000
District of Marash .....	20,000
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>308,500</b>

The Turkish Government, so far back as 1878, anticipating the "Armenian danger," arbitrarily modified the limits of the Armenian Provinces, with a view to swelling the numbers of Moslems and making it appear that the Turks are in a majority. Thus the frontiers of Sivas and Diarbekir and Adana were enlarged so as to include regions not inhabited by Armenians. If we are to sever from the above three vilayets those portions which have been artificially added to the original provincial delimitations, we obtain a total approximate area of 220,000 square kilometers, wherein the Armenian element was in the majority in the year of 1914.

The following is the return of the populations inhabiting Armenia, presented by the Armenian Patriarchate in 1912 to ambassadors of the great powers at Constantinople when the question of Armenian reforms was again on the tapis in 1912:

Armenians .....	1,425,000
Assyrians .....	128,000
Kizilbashes .....	220,000
Yezidis .....	37,000
Mahommedan Kurds .....	424,000
Turks .....	871,000
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>3,100,000</b>

The Armenians represented 46 per cent, the Turks 28 per cent, the Kurds 13.7 per cent, of the population of the said Provinces, while the remaining percentage of 12.3 per cent was made up of non-Turkish or non-Mahommedan elements. It was with a view to modifying this proportion of numbers that the Ottoman Government for the last 40 years has had recourse to periodical massacres culminating in the 1915 tragic events. By disposing of the Armenians, Turkish statesmen considered they were getting rid of the Armenian question once for all.

To sum up, the Armenians are fully entitled, according to their numbers, on historical, geographical, and ethnological grounds, to a territory covering an area of 280,000 square kilometers, extending from the Gulf of Alexandretta (known as Sea of Armenia in medieval times) to the Russo-Persian frontier. We shall deal separately with the natural boundaries of the territory in question. We now propose to deal with the Turkish race.

Excluding Syria, Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, Armenia, and Arabia, the remaining vilayets of Turkey and central and western Asia Minor are the following:

	Square kilometer.
European Turkey.....	26, 100
District of Ismidt.....	8, 100
District of Bigha.....	6, 000
Vilayet of Brussa.....	65, 800
Vilayet of Smyrna.....	55, 800
Vilayet of Konia.....	102, 100
Vilayet of Angora.....	70, 900
Vilayet of Kastamouni.....	50, 700
Vilayet of Trebizonde.....	32, 400
Total.....	418, 000

Add to these numbers 50,000 square kilometers for the non-Armenian regions comprised in the vilayets of Sivas and Adana and we get a total of 468,000 square kilometers of territory left for the future Turkish State; but whereas out of the above territory a slice of land of the Black Sea should be made part of future Armenia in order that she may have an outlet to the sea, and after disposing of the Greek claims in Ionia, there still remain about 400,000 square kilometers in Anatolia for the future Turkish State, which will contain what remains of the Turkish element, aggregating to something like 4,000,000 people.

This solution of the eastern question would not be, we admit, palatable to the present rulers of Turkey, but the plain Turkish people would welcome it. It insures their future interests in an appreciable manner and is preferable to the uncertainty of their present condition. It has other advantages. A Turkish State without "subject" races may be an incentive to the Turks to radically modify their modes of living, to cease becoming parasites, and thus earn their daily bread with the sweat of their brows. They may thereby gradually enter the family of civilized nations.

But it is opportune to recall that by reason of the destruction of Russia and Russian imperialism, and having regard to the newly accepted doctrine of self-determination for nations, it is but fair and just that a one and indivisible Armenia, including Russian, Persian, and Turkish Armenia, should be constituted as one independent State. In part of this memorandum we mentioned that there are 1,856,000 Armenians in the Transcaucasus bordering Turkish Armenia. It would be natural to unite the fractions torn asunder of the Armenian Nation so as to constitute a Magna Armenia made up of Russian, Persian, and Turkish Armenia. The Transcaucasian Provinces, where the Armenians are in a majority, are the following:

	Square kilometers.	Population.
1. Province of Erivan.....	27, 777	750, 000
2. Province of Kars.....	18, 749	130, 000
3. Mountainous district of Elizabetopol.....	22, 000	450, 000
Total.....	68, 526	1, 330, 000

Interspersed among this Armenian population there are 545,000 Mahomedans, Tartars, and Turks, while there are about 526,000 Armenians scattered in the Georgian and the Tartar Provinces of Transcaucasia. This proximity offers great facilities to these different elements to settle on the respective territories to be allotted to them by the peace congress as a result of this world war.



To summarize, the future Armenian State may therefore include:

	Square Kilometers.
Turkish Armenia.....	220, 000
Russian Armenia.....	68, 526
Persian Armenia.....	15, 000
Total.....	303, 526

In our opinion, the aforementioned should be the boundaries and extent of the future Armenian State. The State thus created should be able to develop economically in a normal fashion and without hindrance, and it will, moreover, be in a position to fulfill its political and civilizing mission and become the corner stone of a lasting peace in the Near East, with a population of 3,000,000 Armenians and with about one million to one million and a half non-Armenian elements.

#### PART IV.

#### WHAT INTEREST HAVE THE ALLIES IN CREATING AN INDEPENDENT ARMENIA?

We venture to state that an Armenia created under these conditions, whose freedom and independence shall be guaranteed by all the powers and by a league of nations, will in the Near East play the part that Switzerland does in Europe. By reason of her geographical position, Armenia is more important than Switzerland, which stands between four European powers, two of which belong to the Latin and the other two to the Teutonic races. Whereas the Armenian plateau, which covers an extensive area between the Black and Mediterranean Seas, by the very nature of its exceptional position will not only stand between Georgia, Turkey, Syria, the Tartar regions of the Caucasus, Persia, Mesopotamia, and Kurdistan, namely, seven different States, but being so situated that it has almost become the converging point of Europe, Asia, and Africa, is destined also to become the land where all races may intermingle and diverge. This is a vital consideration which requires that a land so situated should be neutralized so that no Government or people should in any way be able to utilize it for purposes of conquest, as has happened so often in the past. This in itself is a vital reason for the creation of an Armenia, destined to insure the equilibrium in the Near East.

The immediate services such a State can render will be to obstruct the "draug nach Osten" policy of Germany by neutralizing the Berlin-Bagdad line that runs through Armenia. Another salutary consequence of the creation of such a State would be to arrest the Young Turkey's panislamic and pantouranian aggressive movement and to build up a barrier against it. Although the pantouranian movement is in its infancy at present, we can not disregard its future potentialities and measures ought to be taken to arrest its baneful effects, otherwise, it may become as dangerous an element for the future of mankind as is Pan Germanism at present, having, moreover, in view the circumstance that the center of this pantouranian movement would be in Berlin and not Constantinople and exploited by Germany for the purpose of furthering her designs of domination and aggrandizement. Besides these two aggressive movements, there may be danger in the future that Imperial Russia, after traversing this present phase of dissolution, may emerge triumphant, and in such

a circumstance, a neutralized Armenia would be the only barrier to be opposed to a possible aggressive Russia.

The above political circumstances do not stand alone. There is another higher justification which renders imperative the restoration of Armenia to freedom, and this is in the supreme interests of civilization. We all know that the enlightened countries of the west have inherited their culture from those ancient peoples of the Near East. Under the scimitar of the Turks, it has been buried for centuries and was threatened with eternal decay. It is high time to restore to the east that share of light and progress of which it became the cradle and the principal source. To accomplish this, the democratic nations of the earth have a duty to perform toward the Armenian people, by bringing about their emancipation and insuring their existence against final extinction, in order that a people susceptible of the highest culture may be able to fulfill its glorious civilizing mission in the Near East.

All the European savants are of the unanimous opinion—and in this the German professors concur—that the Armenian represents the only element in the Near East that can play the part of the intermediary between the eastern and western world. The Turk, the Arab, the Georgian, the Kurd, or the Persian, who are his neighbors, do not possess the aptitudes to disseminate European and American civilization as does the Armenian. Ethnologists are all agreed in stating that the Armenians, being a branch of the Indo-European race, settled on the Armenian plateau 27 centuries ago, while they embraced Christianity as far back as the fourth century, and ever since have kept aloft the ideas of Christian thought and civilization against the onslaught of semisavage Asiatic and Mohammedan races. The experience they have acquired of a life replete with vicissitudes and tribulations in their contact with the eastern nations has developed in them extraordinary qualities such as no other people possess. If the times are ripe in order that the different parts of humanity should be brought more closely in touch with each other, so that they may come to an understanding and to create more decent relations among them, it is the Armenian who is destined to become the connecting link between Christianity and Asia.

#### CONCLUSION.

After unprecedented vicissitudes and tribulations, the Armenians claim a fitting place in the concert of free and independent nations. Armenia, like Poland, claims to be one and indivisible, and the future Armenian State should by right include Russian, Persian, and Turkish Armenia—from the Caucasus to the Straits of Alexandretta. To this territory Armenia is entitled on historical and ethnological grounds, and it is indispensable that the Cilician Provinces of Armenia bordering on the Gulf of Alexandretta should be included in Armenia Irredenta. Cilicia was an independent State at the end of the fourteenth century. Therein is situated Adana, where the massacres of 1909 took place, and there, in the fastnesses of the Taurus, the Armenians held their own against Turkish barbarism for centuries, and in the course of the nineteenth century fought heroically against overwhelming Turkish armies.

The Armenians do not claim any territory which is not their own, nor is it fair that they should accept any solution which does not

vouchsafe to them an independence such as Greece, Serbia, and Roumania possess. Massacres and deportations do not constitute rights for the Turkish executioners of the Armenian race. The number of Armenians has been reduced by reason of these atrocities, but there are at least 3,000,000 survivors of the Armenian holocaust who are entitled to the territory claimed. Greece at the time of her emancipation, in 1829, hardly contained half a million people. Notwithstanding, Europe recognized Greek independence after the Battle of Nefarino, which sealed the death of Turkish domination in Hellas, whose population has now more than quadrupled. It will be the same of Armenia if she be allowed to develop and breathe freely as a sovereign independent State. The thirteen States of America that revolted against Great Britain at the time of their liberation did not contain more than 4,000,000 people, and they covered a territory far greater in extent than would the future Armenian State. The argument that the Armenian population has been depleted is a very loose one. To accept the same and to make it weigh in the balance against Armenian claims would be to put a premium on crime and to legitimize the massacres and deportations carried out by the Turks during these last 30 years, culminating in the events of 1915 and 1916, to which reference is made in the first part of this memorandum.

And let us record here that Armenia, by reason of her civilization in the east, her immeasurable sacrifices, especially her military assistance to the allied cause, in the Caucasus, in Palestine, and in France, to which expression is given in the correspondence exchanged between Lord Cecil and Lord Bryce, referred to in this memorandum, is entitled to complete restoration of her national independence. Through the ages her spiritual and patriotic leaders have kept alive and alight the flame of national consciousness and self-government, despite successive dominations and persecutions. Her political and military struggles against Turkish barbarism during the last 30 years are admirable credentials for her to present to the future peace congress.

The founding of the diminutive Republic of Ararat is a small beginning for national government for the whole of Armenia, from the Caucasus, through Cilicia, to the Mediterranean. Any scheme which may be advocated by certain elements in this country having for their object to preserve Turkey as a unit are of a nature to defeat the imperishable rights of the Armenians to freedom and independence. Such schemes are, moreover, detrimental to the cause of the allies and to the United States, and unworthy of the noble traditions bequeathed by the founders and continuators of this great Republic.

To sum up, Armenia is Europe and America is Asia in the bud. Let western civilization take care of it. It is a bud out of which will develop fresh elements of æsthetic, moral, and spiritual progress. The Armenian race, by its strong national, religious, and philosophical turn of mind, is the equal of all the fine, sensitive natures among the peoples of Europe and America. Her cause therefore appeals strongly to every State and people, all of whom should agree to grant to Armenia that which she wants and demands at the close of this great war; namely, complete freedom and national independence.