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The Armenian Weekly

A PUBLICATION OF THE ARF CENTRAL COMMITTEE, EASTERN USA

VOLUME 72 | NUMBER 33

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2006

PRICE: \$1.25

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Refugees Return Home as Truce Holds In Lebanon

LEBANESE ARMY TAKES OVER AREAS IT HAS NOT CONTROLLED FOR DECADES

On Monday, August 14, an official cease-fire was declared between Israel and Lebanon, ending 33 days of intense violence. The ceasefire was orchestrated, orchestrated by the United Nations Security Council, was presented to the international community on August 11, gaining unanimous approval of all 15 members of the Security Council. Resolution 1701 called for an end of all hostilities, including rocket attacks from Hezbollah and all offensive operations by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). The resolution also called for the deployment of Lebanese Army troops, alongside with a UN Peacekeeping Force, to be deployed in the south of Lebanon, and at the same time the withdrawal of all Israeli troops from the region. The resolution emphasized the need for the Lebanese government to impose its complete authority over all of its territory.

The Security Council also reiterated the need for all militias to be disarmed in Lebanon, and stressed that the government and the UN must crack down on all arms imports into Lebanon not authorized by the Lebanese government.

The resolution called for a complete cease-fire beginning at 8 a.m. local time (1 a.m. Eastern Time) on Monday, August 14. The resolution also said the UN

had the responsibility of finding a solution to some long-term problems that underscored the latest round hostilities, including the disputed sovereignty of the Shebaa Farms area.

On the same day, The United Nations also estimated that the conflict had displaced an estimated 915,000 inside

Lebanon.

As Hezbollah's leadership, the Lebanese cabinet and Israeli Security Cabinet met to discuss the terms of the cease-fire, violence continued, with Israeli troops pushing all the way to the Litani River to eliminate

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STATEMENT

By the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Central Committee of Lebanon

We Reject the Participation of Turkish Troops in the U.N. Peacekeeping Force in Southern Lebanon

The Central Committee of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Lebanon held a meeting yesterday (August 16, 2006), during which it discussed the events that occurred after the beginning of the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701. The following statement was released after the meeting.

The participants in the meeting discussed the loss of life and material damage caused by the war waged by Israel on Lebanon, and highly praised the spirit of solidarity and cooperation shown by the Lebanese people during the conflict, as well as their determination. A.R.F. also highly praised the Lebanese resistance for its brave actions in protecting Lebanon, and invited all Lebanese to ensure their victory by remaining united, and by resisting any attempts to jeopardize this unity, for as long as Israel continues to threaten Lebanon.

The A.R.F. Central Committee also welcomed Resolution 1701, and discussed the possible make-up of the expanded U.N.

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US Armenian Community Representatives Meet with Education Minister Of Lebanon

On August 10, 2006, a delegation representing the Armenian community on the eastern seaboard of the United States met with the special Envoy of Lebanon's Council of Ministers Tarek Mitri in New York. The Minister is in New York to lead

the efforts of the Government of Lebanon at the UN to secure a cease-fire and withdrawal of the Israeli army from Lebanon. The meeting was also attended by the Lebanese ambassador to Mexico Nouhad Mahmoud.

The Armenian delegation in-

cluded the Prelate of the Eastern Region Archbishop Oshagan Chologyan and Vicar Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian. The Armenian Relief Society Eastern Region USA (ARS) was represented by Anais Cholakian and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation - Dashnaksoutiun Eastern Region USA (ARF) was represented by Central Committee members Alex Sarafian and Jirayr Beugekian.

The Prelate passed on the blessing of the Armenian Catholicos Aram I and expressed the readiness of the Armenian-American community to do whatever it can to ease the pain of the civilian population.

The minister praised the Armenian community in Lebanon for its contributions to the political and social life of Lebanon. The attendees then discussed the latest events in Lebanon and the ongoing Israeli aggression against the people and civilian infrastructure of Lebanon, which is creating a dire situation. The minister touched upon the economic, social, and medical assistance needed in Lebanon.

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The Armenian Weekly Bids Farewell to Editor Jenny Kiljian



WATERTOWN, Mass. — The purpose: to complete the Hairenik Association's annual dinner this week that Armenian Weekly editor Jenny Kiljian will step down from her post on August 19, after nearly two years of helming the publication.

As a professional journalist, Kiljian brought a modern sensibility and style to the paper and masterfully polished its editorial design, while bringing a new energy to the newspaper. Under her leadership, the newspaper saw the installment of a new column—Critics' Forum—as well as the influx of articles by young, talented writers.

During her tenure, she contributed dozens of news articles, featured stories and interviews to the paper. Notable among them were her in-depth reports about the American Foreign Service Association's withdrawal of a prestigious award from U.S. Am-

bassador to Armenia John Evans, which included a frank, honest interview with former envoy Harry Gilmore; an insightful article about the predicament faced by Dr. Jack Kevoorkian in light of the death of Terri Schiavo; as well as a piece that researched the validity of the Turkish government's decision to remove the Armenian nomenclature of animals within its borders.

Kiljian moved to Boston from Los Angeles to assume the role in January of 2005, shortly after receiving a master's degree in journalism from the Annenberg Communication at the University of Southern California. She completed her undergraduate studies at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Following her departure, she will move to Ann Arbor, Michigan where she will continue to work as a medical journalist while working on a book—a medical and biological study of people who have suffered from a traumatic 2001 car accident, leaving him partially paralyzed and unable to speak. She credits his determination to recuperate, and his good humor despite his condition, for the inspiration to write the book, which she hopes will give a voice to other people and their families as they learn how to adapt to such situations.

To contact Kiljian directly, email jenny.kiljian@gmail.com.

ARF Opposed To Armenian National Anthem Change

BY RUZANNA KHACHATRIAN AND GAYANE DANIELIAN

(Radio Liberty)—A senior member of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation

(Dashnaksutun) voiced on Thursday strong opposition to government plans to change Armenia's current national anthem that was first adopted by the nationalist party when it ruled the country in 1918-1920.

The "Mer Hayrenik" (Our Fatherland) song had an official status until the short-lived first independent Armenian republic was incorporated into Soviet Russia. It was for decades banned by the Soviet authorities before being reinstated by Armenia's first post-Communist government in 1990.

Many Armenian music composers and artists disapproved of the move, saying that the song's uncomplicated theme is too simple for an anthem and calling for the adoption of a more solemn tune. The Armenian government heeded their concerns early this

year, setting up an hoc commission tasked with suggesting alternative anthems.

The 22-strong commission, which consists of prominent intellectuals, artists and government officials, short-listed on Wednesday five out of 85 songs submitted by local composers. The short-list includes Soviet Armenia's former anthem with changed lyrics that no longer glorify Soviet rule and the Communist Party.

The head of the commission, Culture Minister Hasmik Poghosian, said the contest will finish later this year. "It is very difficult to make the right choice," she said. "But we must pick the best one."

The song that will be chosen by the commission is expected to be submitted by the government to the National Assembly for approval.

Gegham Manukian, a parliament deputy from Dashnaksutun, said the party, which is represented in the gov-

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ANCA TELETHON DONATIONS REACH \$3 MILLION

OVER 7,500 ARMENIAN-AMERICANS DONATE TO FIRST EVER ANCA TELETHON

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Donations to the first ever ANCA Telethon topped the three million dollar mark, with over 7,500 individual donations coming in from across the country to expand the level of Armenian-American participation in the civic life of the United States, reported the ANCA Endowment Fund, Inc.

"We are deeply gratified by this broad-based, grassroots investment in our energetic pursuit of the Armenian Cause," said ANCA Endowment Fund President Ken Hachikian. "The success of the Telethon—both financially and as a means of recruiting thousands of new activists—represents both a reflection of our community's enduring faith in the Armenian Cause and an important milestone in the growth of our power, respect, and influence in the nation's capital. It is a clear expression of our community's confidence in the success of the ANCA's grassroots

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Editorial

A Message from the Editor:

As I make the final edits to this, my last issue, I'd like to thank our readers for what has been a wonderful, eye opening and fulfilling experience throughout the last two years. Seldom are professional journalists fortunate enough to meld their career with their culture and heritage, and I consider myself doubly blessed for having served my people through my medium.

Since I took the helm last year, I'm proud to say that The Armenian Weekly has continued to be a beacon of news and information from the Eastern Region, as well as a vital link to the homeland.

During my tenure, we've seen a marked shift toward groundbreaking investigative journalism and provocative commentary, as well as a prominent focus on in-depth feature stories. The Armenian Cause must continue to be fueled by such tenacious, intrepid reporting. Furthermore, the Armenian people should support the media who unify our community by featuring luminaries, young and old, excelling in their chosen fields.

I trust that the next editor will continue this trend and break further ground.

I would like to express my gratitude to my former assistant editor—and dear friend—Sossi Essajanian for her invaluable contribution to the paper during my tenure. Although the masthead hasn't reflected her name since January, her presence in our offices continues to resonate.

To the editorial staff of The Armenian Weekly—Khajag Megerdichian, Aram Avakian, Nora Mouradian—I have tremendous appreciation, respect and encouragement.

Our sales manager, Lana Guebenian, deserves recognition for her entrepreneurial spirit.

To my mentor, Tatul Sonentz-Papazian, thank you for your wisdom, guidance and friendship. I will not forget you.

Mnak Parov,
Jenny Kiljian

CONDOLENCES

The Hairenik Association and the editorial staffs of The Hairenik Weekly and The Armenian Weekly extend their sincerest condolences to the family of Aztag Daily Newspaper editor Shahan Kandaharian on the passing of his father, veteran ARF member Kevork Kandaharian on August 17, 2006.

The opinions expressed in this newspaper, other than in the "Editorial" column, do not necessarily reflect the views of The Armenian Weekly.

The Armenian Weekly

PUBLISHED BY THE HAIRENIK ASSOCIATION FOR
THE ARF CENTRAL COMMITTEE, EASTERN USA

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Annual Subscription Rate: \$75 continental USA, \$95 for Canada, and \$180 for international. THE ARMENIAN WEEKLY (ISSN 0004-2374) is published weekly by the Hairenik Association, Inc., 80 Bigelow Ave, Watertown, MA 02472. Periodical postage paid in Boston, MA and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to the ARMENIAN WEEKLY, 80 Bigelow Ave, Watertown, MA 02472. Allow 4 weeks for new subscription or for change of address. The opinions expressed in this newspaper, other than in the editorial column, do not necessarily reflect the views of THE ARMENIAN WEEKLY.

Submissions: Articles, press releases, and other material submitted for publication should be provided in a clear, typed format. Electronic submissions, whether via disk or email, are strongly encouraged (accompanying hard copy is advisable). Submissions should be made no later than 12:00 noon on the Monday prior to publication to be considered for inclusion. Running date and location of articles cannot be guaranteed. Due to the volume of submissions received, the return of any submitted materials, including photographs, cannot be guaranteed.

Advertisements: The deadline for ads to appear in the ARMENIAN WEEKLY is Friday 12:00 noon, eight days prior to publication date. The advertising rate is \$10 per column-inch for camera-ready artwork. An additional fee for typesetting will be applied. Location of ads will be determined by the production department. Contact for specifications or submit advertising to ads@hairenik.com.

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A Tea Party

BY KARDASH ONNIG

I am often told, by seemingly wise people, to leave politics, let it go where it will anyway, and go to my studio and be creative. I have a problem with "Art for art's sake." I believe it is an idea born after Descartes that the mind is at the center; that art can take the mind on a liberating journey while the body suffers under the management of "experts": politicians, scientists, priests, doctors, school teachers. For me, art severed from the realities of the world, severed from the needs of the total human being and the needs of the society, is art without meaning.

The day I was born, in 1941, peace was declared in Lebanon.

Today, I cry for Lebanon. Tears in my eyes, and an ache for vengeance in my heart.

This war is not about protecting against terrorist groups. It is not about making anyone safer. It is a war about ideology. The ideology of Zionism, the idea that Jews are a chosen people with a right to a cer-

tain homeland, Israel, is being defended in ways that are inspiring disgust in the international community. For all the heart-breaking damage

Zionist lobbies in America have continually pushed their pro-Israel agenda and their one-god mentality. But it has gone too far. It's time that we have our own Boston tea party, to throw out nationalism, to throw out religious self-righteousness, to throw out tribalism from our hearts, once and for all.

that the missiles are inflicting, it is the ideology that is most dangerous.

Zionism, or any other ideology that favors a chosen people, is unacceptably exclusionist, unacceptably

racist. Our world can no longer support versions of reality that refuse to acknowledge the value of the "other," that work to promote the well-being of one people to the detriment of another.

Zionist lobbies in America have continually pushed their pro-Israel agenda and their one-god mentality. But it has gone too far. It's time that we have our own Boston Tea Party, to throw out nationalism, to throw out religious self-righteousness, to throw out tribalism from our hearts, once and for all.

I will not label those who do not choose it. I will leave it up to both Jews and goyim to define themselves as Zionist or not. Those identifying with Zionism, with the elevation of one tribe over another, I will ignore. I will ignore their ego, their Yahweh, their prophets, their Hollywood. I can no longer take the colonization of my consciousness by the Jewish myth.

Please. Wake up. Wake a Jewish friend up. Let's leave our tribalism behind. With hope for the future ...

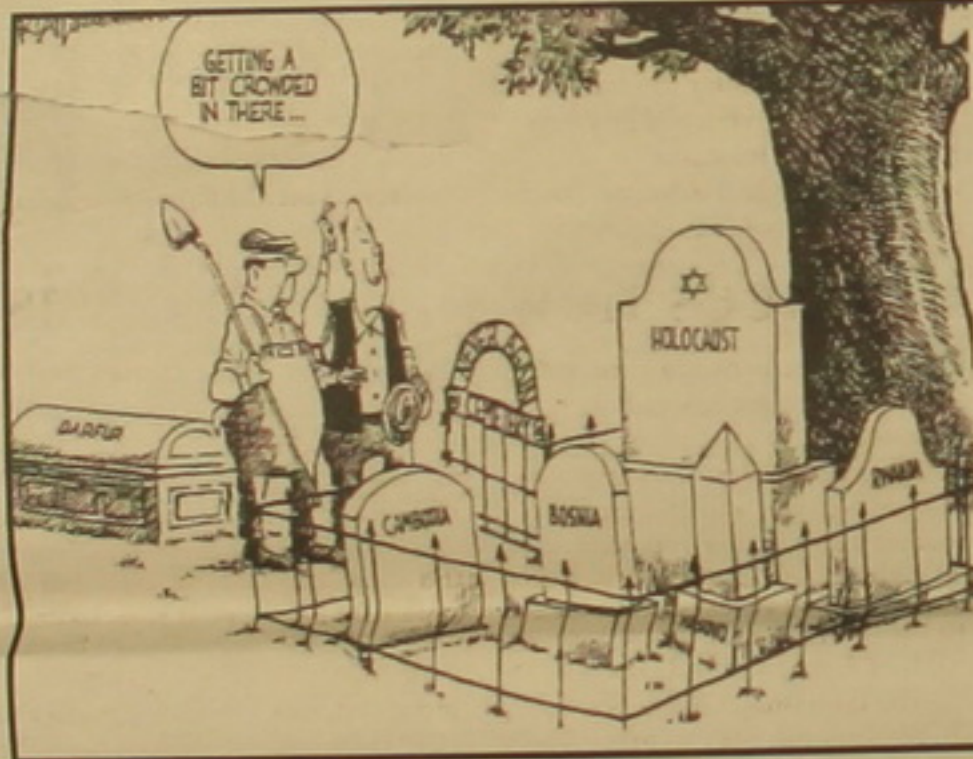
A Missing Headstone

This cartoon appeared in the Nashua Telegraph on July 3, 2006, and the following letter was written to the newspaper's editor on July 4.

The first genocide of the 20th century was the Armenian genocide, committed by the Ottoman Turks in 1915.

The cartoon on the genocides by cartoonist Robert Aerial in the newspaper did not include Armenia. Was it deliberate or an oversight?

Jeannette John
U.S. Foreign Service Officer,
Retired



FROM THE LETTERBOX

A Place in the History Books

The following letter was sent on June 15 to the editor of McDougal Littell, Inc. publishing company, and to Joel Klein, Chancellor of the NYC Department of Education.

To the Editor:

I am a substitute schoolteacher with the New York City Department of Education. I teach in all levels, but concentrate in the middle schools, grades six, seven and eight. One of the texts used by the Department of Education for social studies is titled *World History-Patterns of Intervention* by Roger B. Beck, et al, copyright 2003, published by McDougal Littell, Inc.

On page 745, in one corner of the page is a caption titled "Side Bar on 'Crises in the Balkans.'" While I applaud you for including a discussion of the Armenians, as brief as it is, you nevertheless pay a disservice to our students and to world history in general by referring to the Genocide of the Armenians as "The Armenian Massacre..." (where the Armenians) suffered greatly."

The vast majority of world scholars have recognized the "massacre" of the Armenians as genocide, the first genocide of the 20th century. To refer to the Genocide of the Armenians by the Ottoman Turkish government in any other way is wrong, insulting, and feeds into modern day Turkey's attempt to revise history.

You indicate "Throughout the 1890s Turkish troops killed tens of thousands of Armenians." You make it sound that this was an unorganized attempt by renegade Turkish troops to kill Armenians.

The fact is that the killings were an orchestrated and well-planned attempt to exterminate the Arme-

nians. This was the last genocide of the 19th century.

You distort history when you failed to refer to the first genocide of the 20th century, when during the period of 1914 to 1923 more than 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were slaughtered by the Ottoman Turks.

You state that "...nearly 2 million Armenians were deported" and "along the way, more than 600,000 died of starvation or were killed by Turkish soldiers."

You failed to state that the Armenians were massacred because of a well-planned and deliberate attempt by the Ottoman Turks to kill all Armenians, to eliminate the Armenian population just as Hitler tried to exterminate all Jews a few decades later.

In their editorial of May 16, the New York Times stated, "Turkey's self-destructive obsession with denying the Armenian genocide seems to have no limits...The preponderance of serious scholarship outside Turkey accepts that more than a million Armenians perished between 1914-1923 in a regime-sponsored campaign."

Turkey's continued refusal to countenance even a discussion of the issue stands as a major obstacle to restoring relations with neighboring Armenia and to claiming Turkey's rightful place in Europe and the West. It is time for the Turks to realize that the greater danger to them is denying history."

I strongly urge you to make appropriate changes in future editions of *World History* and all other texts you may publish and discuss the events of 1914-1923 for what it was, Genocide.

I thank you, appreciate your attention to this matter, and look forward to your reply.

Kenneth Asbedian
New York

Sen. Democratic Leader 'Extremely Concerned' over Hoagland's Reluctance To Acknowledge Genocide

SENATOR COLEMAN VOWS TO VOTE AGAINST HOAGLAND NOMINATION

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), in a letter to the Armenian National Committee of Nevada (ANCA-NV), reported that he is "extremely concerned" by the reluctance of Richard Hoagland, the Administration's nominee to serve as the next ambassador to Armenia, to acknowledge the Armenian genocide.

Senator Reid's public stand follows the August 2nd announcement by Senator Norm Coleman (R-Minn.) that he will vote against the Hoagland nomination because of the nominee's refusal to properly recognize the Armenian genocide as "genocide." Sen. Coleman serves on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

"The opposition of Senator Norm Coleman and concerns raised by Harry Reid—the Senate's Democratic Leader—reflect the growing bipartisan opposition to the approval of a U.S. envoy to Yerevan who refuses to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide," said ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian. "We continue to work in communities around the nation to explain to Senators the damage to U.S.-Armenia relations—and, more broadly, to America's standing on genocide prevention efforts worldwide—that will

be done by approving a nominee that has actually denied the genocidal intent of the perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide."

Responding to grassroots concerns raised by Nevada's growing and increasingly active Armenian American community, Senator Reid noted that this refusal is "particularly troubling in light of the State Department's dismissal of the last Ambassador to Armenia, John M. Evans following comments he made during a February 2005 tour of Armenian-American communities in which he recognized the Armenian genocide. As you may know, the State Department has offered no explanation for Evans' dismissal."

As reported by the Associated Press, Senator Coleman has explained, "As someone of the Jewish faith, I bring a heightened sensitivity to the reality of genocide and mass murder, and the importance of recognizing it for what it is. I was brought up believing you never forget the Holocaust, never forget what happened. And I could not imagine how our ambassador to Israel could have any effectiveness if he couldn't recognize the Holocaust."

On August 1, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee delayed con-

sideration of Ambassador Hoagland's nomination, following a request by the Committee's Ranking Democrat Joseph Biden (D-Del.) and Senator John Kerry (D-Mass.).

Also voicing support for the delay were Senators George Allen (R-Va.) and Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.). The Committee is set to consider the matter during its regular business meeting on September 7.

To date, more than half of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including Senators George Allen, Joseph Biden, Barbara Boxer, Lincoln Chafee (R-R.I.), Norm Coleman (R-Minn.), Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), Russell Feingold (D-Wisc.), John Kerry and Paul Sarbanes (D-Md.), have contacted Secretary Rice or questioned Ambassador-designate Hoagland directly regarding the Armenian genocide. Senators Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Jack Reed (D-R.I.), along with over 60 members of the U.S. House have also expressed serious concerns to the State Department on this matter.

For a comprehensive overview of documents regarding the firing of Ambassador Evans and the Hoagland controversy, visit: http://www.anca.org/hoagland_controversy.php.

After Alaska, BP faces new pipeline crisis

By STEPHEN FOLEY

NEW YORK (The Independent)—Environmental groups have warned that corrosion inside a controversial oil pipeline controlled by the British company BP could trigger a massive oil spill into some of the most environmentally-sensitive areas of the former Soviet Union.

As BP battles with a crisis in Alaska, where it had to shut down the biggest oil field in the US, campaigners say that safety flaws discovered there extend also to a 1,000-mile pipeline from the Caspian Sea to Turkey.

And the company stands accused

of a management culture where whistleblowers are ignored or, worse, hounded out.

BP is accused of ignoring warnings about the effectiveness of a coating it uses to slow corrosion. Critics say the coating will fail, and corrosion will eventually cause the pipeline to break open, spilling oil into the wilds of Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The criticisms come as politicians in Washington plan to bring senior BP executives before Congressional hearings to face questions on a string of safety lapses. Corroded pipelines in Alaska caused a 200,000-gallon oil spill—the region's worst ever on land—and BP is shutting down the entire oilfield to conduct repairs. The field represents 8 per cent of all

oil produced in the United States, and its closure sent oil prices soaring this week.

The debacle comes barely a year after 15 people died in an explosion at a BP refinery in Texas, for which the company faces a legal bill of more than \$1 billion. It is nicknamed

Platform, an oil industry monitoring group, says it is only a matter of time before the pipeline through the Caucasus—from Baku in Azerbaijan to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan—also triggers a disaster.

The pipeline cuts through national parkland and mineral springs in Georgia, and triggered environmental protests when it was still at the planning stage.

Mika Minio Paluello, of Platform, said: "The public in Alaska is much more important to BP than the public in the Caucasus, so if the standards are not even met in the US then there is not much reason to believe that they will be met there."

Platform says BP ignored warnings from one of its engineering consultants about the coating used to prevent corrosion. Test results show it is already cracking at some points, although BP says this is not serious.

The project has been dogged by criticism, and earlier this year The Independent revealed a string of blunders. Builders cut off villages' water supplies, flooded farmland and allowed oil leaks; there were insufficient checks for pipes buckling in earthquake zones; welding work failed inspections; and those who complained were sacked or made to leave.

But in May, oil began flowing through the pipeline and it will carry a million barrels a day from the newly developed oilfields off the Azeri coast. The industry is desperate for new sources as existing fields mature and as demand for oil rises.

BP dismissed the idea that it cuts corners and compromises safety. A spokesman said: "The pipeline was constructed, and will be operated and maintained, to a high standard. It is protected against both internal

Digging her way with Words

(The Irish Times)—Turkish novelist Elif Safak might seem the perfect writer to become an interpretive guide to the east. But no one person can be the representative of a culture, she tells Nick Birch

"No word polarises more than the word genocide," observes Halil Berktag, a well-known historian of the late Ottoman Empire. "If you use it, Turks get angry. If you don't, Armenians do. Either way, it stops the conversation."

It's an observation internationally renowned Turkish novelist Elif Safak has learned to her cost since her sixth novel came out in Turkey this March. The Bastard of Istanbul topped the country's bestseller lists for three months here and received largely positive critical reviews for its description of the growing intimacy between two families, one Turkish and one Armenian-American.

But it also attracted the attention of ultra-nationalist lawyer Kemal Kerincisiz, whose rise to prominence as an opponent of free speech has paralleled Turkey's European Union accession efforts. He was the one who tried to close down a conference on the Armenian issue last year. He is novelist Orhan Pamuk's nemesis. In the case of Elif Safak, he

has surpassed himself.

His gripe is not with something she said, but with comments made by Armenian characters in her book. "I am the grandchild of a family which lost all its relatives to the Turkish butchers in 1915," says one. "I learned to betray my roots, I was brought up to deny the Genocide."

An insult to Turkishness, Kerincisiz claims, citing the notoriously vague terms of Article 301 of Turkey's new criminal code, used against dozens of writers since its ratification last year. A first prosecutor laughed him out of court this June, but his appeal was accepted by a higher court on July 6th.

Elif Safak can't help seeing the absurd side. The thought of Uncle Barsam and Auntie Varsenig, both figments of her imagination, being called to the dock to testify feels like something out of Gogol, an author she's always loved.

With her first child due in September, though, she's in no mood to laugh. Her case is likely to be long.

And after a High Court decision last week to convict a Turkish-Armenian journalist under Article 301, the first such conviction in Turkey, the threat of three-year sentences at

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from the
ANCA Desk

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Free Ethnic Cleansing for Azerbaijan

Congressman Joseph Crowley on the House Financial Services Committee offered an Amendment last spring, which would prohibit the U.S. Export/Import bank from funding a proposed railroad project bypassing Armenia.

Thanks to the tireless work of ANC activists, our friends on the Committee did not heed calls from Azerbaijan and Turkey's lobbies to kill the measure, which the full House passed shortly after. Crowley's bill has made it past the first hurdle. Now the second:

Once Congress returns in September from the August recess, the Senate Banking Committee must vote on the same authorization bill and decide whether or not to include the amendment.

It is essential that local activists call the Senate offices listed below to urge members to vote for Joseph Crowley's and Ed Royce's amendment, which would prevent U.S. taxpayer money from paying for commercial infrastructure meant to isolate Armenia in the Caucasus.

Ankara and Baku's proposed route for the railroad has one purpose: to complete the genocidal project of the Young Turks. Starve Armenia economically so that it in "30 years, there won't even be an Armenia," to quote the President of Azerbaijan. Our friends in the House have successfully challenged that belligerent plan; it's now up to Armenian Americans to call upon their friends in the Senate to ensure that U.S. foreign policy doesn't favor ethnic cleansing over free trade.

Using the phone numbers at the bottom of this column, ask to speak with the foreign affairs legislative aid for the Senator you are contacting. The language of

Amendment to Export Import Bank
Reauthorization bill H.R.5068

Prohibition on assistance to develop or promote any rail connections or railway-related connections that traverse or connect Baku, Azerbaijan; Tbilisi, Georgia; and Kars, Turkey, and that specifically exclude cities in Armenia.

Section 2(b) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635 (b)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "(13) The Bank shall not guarantee, insure, or extend credit, or participate in an extension of credit in association with the development or promotion of any rail connections or railway-related connections that do not traverse or connect with Armenia, and do traverse or connect Baku, Azerbaijan; Tbilisi, Georgia; and Kars, Turkey."

TALKING POINTS

1. Turkey and Azerbaijan have instituted an illegal blockade against land-locked Armenia for over a decade and are now escalating their economic aggression.
2. Refusing to use an existing railway that connects Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan because it traverses Armenia, Turkey and Azerbaijan are leading plans to build a nearly \$1 billion project to build an entirely new railway that deliberately excludes Armenia.
3. U.S. tax dollars should not be spent on such a wasteful and destabilizing venture.
4. The Crowley/Royce Amendment would prevent Export Import Bank assistance to develop or promote any rail connections that deliberately exclude Armenia, because U.S. policy in the region has focused on regional cooperation, conflict resolution, and open borders.
5. The Administration has publicly stated that it will not support the proposed railroad to exclude Armenia because it does not encourage regional integration.
6. Despite continued calls from the U.S. and international community to end its aggression, Turkey continues its devastating, illegal blockade of land-locked Armenia now in its 12th year.

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My Turn

BY HARUT SASSOUNIAN

Will the Bombing of Lebanon Bury the Azeri-Israeli Lovefest?

As a follow up to my last month's column on Azerbaijan's efforts to exploit Israel's clout in Washington, D.C., I would like to present further revelations on this topic by Ilya Bourttman, a former researcher at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies in Ramat Gan, Israel. His article, titled, "Israel and Azerbaijan's Furtive Embrace," is published in the Summer 2006 edition of the Middle East Quarterly.

Stating that "few could have foreseen how Israel's relationship with Azerbaijan would blossom," Bourttman expresses his amazement that "a country 93 percent Muslim would cooperate closely with Israeli intelligence, and even provide Israeli officials a defensive platform in such a volatile region's Israel and Azerbaijan have quietly become strategic partners sharing intelligence, developing trade relations, and together building regional alliances (with Turkey)." The writer strains credulity by drawing parallels between the Arab-Israeli conflict and that of Azerbaijan with Armenia. This is how Bourttman explains why Azerbaijan needed the Jewish lobby's help in Washington: "In 1991, Azerbaijan was economically fragile, politically unstable, and militarily weak. Desperate for outside assistance, Baku turned to Israel to provide leverage against a much stronger Iran and a militarily superior Armenia. Israel promised to improve Azerbaijan's weak economy by developing trade ties. It purchased Azerbaijani oil and gas and sent medical, technological, and agricultural experts. Most importantly for Azerbaijan, Israel's foreign ministry vowed to lend its lobby's weight in Washington to improve Azeri-American relations, providing a counterweight to the influential Armenian lobby. According to Azerbaijan's first president, Abulfas Elchibey, "Israel could help Azerbaijan in [the] Karabakh problem by convincing the Americans to stop the Armenians. Azerbaijani diplomats recognized the need to diversify their contacts in Washington, especially after the U.S. Congress imposed sanctions on Azerbaijan at the behest of the Armenian lobby following the war in Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijani military officials also believed that Israeli firms could better equip the ragtag Azerbaijani army, which needed new weapons following its defeat in Nagorno-Karabakh. On several occasions, Heydar Aliyev, Azerbaijan's president between 1993 and 2003, personally requested military assistance from Israeli prime ministers." In describing the benefits of the Israeli lobby to Azerbaijan, Bourttman writes: "in the mid 1990's, struggling to piece together the weak and dysfunctional Azerbaijani state, President Aliyev moved towards Jerusalem, thereby winning the allegiance of the pro-Israel lobby in Washington." He then quotes Hassan Hassanov, Azerbaijan's foreign minister, who stated in 1997: "We don't conceal that we rely on the Israeli lobby in the U.S." Bourttman explains: "This paid dividends when, in 2002, President Bush waived Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act. In a rare and understated public admission, an official at the Azerbaijani embassy in Washington acknowledged that, "Jewish organizations made a certain contribution in the Section 907 waiving process."

Beyond lobbying assistance, Bourttman reveals the extent of Azerbaijan's reliance on Israeli weaponry: "Following its loss in Nagorno-Karabakh, Baku reached out to Israel for help in rebuilding its military. Israeli defense firms obliged, selling Azerbaijan advanced aviation, antitank, artillery, and anti-infantry weapon systems. The arms trade has continued. In 2004, the Azerbaijani and Israeli press both reported that an undisclosed Israeli weapons system was being sent to Turkey where it would be assembled and then delivered to Azerbaijan. While Israeli, Turkish, and Azerbaijani officials denied the report, Israeli policy prohibits confirmation of such

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FROM THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS

Three Days in Rome: Plotting Regime Change in Iran

BY LAURA ROZEN

On December 21, 2001, military officials and intelligence operatives from three nations—the United States, Italy, and Iran—made their separate ways to a commercial building set anonymously amid the shops, cafés, and fountains of Rome's bustling Piazza di Spagna, and disappeared inside. Among the tourists enjoying the famous Spanish Steps, and the Romans going about their Christmas shopping in the boutiques nearby, few would have had reason to wonder what was going on in the building, which held an unmarked office provided by the Italian military intelligence organization Servizio per le Informazioni e la Sicurezza Militare (SISMI). Nor would passers-by have likely recognized among the men two Pentagon officials and key figures in the post-9/11 push to redraw the political map of the Middle East. Rome's centro storico, locus of a few millennia of international intrigue, was the perfect setting for the business at hand.

Though little-known outside the Beltway, the Pentagon officials, Larry Franklin and Harold Rhode, were at the height of their powers among a small, tight-knit coterie of Washington Iran hawks determined, in the wake of 9/11, to push for regime change not just in Kabul and Baghdad, but in Tehran as well. Farsi speakers both, they had become increasingly influential as advisers to top Pentagon officials consumed with planning a response to the terror attacks. Franklin was the Iran desk officer in a Pentagon policy office that would eventually include the Office of Special Plans, an alternative intelligence shop that became closely allied with Ahmed Chalabi and his band of Iraqi exile informants. Joining the pair in Rome was Michael Ledeen, a neoconservative historian and activist who is among the most impassioned advocates for overthrowing the Iranian regime.

Given that Italian intelligence was hosting the gathering, protocol would have called for the CIA to be involved and the U.S. Embassy to be notified. Yet no one from Langley or Foggy Bottom had been invited—and for good reason. Among those who had come to meet with the Pentagon team was an Iranian exile who was not exactly an unknown quantity in Washington. Manucher Ghorbanifar, an arms dealer, intelligence peddler, and former military intelligence official in the Shah's regime, had been a key figure in the Reagan-era Iran-Contra scandal, in which Washington secretly sold missiles to Iran's Islamic rulers. Even before that, he had been so unreliable as a CIA informant that the agency had issued a "burn notice" directing agency personnel not to deal with him. When, in the midst of Iran-Contra, the CIA gave Ghorbanifar a polygraph test, he was deemed not to be showing deception on only 2 of the 15 questions—his name and his place of birth.

"One test of a source is his ability to tell you something accurate that cannot be known through any other means," Bill Murray, the former CIA station chief

in France, told me. Ghorbanifar not only has never been able to do that, Murray said, "he has a proven track record of fabrication—making up the information he reports from his own imagination." Washington insiders of a certain vintage cringe at the mention of Ghorbanifar's name—and grow alarmed when they hear that, as another ex-CIA official puts it, "anyone in the U.S. government would still talk to Ledeen and Ghorbanifar after what happened."

But someone was. For three days, the international group met to discuss Middle East political machinations, alleged Iran-backed terrorism threats, and, most of all, rumors of discontent and divided loyalties in the Iranian security services. Even as Chalabi and company were spinning tales in Washington about how Saddam's regime would collapse with only a minor effort from the United States, the administration's Iran hawks were eager to hear the same about Tehran—and to that end, Ghorbanifar had delivered a special guest. The guest was "a very high-level ex-Revolutionary Guard," Ghorbanifar later told me. "His situation was so high that the Italian intelligence network, in order to prove he had a special mission to Italy, created a kind of fake cover itinerary to give him an excuse to the Iranian authorities."

CIA sources are unconvinced. "They drag these guys out and say they're from the Revolutionary Guard," Tyler Drumheller, the former CIA director for Europe, told me. "In fact, they're actually from some rug store. In any city, it's an industry."

Rhode and Franklin, in any event, were impressed. As the meeting was breaking up, Rhode sent a classified cable from the telex room of the U.S. Embassy in Rome back to the Pentagon, reporting that the group had "made contact with Iranian intelligence officers who anticipate possible regime change in Iran and want to establish contact with the United States government." The cable, portions of which were obtained by Knight Ridder's Washington bureau, continued, "A sizable financial interest is required."

Intelligence sources have their suspicions about what the money was to go for. "My thought is that he was trying to do a Chalabi, asking them to tell the president that there's Iranians waiting to rise up," one former U.S. intelligence official told me. "It would be comical except that they have a lot of money, and people pay a lot of attention. All they need is purchase someplace, and the virus spreads very quickly."

Just how far did it spread? In the four years since the Rome meeting, the Pentagon has refused to answer many questions about it, including those from congressional in-

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Reprinted from *Mother Jones*
July/August 2006



Five Hundred Participate in First Annual 'Walk of Life'

ONE HUNDRED SIGN-UP WITH THE ARMENIAN BONE MARROW DONOR REGISTRY

LOS ANGELES, Calif.—Armenians and non-Armenians alike rallied together on July 29 at the First Annual 5k/10k Walk/Run around the Pasadena Rose Bowl in support of further expanding the Los Angeles-based Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry's (ABMDR) critical life-saving mission to recruit more Armenian bone marrow donors. In addition to raising needed funds and awareness through the Walk of Life, 100 new donors signed up.

"We are thrilled with the spirit of giving and life expressed through the overwhelming participation in our first annual 'Walk of Life,'" said ABMDR president Freida Jordan. "We are also greatly appreciative of all our sponsors and the organizational and individual support that made the first walk a resounding success and will enhance our ability to fulfill our life-saving mission." Corporate sponsors included Glendale Memorial Hospital, St. Josephs Hospital, Closet World, Next Day Color Printing, Glendale Water and Power, City of Los Angeles and GNC.

A key method of treating leukemia patients or people with other life-threatening blood diseases is through bone marrow/stem cell transplants. In order to treat Armenian patients, bone marrow transplants require compatible tissue types that match the genetic makeup of the patient that is most likely to come from other Armenian donors. There are currently 630 patients throughout the Diaspora and Armenia who are desperately waiting to find a matching donor to help save their lives. On average, it takes 200 donors to find a precise match for one patient. The ABMDR has a goal of increasing their registry from its current 11,000 donors to 126,000 to meet the critical need. The registry partners closely



The Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry's 'Walk of Life' raised much needed funds and awareness and increased its donor list by 100

with Glendale Memorial Hospital and St. Josephs Hospital in addition to being a member of global organizations such as the World Marrow Donor Association and World Marrow Donor Worldwide.

"By simply walking today, you are helping save a life," said Walk of Life organizing committee chairman Steve Artinian. "With this walk we hope you will spread the message that by taking the simple step of signing up with the registry every Armenian can give the most precious gift of a second chance to another fellow Armenian who is fighting for their life against these destructive diseases." Special guests included Western Prelate Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian; Western Diocese representative Very Rev. Father Dajad Yardemian; ABMDR in Armenia executive director Sevak Avagyan; and ABMDR treasurer Varant Melkonian. There was also entertainment at the end of the walk welcoming participants to the dance floor including the band Element and singer Mariette Soudjian.

"The Walk of Life is a huge success today because of all the hard

work and dedication of our volunteers," said master of ceremonies and director of walk operations Taleen Khatchadourian. "If we join together like this for our common mission we can make a big difference in the lives of Armenian patients in need."

During the short program after the walk, the family of Biurad Moghadasian, an eight-year old Armenian patient currently at Los Angeles' Children's Hospital being treated for leukemia, approached organizers to stress the urgency of the ABMDR's mission using their son's plight as an example. The family made a plea to all present to recruit additional bone marrow donors that is the only way her son and others like him will have a chance at beating the disease. Biurad is currently looking for a matching donor to help save his life.

The ABMDR encourages all Armenians to call and join the registry with the hope of saving another life. The registration process is very simple and takes only a few minutes. The registry is an organization and welcomes donations of any size that are tax-deductible.

Armenian Dramatic Arts Alliance Honors Actor Simon Abkarian



(L to R) Carla Garapedian, Vahe Berberian, Anahid Shahrik, Diana Hekimian, Bianca Bagatourian, Karen Kondazian, Sona Tatoyan, Anita Vogel, Jose Rivera, (seated) Simon Abkarian, and Valerie McCaffrey

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—On July 24, a luncheon in honor of French Armenian actor/director Simon Abkarian who was in town to direct

AWAOC to Host Monthly Literary Meeting

The monthly literary meeting of the Armenian Writers Association of California (AWAOC), sponsored by Glendale Public Library, will take place from 7 to 9 p.m., on Thursday, September 7, 2006, at the Auditorium of the Library, on 222 East Harvard St.

Poet Grish Davtian, President of AWAOC, will give a lecture on "The Orthography of the Armenian Language." Proceedings will be in Armenian. Admittance is free. For more information, email awaoc@yahoo.com.

Love's Labor's Lost, a Shakespeare play for the Actor's Gang Theater of Los Angeles. The play, which has been receiving rave reviews, can be seen at the Ivy Substation in Culver City where it will run through September. It also features the music of composer and musician Ara Dabandjian. Abkarian, who has had a distinguished film career, was recently in the Bahamas filming for the new James Bond film *Casino Royale* due out in November this year.

Various Hollywood professionals, as well as a host of ADAA advisory board members including screenwriter Jose Rivera, artist Vahe Berberian and journalist Joan Agajanian Quinn, attended the luncheon. There were also some new faces in the group, including FOX TV correspondent Anita Vogel; documentary filmmaker Carla Garapedian; and award winning producer and casting director Valerie McCaffrey.

During the event, board of directors' members Karen Kondazian and Bianca Bagatourian led a discussion regarding the goals and growth of the ADAA, whose aim is to project the Armenian voice through the arts of stage and screen. Various artists also spoke about their particular needs and how the alliance could serve them best.

Through many such events and discussions, this new non-profit organization hopes to establish specific channels to help Armenian artists prosper in the dramatic performing arts fields.

For more information, visit www.armeniandrama.org or email adaa@techfusion.com.

ARPA Int'l Film Festival to Honor Hagopian

LOS ANGELES—The 2006 Arpa International Film Festival will hold its 9th annual film festival on October 26 at the Egyptian Theater in Hollywood, Calif. Screenings will run all day and throughout the evening. The following day, the Arpa Awards Banquet will be held on October 27.

This year, Arpa will honor 92-year-old documentary filmmaker Dr. J. Michael Hagopian with the Armin T. Wegner Award for lifetime achievement in film.

The Arpa International Film Festival presents Armenian cinema and international films that explore diaspora, war, exile, genocide, multi-culturalism and dual-identity. "Arpa celebrates artistic vision and cultural diversity in cinema while illuminating the Armenian experience," said Arpa Foundation for Film, Music and Art (AFFMA) founder Sylvia Minassian. "We're so pleased that people in both the United States and abroad are becoming aware of the opportunities Arpa gives filmmakers to share our unique history through film."

While Armenians live all over the globe, one of the largest populations of Armenians outside of Armenia is in Southern California. "Los Angeles is a city of unlimited cultural power and Armenians contribute to that richness immensely," said Minassian. With that in mind, Arpa honors those filmmakers who address the common circumstances of diasporan people, redefining what Los Angeles stands for as a global city, through the presentation of Armenian and international cinema.

"Dr. Hagopian is internationally revered as a major influence in the world of documentary filmmaking. For over 50 years, he's been presenting meticulously researched and cross-referenced films about the Armenian Genocide and presenting them to the world in the face of Turkey's continued denial," said festival director Alex Kalognomos of this year's Armin T. Wegner recipient. "He founded the Armenian Film Foundation and has interviewed over 400 Genocide survivors. In his 90s, he's still going strong. He's a great artist, a great humanitarian, and an inspiring man."

This year, Arpa will present 25 feature, documentary, short and animated films from Armenia, Greece, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jamaica, Lebanon, Netherlands, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States. The festival includes works by J. Michael Hagopian, Gary Null, Apo Torosyan, Eddie Deleon, Peter Musurlian, Arbi Ohanian, Vartan Latyre, John Putch, Armand Ghazarian, Shant Hamassian, Dorothee Forma, Hovik Thomasian, and Manja Wilkinson. For a complete schedule of films, visit

For sponsorship and tickets for the Arpa Gala and Awards Banquet call (323) 663-1882 or email affma_filmfestival@yahoo.com.

Chookaszian Joins CSUF Armenian Studies Program

FRESNO, Calif.—Professor Levon Chookaszian, UNESCO chair of the department of art history at Yerevan State University, has been appointed the sixth Henry S. Khazadian Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies at Fresno State for the Fall 2006 semester.

Chookaszian will be teaching a three-unit course, Armenian Studies 120T, "Armenian Massacres and Genocide Reflected in Armenian Art of the 20th Century."

The Armenian Massacres of 1895 to 1896 and of 1905 to 1907 stimulated the appearance of topics related to those events in the works of Armenian painters. The first artist who represented the acts of violence and ethnic cleaning was Haroutyune Shamshinian (1856 to 1914). Later, numerous Armenian artworks were produced by different artists depicting those horrible pages of Armenian modern history.

During the Armenian genocide, certain painters became the eyewitnesses of the deportation of the Armenian people from their native lands and portrayed those homeless people, sometimes even endangering their own lives.

The mass tragedies of those years created the generations of orphan painters who grow up in orphanages in foreign countries and produced art-works full of sadness and nostalgia, until the end of their lives. The horrors that they experienced, in certain cases, were incorporated in symbolic or surrealistic ways. The course will cover artists working in the Armenian Diaspora, as well as during the era of the Soviet Union. The repatriation of Armenians from the Middle East and Europe to Armenia during the 1940s and 1950s helped to advance the education of art in Armenia and brought a breath of fresh air in the whole culture.

The appointment of Chookaszian as Kazan Visiting Professor follows that of Dr. Richard Hovannisian (Fall 2000), Dr. Robert Hewsen (Fall 2001), Dr. Barbara Merguerian (Fall 2002), Dr. Ara Sanjian (Fall 2003), and Dr. James Reid (Spring 2006).

Chookaszian did his undergraduate work in Armenian language and literature and his graduate work in Armenian art at Yerevan State University. He furthered his graduate studies at Moscow State University with special emphasis on Byzantine art and European art of the Middle Ages. His first doctoral degree in art history was defended at the Art Institute of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, Tbilisi (1981),



Poor Tom's Almanac

BY TOM VARTABEDIAN

THE JURY'S OUT ON THIS ONE

I have always considered it my All-American duty to serve on a juried trial.

But why must they make it so difficult on me? My notice arrived in the mail a month ago. I was to report to a federal courthouse in Boston for what appeared to be a 3-week commitment overlapping July and August. With the Ted Williams tunnel down and all the problems circumventing The Big Dig, I would have preferred a root canal. "Be prepared for the worst," said my nephew. "Once they get you, they'll own you."

My nephew represented a voice of experience. He got the same notice earlier this year and wound up on a murder trial that lasted two months. The guy had to put his wife and job on hold, everything that comprised his daily life, and sit in a courtroom for eight hours a day listening to cross-examination.

"I knew someone who was committed for a year," said this police chief I know. "She wound up losing her business and was a basket case when it was over. Lots of luck."

I served on one jury in my life. It involved a manslaughter trial in Salem District Court and for some reason, I was appointed the foreman. After hours of deliberation, we found the defendant guilty as charged and sent him away.

I had to stand up before a courtroom full of people and deliver the verdict. My heart skipped a beat that day some 15 years ago and I always thought there might be some retaliation when the culprit was discharged from prison. I have no sympathy for anyone arrested five times for DWI—the last of which resulted in the death of a young pedestrian.

"What if that were my daughter?" I wondered.

The trip to Boston at such a tenuous time was a bit intimidating. I chose the rail system as opposed to a drive. The thought of traffic jams and diversions made this a quick decision. A 30-minute ride from Southern New Hampshire to the train depot in Haverhill got me aboard the 6:05. I had to report by 8 a.m.

The commute to North Station was no pushover. An air-conditioning malfunction found me in a sweatbox with other patrons who were quickly melting away on this hot and humid morning. An hour later, we arrived in Boston drenched to the skin. I hopped a bus to the courthouse for another dollar and arrived 15 minutes to the good, just enough time to grab a coffee and admire the view overlooking the harbor.

Visions of harried business types and somewhat organized confusion in Boston made me feel like a fish out of water. I often wondered what would prompt someone to work in such a hotbed and spend hours each week in congestion when 10-minute proximity to a job was much more enticing.

The jury room was a study in humanities. People read and idled the time away. Six out of every 10 carried a water bottle. Most were sheepish from the early hour. One woman was knitting an afghan. She probably could have finished it by the time her commitment had ended.

A bald guy next to me wondered if I had a magic marker. He wanted to draw a swastika on his scalp to influence the judge.

"My wife said I should bring a copy of 'Mein Kampf' to the courtroom," he laughed. "That would get me off."

I couldn't stoop so low, much less think about it. As much as it inconvenienced my schedule at work, a part of me was actually looking forward to serving on a jury, just to see the government process at work.

Just to let you know, I struck out swinging. By the time they filled three courtrooms four hours later, I got the word my services were no longer required and I could go home. I appeared once before a judge for a private consultation. He inquired about my previous jury experience and my job, and then sent me on my way. Simple as that.

The train ride home was just as unbearable. An 80-minute wait inside the train station got me aboard a car with no air-conditioning once again. I took a seat next

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

AuthorHouse Releases Boghos Kupelian's 'African Symphony'

MONTROSE, Calif.—Raymond Boghos Kupelian is an adopted child of Africa. A native Armenian, his 20-year sojourn there cultivated his attraction to the landscape and its people. His acclaimed works about the tragedy of Africa and the plight of the natives were first published in Armenian, and one of his vivid collections of short stories, *African Symphony* (now available through AuthorHouse), is now available in English.

"At the age of 23, I set my feet on the African continent and was overwhelmed by the colorfulness of its daily life, the breathtaking beauty of its nature, the secrecy hidden behind the thickness of its forest and, especially, the universally extended boundary of poverty and hunger," Kupelian writes.

In this collection, which includes his captivating art pieces of African scenes and people, Kupelian cap-

tures the heartbeat of the modern realities of Africa. With poignant descriptions and sensual tones, his stories are vibrant and emotionally affecting.

Ishkhan Jimbashian, an author and literary critic, describes the stories:

"Kupelian's heroes represent the spectrum of West African society: from the sand boys and domestic helpers to the president of the republic and civil servants, from the underage murderer and illicit diamond dealer to the primeval fisherman, the sophisticated scholar of ancient Greek and golf club guru, these are the characters that allow Kupelian to depict the daily struggles, but also the complex interracial relations, prejudices and hatred that suffuse the continent."

In these vivid portrayals of anguish and hope, the author writes that his more than 40 years of writing

about Africa has an important purpose. "I came to the conclusion that my writing experience was a journey undertaken with a mission to discover and tell the truth, to try to put an end to the suffering of millions of unfortunate people who are created in the image of Almighty God. If, by some chance, through my writings, I succeed in bringing even a little relief to the underprivileged people of the world, in order to stop man's inhumanity to man, and provide some pleasure of reading to others, I will consider myself rewarded."

Kupelian has written more than 10 books. *African Symphony* is the second of his publications, and its stories were written in the 1970s: He currently lives in Montrose, Calif.

For more information, visit www.raymondkupelian.com.

For a review of *African Symphony*, see the Critics' Forum column on page 14.

Photographers Participate in First Open Air Pan-Armenian Festival

(Armenpress)—The First Pan-Armenian photo-festival, "Under the Open Sky," began on August 9 in Yerevan, with the participation of 40 professional photographers and beginners from Armenia and the Diaspora. The open-air photo festival was organized by the National Association of Armenian Photographers in cooperation with "Vega" company. The festival lasted for three days, and presented 200 works related to different themes, including the crash of the Armavia airplane A-320, on May 3.

The head of the National Association of Armenian Photographers Sergey Hakobian said that the festival has been organized during one month and a half and is aimed at the development of photography in Armenia.

"Armenian photographers have great potential and our association will do everything possible to make the festival Pan-Armenian and annual," he said, adding that in future they will try to establish relations with a number of international organizations dealing with photography and participate in international festivals presenting Armenia with the eyes of Armenian photographers.

The head of the association also noted that photographers from Turkey and Iran also presented their works, though because of short time many of the representatives of the diaspora could not participate in the initiative.

Seventeen

In that remote spring,
You were springtime,
Radiant, dreamlike,
When I first met you
In fields of
Blood-red flowers...

All the girls
Born that year
Have now turned seventeen.

Those fields are now
Red again, with real blood,

And yet,
I am still
The very same
Fragile juvenile...
Even with the beard.

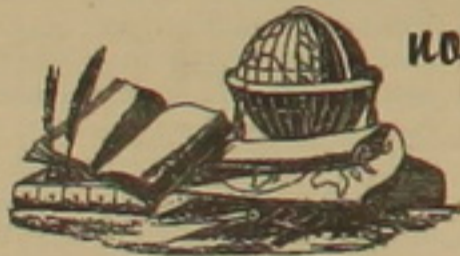
—By Varand

Translated by Tatul Sonentz

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from Uncle Garabed's notebook



Selectivity

Most men who rail against women are railing at one woman only.

Remy de Gourmont

From the Trivia File

Mississippi, which is usually indicated to mean "Father of Waters," is actually two words from the Chippewa language, "mici" meaning large and "zibi" meaning river.

German Proverb

A great war leaves a country with three armies—an army of cripples, an army of mourners, and an army of thieves.

Double-entendre

In the reign of George II, the See of York falling vacant, and his Majesty being at a loss for a fit person to appoint to the exalted office, asked the opinion of the Rev. Dr. Mountain,

who had raised himself, by his remarkably facetious temper, from being the son of a beggar to the See of Durham. The doctor wittily replied, "Hadst thou faith as a grain of mustard-seed, thou wouldst say to this Mountain" (at the same time laying his hand on his breast), "Be removed, and be cast into the sea (See)". The king laughed heartily, and forthwith conferred the preferment on the facetious doctor.

Examiner and Examinee

A college student walked into his ornithology class to find four birds with bags over their heads, showing only their feet. "What's this?" he asked. "It's an exam. You must identify the birds by looking at their feet." "What a stupid test!" blurted the student. "What's your name?" demanded the angry professor. "You tell me," said the student as he pulled up the legs of his pants.

One of a Kind

Edo: What made George Washington such a great President?

Bedo: He never blamed any of the country's problems on the previous administration.

What's in a Name?

Nazarian: Hebrew or Arabic in derivation, identified respectively as a geographic location and a descriptive term, *Nazar* may be the diminutive form of *Nazaret(h)*, Jesus Christ's home town, or see, eyesight, glance.

Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island Celebrates 50th Anniversary

By ARPİE SHIRAGIAN

PROVIDENCE, R.I.—This year the Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island is celebrating a long existence in the Armenian community of Rhode Island with a gala concert on September 9 at Rhode Island College.

From its inception, hundreds of volunteers have devoted their time and talent to the Armenian cultural heritage through music. Their aim is to keep alive the Armenian spirit and never forget their past. In appreciation of their time and devotion, the chorale is compiling a list of all its members since 1954 to be listed in the concert program.

Week after week, the chorale practices under the direction of its able and talented composer and conductor, Konstantin Petrossian, accompanied by Mari Panossian.

The Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island, also known as the Armenian Community Chorus of Rhode Island, was founded in 1954 by at Boston Conservatory conductor and violinist Rouben Gregorian.

Under his leadership, the Armenian Community Chorus performed at Lincoln Center in New York, where the group sang Armenian *Sharagans* (liturgical hymns) and music from Gomidas. Michael



The Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island was founded in 1954 by Boston Conservatory conductor and violinist Rouben Gregorian

Kroian, a teacher at Warwick Veterans High School and a graduate of the University of Rhode Island, assisted Gregorian on many occasions, who continued his services until 1986.

After a hiatus of a few years, the chorale resumed its activities in 1995 under the direction of Petrossian, changing its name to the Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island. Members of the three Armenian churches in the area constitute the roster of the present chorale.

They have performed *Sharagans*, works of many Armenian composers, and occasionally American popular tunes upon request. Artists of re-

nown, such as Lily Chukasian, Lucine Amaral and Ara Berberian, have performed with the chorale, accompanied by the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra.

The group also performed the *Anoosh Opera* with soloists from Armenia. In addition to its annual gala concerts, the chorale also performs on Martyrs' Day, Christmas, and other special occasions.

The chorale has also entertained invitations to sing in nearby states, sometimes joining the local choral group.

The event begins at 7 p.m. at Rhode Island College Roberts Hall in Providence, R.I.

Onto Bigger and Bluer Things

WHOI President and Director Robert Gagosian Steps Down

(Oceanus)—On June 5, Robert B. Gagosian announced that he plans to step down as president and director of Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), a position he has held for 12 years.

Effective July 17, James R. Luyten, executive vice president and former director of research, became acting president and director. A transition has been in motion for some time, as Luyten, 64, has accepted increasing responsibility over the past year for key issues and challenges facing the institution. Luyten agreed to serve for the duration of the search for a successor to Gagosian, which is expected to take at least 12 months.

Gagosian cited interest in "moving to a role of broader impact to advance oceanography nationally and internationally." He has assumed the title president emeritus.

James Moltz, chairman of the Board of Trustees noted that Gagosian, 61, had achieved his goals, including the creation of the cross-disciplinary Ocean Institutes (Ocean Life, Coastal Ocean, Deep Ocean Exploration, and Ocean and Climate Change); completing a project to redevelop the Quissett campus and construct new laboratories; launching the new coastal research vessel, *Tioga*; securing funding to replace the 42-year old research submarine, *Alvin*; and completing 75 percent of the institution's current campaign by raising \$150 million.

Stepping in as acting director of research, a position vacated by Luyten's move, is Laurence Madin, director of the Ocean Life Institute, and former chair of the WHOI biology department. Madin has worked in marine biology for more than 35 years, coming to WHOI as a postdoctoral scholar in 1974.

He has maintained his science program, which concentrates on the ecology and behavior of gelatinous, open ocean marine animals.

He holds an A.B. degree from University of California at Berkeley and a Ph.D. degree from University of California at Davis both in zool-



Robert B. Gagosian (right) with Board of Trustees chairman Jim Moltz

ogy. Succeeding Madin as director of the Ocean Life Institute (OLI) is Cabell Davis.

He came to WHOI as a postdoctoral investigator in the biology department in 1982, became a senior scientist in 1999, and was an OLI fellow from 2003 to 2005. Davis combines high-resolution digital holography, in-situ DNA analysis, and autonomous underwater vehicle technology to explore marine plankton population dynamics and distributions.

Gagosian was appointed director of Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in 1994, following a career as a marine geochemist that included chair of the WHOI Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry department, six years as WHOI director of research and two as a senior associate director.

He joined WHOI in 1972 as an assistant scientist, studying substances produced by marine organisms and the chemical transformation of these substances as they disperse through the water column to the seafloor.

His research led to the discovery that the atmosphere plays an impor-

tant role in transporting material from the land to the open ocean. He is the author or co-author of some 85 scientific papers and several technical reports.

He holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a Ph.D. degree in organic chemistry from Columbia University.

Luyten was appointed director of research in 1994 and executive vice president in 2002.

He previously held a series of administrative positions, including chair of the WHOI Physical Oceanography Department.

He came to the institution in 1968 as a summer fellow in geophysical fluid dynamics and joined the staff as an assistant scientist in 1971.

His area of research is the observation and modeling of ocean currents, including the general circulation of the North Atlantic, the Gulf Stream, and equatorial current systems.

He holds an A.B. degree from Reed College in chemistry and physics, and, from Harvard University, a master's degree in physics and a Ph.D. degree in chemical physics.

Sayat Nova Celebrates 20th Anniversary

When Apo Ashjian, director and founder of the Sayat Nova Dance Company (SNDC), decided to have a special celebration marking the 20th anniversary of the company, he asked Armand Andreassian to be involved and assist in the planning of a special event. Originally, the plan was to focus on a gala dinner-dance in an elegant Boston venue but it soon evolved into including performances at the Cutler Majestic Theater in Boston's theater district.

A committee was formed shortly thereafter in May 2005 to work on executing these plans. Andreassian was made general chair of the committee and Margrit Atinikian was made chair of the gala party sub-committee. The committee consisting of about 20 individuals, some of who are related to the dancers, has been meeting regularly to produce desired results of fundraising and exposing the SNDC to a more diverse audience.

Final details are being worked on for the Gala dinner-dance, which will take place on Saturday, September 16 at the Fairmont Copley Plaza. This event will feature, in addition to a dinner and dancing, a silent and live auction. Auction items include a week's stay in a New Hampshire resort condo, a pair of choice tickets to an upcoming Charles Aznavour concert and a week in an apartment in Italy. The cocktail reception and auction preview is from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and will feature music by a flamenco guitarist. Dinner and dancing will follow with a brief break for the live auction. Donation is \$150 per person. The performances at the Cutler Majestic Theater are scheduled for Saturday, September 30 at 8 p.m., and Sunday, October 1 at 3 p.m. Ticket prices for the performances range from \$20 to \$75.

The Sayat Nova Dance Company has just returned from a critically acclaimed seven-performance tour in Armenia. They will be dancing to new music with exquisite new costumes, which will be making their Boston premier at these performances.

Knights Of Vartan Awards Research Grants

PHILADELPHIA, Penn.—At its annual convocation held in Philadelphia, the Knights of Vartan announced that the Board of Trustees of its Fund for Armenian Studies has awarded two grants totaling \$9,500 for Armenian Studies following a public solicitation for proposals.

Grants were awarded to Vahan Baibourjian from Armenia from the mid 1890s massacres by the *Hamidite regime* in the rise of Kemalism and the Lausanne conference; and Hrach Martirosyan from Armenia for continuation of his studies at the University of Leiden, Holland, under professor Weitenburg's Armenian Studies program.

The Knights of Vartan is a 90-year old fraternal organization established in 1916, comprising Armenian men and who, together with their affiliated organization Daughters of Vartan, are dedicated to the preservation and advancement of the faith, culture and heritage of the Armenian people.

Three Noted Alumni Join ASA Board of Trustees

NEW YORK—The Armenian Students' Association (ASA) recently announced the addition of three new members to its Board of Trustees. Gregory T. Arzooonian, Pauline Getzoyan and Arthur Halvajian were officially elected to the board during the ASA's 97th Annual Convention Meeting on June 10. Also re-elected was longtime Board member Brian Assadourian.

Each of the three newcomers traces his or her involvement in the ASA via the organization's branch levels, the first two with Providence and the third with New Jersey. Arzooonian has served many executive functions with the Providence branch, most recently as its treasurer, while Getzoyan has been instrumental in strengthening the ASA's public relations throughout the greater Providence area. Halvajian established and was the first president of the New Jersey branch; as well, he is a former Board member, having previously served six Board terms.

The ASA's Board of Trustees is made up of nine members that are elected to terms of three years apiece. In addition to the above-mentioned four individuals, the members include chairperson Azarig Kooloian, Jr., along with George Chakoian, Rafi Hovsepian, R. Carol Norigian and Robert Semonian. The term for all four elected members is set as a standard three-year period.

Headquartered in Warwick, RI, the ASA is the oldest major Armenian organization founded in the United States, established in 1910. The purposes of this association are educational and charitable, in that it shall encourage educational pursuits by Armenians in America and the raising of their intellectual standards, provide financial assistance in the form of scholarships and loans to deserving Armenian students, develop fellowship among them, cultivate in them the spirit of service in the public interest, and acquaint them and the entire American community with Armenian culture.

For more information, call (401) 461-6114 or visit www.asainc.org.

Lebanon

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Hezbollah positions and the Israeli Forces continuing their bombardment of Southern Lebanon and the Southern Suburbs of Beirut. Hezbollah continued to inflict casualties on the IDF in the days prior to the cease-fire, killing 24 Israeli troops on August 12, the most in one day during the conflict.

Immediately after the cease-

gets. The Lebanese Cabinet was then expected to meet again on August 13 to discuss the implementation of the resolution, including the disarmament of Hezbollah, but the meeting was canceled amid rumors of disagreements between Hezbollah and the Lebanese government. The Lebanese cabinet has still not agreed on if, and how it plans to disarm Hezbollah.

In the days following the cease-fire, both sides, as well as UN observers, reported some

gion.

Violence Precedes Cease-Fire

Even after the official cease-fire, sporadic violence continued throughout Lebanon, with Israel reporting that its troops killed at least half a dozen Hezbollah fighters after 8 a.m. local time on August 14. The I.D.F. had previously declared that despite the cease-fire, it retained the right to defend itself against Hezbollah fighters oper-



fire, tens of thousands of internally displaced refugees began returning to Southern Lebanon, with some agencies estimating 20 percent have been made homeless by Israeli bombardment and shelling. The Israeli Army, starting on August 14, started warning refugees, saying Southern Lebanon was still unsafe, and despite the cease-fire, the region saw some clashes between IDF troops and Hezbollah fighters. The Lebanese government, meanwhile, warned that roads and other essential infrastructure were completely destroyed in the area. Some agencies also expressed concerns regarding unexploded ammunition, with some reports saying civilians have been killed due to after finding unexploded shells and missiles.

The death toll of the conflict, as it stood when the end of hostilities took effect, stood at more than 1,000. Lebanese officials reported 908 Lebanese, mostly civilians, had died, while the IDF reported 159 Israelis had died, including about 43 civilians. Lebanon reported close to 4,000 injured, while on the Israeli side, about 100 were seriously injured. 915,000 in Lebanon and about half a million in Israel had become refugees. Lebanese authorities also say an unknown number of bodies remain buried in rubble.

The conflict has cost about \$1.1 billion of damage in Israel, and about \$2.7 billion of damage in Lebanon, excluding damage to its infrastructure, according to the BBC.

Cease-Fire Declared

A day after UN Security Council resolution 1701 was declared, the Lebanese cabinet met and unanimously approved the resolution.

The cabinet includes two ministers representing Hezbollah. And then, on August 13, the Israeli cabinet also approved the resolution. Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, in a televised address, approved to the resolution, but expressed serious reservations and said Israeli troops on Lebanese territory would remain tar-

clashes in south Lebanon, but said there had been no major violations of the cease-fire as of August 17.

Also on August 17, the Lebanese Army began deploying 15,000 of its troops south of the Litani River, into areas that have been under Hezbollah control for decades, in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1701. The Lebanese troops will be joined by 30,000 UN troops, and are set to extend the Lebanese government's control over the south of the country. Sporadic violence continued throughout the region, with Israel reporting that its troops killed at least half a dozen Hezbollah fighters after 8 a.m. local time on August 14. The IDF had previously declared that despite the cease-fire, it retained the right to defend itself against Hezbollah fighters operating inside IDF-controlled territory.

The Israeli Forces began a partial withdrawal from southern Lebanon almost immediately after the cease-fire was declared, but some Israeli officials, including ex-prime minister Simon Peres, said some Israeli troops might remain in Lebanon for weeks or months, until the area is under the complete control of UN and Lebanese troops.

The Security Council has been discussing the composition and mandate of the UN force that is to be deployed to the region. The already-existing UN force in Lebanon, UNIFIL, is set to be expanded from 2,000 to 15,000 soldiers, and troops must, as stipulated by the cease-fire resolution, have the mandate to act if they observe any violations. On August 16, the French Defense minister, Michele Alliot-Marie, announced that France would lead the expanded multi-national force, but said French troops would need a specific mandate and sufficient resources. Other possible contributors to the multi-national forces include Malaysia, Italy, Belgium, Finland, and Turkey. The UN Force is to have 3,500 troops in two or three weeks, but some officials have said it could take months to send 15,000 peacekeepers to the re-

gion. Immediately before the cease-fire, Israel stepped up its land and air campaign, reaching the Litani River, 28 miles into Lebanon, and pounding the southern suburbs of Beirut, leveling buildings and blocks.

On August 13, a day before the cease-fire officially took effect, Hezbollah launched at least 250 rockets into northern Israel, killing one civilian. Meanwhile, Israel pounded the southern Lebanese cities of Tyre, Ali Al-Nahri and Brital, killing at least 11 people.

August 12 was the deadliest day for Israeli soldiers in the conflict, as 24 troops died in clashes in Lebanon, including five who died when Hezbollah destroyed an Israeli military helicopter. Israel continued its air strikes, hitting targets in the Southern suburbs of Beirut.

On August 11, the Israeli Air Force attacked a convoy of Lebanese army vehicles, accompanied by about 1,000 civilians, killing at least four people. The IDF continued to launch raids against towns and villages in southern Lebanon, while air strikes hit bridges and towns deep inside Lebanon. Hezbollah launched 150 rockets, injuring ten civilians in Israel.

Both Sides Claim Victory

The Israeli Army, after the ceasefire, claimed it had severely damaged Hezbollah. Officials said the IDF had killed as many as 500 Hezbollah fighters and handicapped the organization's infrastructure and leadership. Immediately before an end of hostilities was declared, the IDF said it killed a senior Hezbollah leader. However, many Israelis dispute the claims of an Israeli victory. Some in the Knesset challenged Ehud Olmert's government, saying it had failed to destroy Hezbollah and put an end to the threat faced by Israel. The Israeli media was also skeptical of Olmert's government's claims of victory.

Hezbollah, meanwhile, claimed that it had driven the Israeli force out, and had sur-

vived while inflicting severe casualties on the enemy.

Throughout the Arab world, Hezbollah has been elevated and has become a major force resisting Israel and the West. The Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmedinajad, On August 15, delivered a speech in which he said "God's promised had come true" and called Hezbollah fighters "pious young men" who resist an offensive from the outside.

On the same day, Syrian President Bashar Assad delivered a speech in Damascus, saying Hezbollah had destroyed America's vision of the Middle East, and declaring a victory for the whole Arab world.

Iran and Syria are seen as the main backers of Hezbollah, and consider Israel an enemy.

Relief and Refugees Arrive in Southern Lebanon

Lebanese refugees, who had left the war area to find shelter in the relatively safe north, began returning to their homes after the cease-fire. Traffic on major Lebanese highways came to a standstill as thousands of cars making their way to the south clogged roads. Pictures showed civilians walking back from Syria through bomb craters

and cars driving on bridges and roads destroyed by Israeli air strikes.

Israeli authorities warned civilians that the area was still considered unsafe, but many defied the warnings, returning home bearing Hezbollah flags and posters of its leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah.

Relief Agencies and the Lebanese Army quickly began repairing damaged bridges and roads, and a makeshift bridge over the Litani River allowed for humanitarian aid to start flowing into the war-struck regions.

On August 17, Robin Lodge, spokesman for the U.N. World Food Program commented on the humanitarian efforts, saying "we are not out of the woods yet, but we can say our operations are much less problematic now and we welcome the positive developments in the past few days." On the same day, the International Red Cross also reported it had sent at least 6 convoys of food and other necessities to southern Lebanon, and that its technicians had started working on repairs to water pipes damaged by Israeli air strikes.

The Lebanese government cautioned returning refugees,

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COMMUNIQUE

By the Spiritual Leadership of the Armenian Community in Lebanon

Based on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701, while deploying in Southern Lebanon, the Lebanese Army will be assisted by multinational forces, who will arrive to reinforce UNIFIL units who are already there to monitor the situation.

Consultations on the formation of this multinational force and many countries are considered as candidates to contribute troops, and Turkey also is expressing readiness to participate in the peacekeeping mission in Lebanon.

The participation of a Turkish military unit in peacekeeping operations must be considered as unacceptable considering that Turkey is a state facing many instances of violations of human rights and international law. To say the least, it is strange for Turkey to present itself with the mask of enforcer of justice and peace. The continuing occupation of Northern Cyprus, the obstinate denial of the Armenian Genocide and the trampling upon the rights the rights of the Kurds are only but few of the issues revealing the true face of the Turkish state. Lebanon too was not left untouched by the Turkish atrocities. And today, the Israeli-Turkish military pact does not allow Turkey to represent itself as an impartial peacekeeper.

Based on these facts, the Armenian spiritual leaders of Lebanon, call upon the Lebanese government in the name of the Armenian community, not to accept Turkey's offer to participate in the peacekeeping force.

ARF Statement

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Force in Lebanon. The Central Committee underlined that the composition of these forces must be accepted by all Lebanese parties and factions. The Central Committee reiterated that the deployment of Turkish troops in south Lebanon under the umbrella of the U.N. Forces is unacceptable to the Armenian community in Lebanon, and expressed hope that the Lebanese government would take a similar stance on the issue, given that Turkey has ongoing disagreements with many nations, and also given its black history, filled with massacres and persecution, such as the Armenian Genocide, which the Turkish government continues to deny. In addition, Turkey has signed military pacts with Israel that threaten the peace process in the region.

We all know that Lebanon was not spared under Ottoman dictatorship. Lebanese of all religions and denominations were persecuted, abused, famished, and murdered by Turkish authorities, and Turkey opposed all who stood up for freedom. During its reign of Lebanon, Turkey committed inhumane acts.

Turkey must first rethink its past and calculations before thinking of participating in multinational peacekeeping forces.

We insist, that placing any Turkish troops in Southern Lebanon under the umbrella of the U.N. Forces is an insult to the collective memory of the Armenian people.

A.R.F. Lebanon Central Committee
August 16, 2005
Beirut

International Press

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investigators examining whether the trip constituted an unauthorized "intelligence activity" by the Bush administration. It has also insisted that the meeting's purpose was merely to follow up on a tip about threats to U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and that the Ghorbanifar intelligence pipeline was quickly shut down.

The real story, as I learned in the course of a two-year investigation that took me from sterile Washington offices to smoky exile pubs in Paris, is more interesting. It's also not over. As the crisis with Iran deepens and moves to the fore, the Bush administration is putting in place key elements of the vision spun in part by the men at the Rome meeting. In a new campaign to ramp up pressure on the Iranian regime, millions of dollars are pouring into exile groups, anti-regime propaganda, pro-democracy projects, and intelligence gathering. State Department and intelligence personnel are being deployed to the region and new Iran operations offices are being "stood up" in the State Department and Pentagon—the latter even featuring some of the names familiar from the pre-Iraq-war Office of special Plans.

In his 1988 memoir of the Iran-Contra affair, *Perilous Statecraft*, Ledeen described the role of the "trusted envoy," a kind of freelance government agent who shuttles between world leaders with few of the constraints of a government job but all of the thrill. "There are certain kinds of secret information that move between friendly countries quite outside the routine channels of government," he wrote. "The bearers of these messages can be anything from businessmen and journalists to actors and trusted personal assistants; they are rarely top officials themselves. Frequently, their names do not even appear on official calendars or appointment schedules; they are slipped in between the formal appointments, or they are ushered into the leaders' private residences on weekends or after dinner."

It was the kind of role Ledeen, who counts among his contacts Karl Rove and National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley, has relished for 20 years. Having come of age in the 1960s at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he says he was friendly with the activists who helped launch Students for a Democratic Society, he later became an avid anticommunist. While living in Italy in the 1970s, he was a political historian, a correspondent for *The New Republic*, and a consultant to SISMI on terrorism issues. Adventurous, impatient, and seemingly unconstrained by the professional boundaries of any of his multiple avocations, Ledeen eventually worked in the Reagan administration at the National Security Council, where he helped set up the Iran-Contra missile sales to Tehran—and became a close ally of Ghorbanifar, Washington's liaison to the Islamic regime.

Ledeen—who has argued in many articles and media appearances that Tehran is the chief sponsor of Islamic terrorism—is part of a subclan of neoconservatives for whom Iran is not an afterthought to Iraq but

has long been the primary target. For almost a quarter century, these hardliners have been waiting for Washington to go on the offensive against the Islamic Republic. But to engineer such a radical shift, to outmaneuver a CIA and State Department gone soft on the mullahs, as they saw it, they had to introduce the Pentagon and the White House to an alternate intelligence network—much as Chalabi and his Iraqi National Congress had done with their clique of Iraq "insiders." In that pursuit, the Rome back channel was the opening gambit.

As several Iran-contra histories and congressional investigations relate, Ghorbanifar has alternately bedeviled and infuriated most every U.S. official who ever dealt with him. Reagan's own national security adviser, Bud McFarlane, once said that while Ghorbanifar "seemed to have a rather agile and creative mind for intrigue," he was "corrupt, duplicitous...not to be trusted." Even Ledeen himself admits to never having figured out what Ghorbanifar was really up to: "Was he, as some have suggested, an infiltrator within the ranks of the émigrés...? Was he simply looking for useful contacts in the hopes of reviving his business career...? Or was he a man with a fairly consistent political agenda, constantly searching for some way to change the policies of the Iranian government...? The very fact that even those who worked quite closely with him wonder about his real identity testifies to the complexity of his personality and the cunning of which he is capable."

With a persona somewhere between a salesman and a Syriana-style operative, Ghorbanifar operates in a twilight world of exiles, international arms dealers, front companies, passports in multiple names and nationalities, and Swiss bank accounts, all suffused with a kind of desperate con artistry based on the larger dysfunction of the U.S.-Iranian relationship of the past quarter century. For 25 years now, Ghorbanifar has been selling American conservatives on the promise of regime change in Tehran; at the same time, and with the tacit knowledge of his U.S. partners, he has operated as a freelance agent of that regime.

Looking with his enormous mustache, balding pate, and cigar like a wheeler-dealer out of central casting, the 60-year-old Ghorbanifar lives with his family in Nice and maintains a Paris presence through an aging aide who happens to be Iran's former minister of commerce. In conversation he is cajoling, flattering, with a glint of a sharper edge beneath. "When you come to Paris, we will chat for hours," he told me. The intelligence he has given his American contacts has been "1 million percent" accurate. For \$20 million, he would open doors all over Tehran for his American paymasters. And so on.

During Iran-Contra, Ghorbanifar conveyed Iran's weapons wish list to the Americans, via Ledeen. In return for sophisticated missiles to be used in Iran's war against Iraq, he promised, Tehran would intervene to gain the release of U.S. hostages held by Hezbollah in Lebanon; what's more, he told his American and Israeli contacts, the weapons sales would bolster regime moderates, in the midst

then, he claimed, of a power struggle.

Disgraced in Washington along with his coconspirators, Ghorbanifar faded from view in the late 1980s. His associates in France say that he has continued to set up import-export projects, including a recent deal in Spain to sell peas to Sudan, and that his business of late has involved trips to Iraq. He is also known to have maintained a relationship with a company in Milan called Atlas Trading, according to U.S. intelligence sources. The company, *Corriere della Sera* journalist and terrorism expert Guido Olimpio told me, is one of several that acquire technology from Europe on behalf of the Iranian regime—marking another instance of Ghorbanifar serving the rulers whom he simultaneously seeks to help overthrow.

To Ghorbanifar, as to his American friends, 9/11 offered a chance for vindication. Ledeen has said that not long after the attacks he got a call from Ghorbanifar offering information—from his brother Ali, who once ran a rug store in Paris—about a threat to U.S. forces in Afghanistan; it was that tip that would provide the ostensible reason for the Rome meeting. Also among Ghorbanifar's intelligence wares was a tip about an alleged Iranian threat to assassinate former president George H.W. Bush, which the Secret Service checked out and deemed useless, as well as a bizarre tale about smugglers getting sick from radiation poisoning after transporting highly enriched uranium from Iraq to Iran back in the 1990s.

But it was one thing for Ghorbanifar to rekindle his rapport with Ledeen; it was another to get the Bush administration to start paying attention. That would require more strategizing—and as Douglas Feith, the Pentagon's undersecretary for policy, noted in a 2004 letter to the *Washington Monthly*, the initiative did not come from the Pentagon. "DoD learned from the White House that there were some Iranians who had information about terrorist threats to U.S. forces in Afghanistan and who wanted to defect," Feith wrote. "It turned out that the Iranians did not want to defect, but they did want to share information directly with the U.S. Government. The Iranians did not, however, want to deal with the CIA." It was classic Ghorbanifar-Ledeen fare—the hint to the White House, the handoff to the Pentagon, the quickly deflated promises, the end run around the CIA.

Not that the CIA had any desire to be involved. CIA headquarters "was extremely goosy about this," a former senior agency official knowledgeable about the Rome meeting told me. "You don't want to be sucked into Iran-Contra. Many of us were around when that happened, and went over a cliff with them. [Then-CIA Director George] Tenet was on the Senate intelligence committee staff when that happened. The answer from Langley was: We don't want anything to do with this." When the CIA learned that the Rome meeting was going ahead, its local station chief even fired off a memo to Langley reporting that an unauthorized covert action might be taking place—a memo that would eventually find its

way into the files of Senate staffers investigating the matter. The State Department likewise complained to the White House, and then-Deputy National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley reportedly promised that the channel would be shut down. (Hadley's office has referred questions about the meeting to the Defense Department, where spokeswoman Lt. Colonel Tracy O'Grady Walsh first told me to email questions, then did not respond.)

Despite the complaints, it appears that the dalliance between U.S. government officials and Ghorbanifar continued beyond the Rome meeting. Rhode would travel to Paris in June 2003 to meet with Ghorbanifar again—a meeting the Pentagon later claimed was "unplanned." Also in June 2003, three months after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, a CIA case officer was sent to meet in Baghdad with a Ghorbanifar associate known to U.S. intelligence officials as a London-based fraudster. As *Newsday's* Knut Royce—who first broke the story of the Rome meeting in 2003—discovered, Ghorbanifar and his associate claimed to have information about a secret cache of weapons-grade uranium in Iraq that Iranian intelligence had allegedly discovered and stolen part of.

At their tense meeting in Iraq, the CIA officer gave the associate a series of test questions, all of which he flunked. Then the officer asked him to provide a small sample of the uranium. He refused and walked out. "He's a fabricator," a former U.S. intelligence official told Royce. "These fabricators were produced by Ghorbanifar. They read headlines, try to cater to your fears, and they draw from real facts."

Ghorbanifar had better luck with Rep. Curt Weldon (R-Pa.), who has met with him in Paris and has now published most of his claims in a book, *Countdown to Terror*, that promises to reveal Iran as "the iron glove behind all our enemies." Weldon's main source, a mysterious Iranian whom the congressman code-names "Ali," is, in fact, Ghorbanifar's longtime business partner and personal secretary, Fereidoun Mahdavi. ("Dear Curt," begins one memo from "Ali" that Weldon quotes in the book. "I confirm again a terrorist attack within the United States is planned before the American elections.") Mahdavi, in turn, told me that the information he gave Weldon came from Ghorbanifar, who appears to have used him as a kind of cut-out—a vehicle for laundering intelligence. U.S. intelligence sources confirmed to me that Weldon has identified Mahdavi as his source. Weldon, they say, has also demanded that Mahdavi be put on the U.S. payroll.

"Anything involving Ghorbanifar is always going to cost a lot of money," former Paris CIA station chief Murray told me after Weldon's book appeared. "His usual first ploy is to try to set up an expensive front company allegedly to do business with Iran. That means you pay for the company and whatever is sold and Ghorbanifar does the business, keeps the books, and uses the 'profits' to fund his nonexistent group in Iran: in short, himself. Some people always fall for it, but nothing ever comes out of it."

On July 9, 2004, the Democratic vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Senator Jay Rockefeller,

stepped to the podium in the Senate Radio and TV Gallery to announce the release of his committee's first report on the intelligence community's pre-Iraq-war mistakes. The report tore into the CIA, finding that the intelligence community had consistently "overstated" the threat of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. But it stopped short of looking at the most troubling issues raised by those failures, chief among them whether the administration had cherry-picked intelligence that served its agenda; those issues would be addressed in a Phase II report that would not be released until after the presidential election. Among the specific targets of that probe, according to a February 2004 document agreed to by the committee, were the still-mysterious intelligence activities of the Feith operation at the Pentagon. Committee investigators were intrigued by documents they had obtained about the Rome meeting, including the cable mentioning a "sizeable financial interest." Under U.S. law, notes one committee staffer, the committee is to be notified of any government intelligence activities. "So if they are conducting intelligence activities and didn't inform us, that's unlawful." (In a separate effort, Democrats on the House Appropriations Committee in 2003 persuaded that committee's chairman, Rep. Bill Young (R-Fla.), to investigate the activities of Feith's office and the Ghorbanifar pipeline, but committee Republicans eventually killed the probe.)

Two years later, the Phase II investigation is still barely limping along. Last August, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman Pat Roberts (R-Kan.), a close White House ally, delayed the process once more by turning the Feith probe over to the Pentagon's inspector general for an inquiry with no specific deadline. By last November, Senate Democrats were so frustrated they literally shut down the Senate until Roberts promised to get things moving. Feith departed the Pentagon in the summer of 2005; even before then, his office had stopped responding to any questions from the Senate committee about its activities, including the Rome meeting. "They freaked out at Defense," the Senate staffer told me. "They said, 'If you're starting a criminal probe, we are not going to cooperate.'"

To many who saw the Iran-Contra scandal unfold, it all adds up to a familiar picture. Jonathan Winer worked for a Senate committee led by John Kerry that, in the mid-1980s, probed rumors of the secret arms deals and of the funneling of the profits to Nicaragua's right-wing Contra rebels. For years as the investigation continued, critics—led by then-congressman Dick Cheney—called us conspiracy nuts," says Winer. The committee kept hearing tips about private individuals secretly carrying out the government's business, he recalls. "Officials tell you none of it is true, because there's no record that any of these things took place. It creates a situation where oversight is practically impossible because official reality is completely misleading, and unofficial reality—which is the truth—does not exist." In the end, the scandal

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Lebanon

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

saying the south of the country was littered with unexploded ammunition, which have injured or killed 18 people since the cease-fire.

The UNHCR refugee agency said it was still unclear how many of the estimated 915,000 people displaced by the conflict were returning home.

By Wednesday August 15, 81,000 of the estimated 150,000 people who had fled to Syria had returned and surveys among the cities of Lebanon's south indicated as many as 600,000 people would pour back into the region by early next

week.

"There is an enormous need in places where people have nothing to go back to," said UNCHR spokeswoman Astrid van Genderen Stort. "We're trying to hit the immediate needs and then look to the longer term reconstruction."

Hezbollah has also been involved in relief work. Hezbollah social workers have begun working with returning refugees in order to rebuild destroyed homes and businesses and provide immediate relief.

Hezbollah Fate Unclear

It is still unclear whether Hezbollah will disarm. Disagreements have been reported within the Lebanese cabinet,

which includes Hezbollah ministers. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said on August 16 that the multi-national forces were not expected to disarm the group, but that a plan had to be drawn up in the future and implemented by all parties concerned, mainly the Lebanese government.

But Rice did say that the UN Forces would help impose an arms embargo on Lebanon, ensuring that the government authorizes all weapons imported into the country.

On the same day, Israeli authorities threatened to renew attacks on Lebanon if Hezbollah refuses to disarm, citing concerns that the multi-national forces, reluctant to impose U.N. resolutions on Hezbollah, might once again

be reduced to passive observers. The Israeli threat came after reports that Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora had reached a deal with Hezbollah that would allow the group to keep its weapons while the government tires to impose the U.N. Resolution.

Armenian Community in Lebanon Rejects Turkish Troops

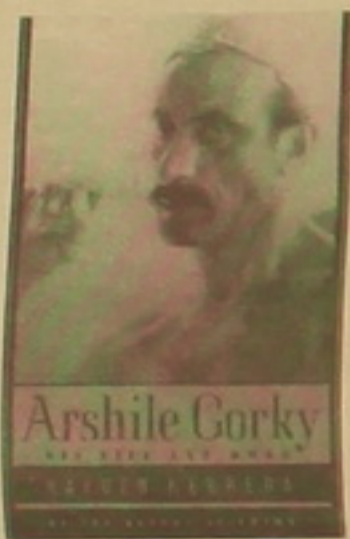
The Armenian community in Lebanon, which for more than a month has been sharing in the suffering of the Lebanese people, expressed deep concerns regarding possible Turkish involvement in the expanded UN multi-national force. The Central Committee of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation released a

statement saying that the involvement of Turkish troops in southern Lebanon would be an insult to the Armenian community.

Also, representatives of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Armenian Catholic Church and the Armenian Evangelical Church in Lebanon released a joint statement, saying the participation of Turkish forces in peacekeeping operations in the region would be unacceptable, given the Turkish government's grim human rights record, the denial of the Armenian Genocide, and its treatment of ethnic Kurds.

Turkish still has not pledged its participation, but has expressed interest in sending troops to join the UNIFIL forces in south Lebanon.

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International Press

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

was uncovered after control of Congress shifted to the Democrats and, simultaneously, more and more evidence was revealed in Iran-Contra-related lawsuits and media investigations.

"What has to happen is, you have to have the press and Congress and the courts all playing their constitutional role for the truth to come out," Winer says. "If any of those components don't function, you can wind up with serious problems."

Comparisons between Ghorbanifar and Chalabi—and there have been a few, from sources including Ledeen himself—are imperfect; for one thing, Ghorbanifar has never shown political ambition. Yet there's a striking parallel in the way that Pentagon hawks relentlessly promoted both players long after they had been deemed unreliable and possibly treacherous by other agencies, in particular the CIA. The difference is that Chalabi's fictions have been exposed in a bloody and costly war, while Iran action is only now moving toward the front burner. And as it does, the notion that Ledeen and other Iran hawks have advocated for so long—that Iran's regime will fall if only the United States will give it a push—is emerging as the main policy trajectory for the Bush administration. In February, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice requested an additional \$75 million for promoting democracy in Iran; that same month, a team of U.S. government Iran experts traveled to Los Angeles to talk to exiles there. State Department Iran watchers are being "forward deployed" to the Persian Gulf and surrounding region; in Washington, think tanks and exile groups are launching Iran initiatives, all of them jostling for the money and launching whisper campaigns against their competitors in a game whose stakes have suddenly risen. More covert measures are also reportedly under way, including the cultivating of proxies among the Kurds and some of Iran's ethnic tribes to gather intelligence in the border regions of Iran; and there have been reports that some in the administration believe missile strikes against Iran's nuclear program would embarrass the regime and lead to a revolution.

For the irrepressible Ledeen, none of this is quite enough. "I was recently asked if I saw signs of action," Ledeen told me in April. "I see nothing." Not much later, when the exile community buzzed with stories to the effect that Ledeen was involved in a new back channel to Iran's rulers, and that Vice President Cheney had authorized the Pentagon to use Ghorbanifar as a source, he shrugged off both rumors. "I can't imagine it. The Pentagon cannot, so far as I know, do intelligence operations without getting the approval of the CIA. It's impossible and illegal." Then he excused himself—he was headed out of town, to Italy, on vacation.

Laura Rozen is a senior correspondent for *The American Prospect*.

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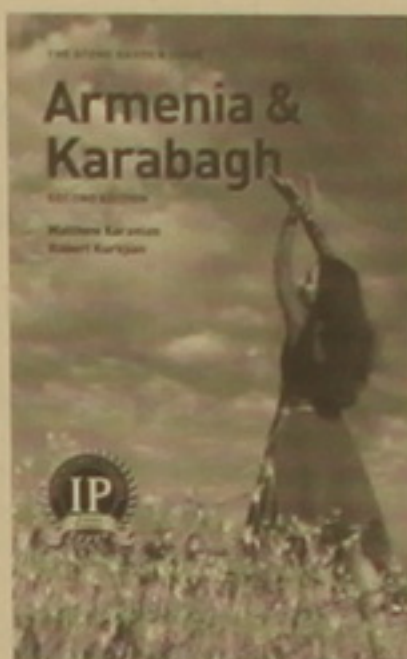
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Poor Tom

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

to a guy dressed as Ben Franklin. No fooling. He even had the square bifocals resting on his nose. Seems he had given an impersonation at a Boston hotel and was headed back to Andover.

"What's your name?" I asked. "Ben Franklin. That's my persona when I'm in character. I'm particularly fond of that time in American history. Life seemed so much more simple back then."

He handed me a business card that read, "Have kite will travel."

Ten minutes later, he pulled out a cellphone and called home.

Chookasjian

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

while he received his second doctorate in the field from the Institute of Art of the Ministry of Culture of Russia, Moscow (2001).

He is an expert on Armenian illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages and recently finished a monograph on the 13th century Armenian painter, Toros Roslin, the most outstanding painter of medieval Armenia. Chookasjian has also published a monograph on Grigor the Miniaturist. For many years, he has been a Senior Fellow and Professor of Armenian Art at the Center for Armenian Studies at Yerevan State University, and a member of the National Committee of UNESCO in Armenia.

Chookasjian is the author of more than 200 articles and reviews for scholarly journals and newspapers as well as numerous entries for encyclopedias. He is also the recipient of several prestigious grants that have helped him pursue his research in Armenian art history. He has participated in many international congresses and symposia on the topic of Armenian, Georgian, Russian, Persian, and Byzantine Art. Chookasjian is fluent in Armenian, Russian, English, French, and German. He and his brother Garegin are the initiators of an Armenian Art Database.

The class will be offered on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 2 - 3:15 p.m. The Fall 2006 semester begins August 28 and the course begins on August 29. The course will be fully illustrated with slides. Community members are invited to enroll in the three-unit course by calling the Armenian Studies Program office. They may also attend the first day of class to enroll. There is a \$50 fee to enroll.

For more information, contact the Armenian Studies Program at (559) 278-2669.

Way with words

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

the end of it for her, her publisher and translator no longer seems so empty.

It's not that she denies having an interest in 1915; far from it. The daughter of a diplomat mother, she remembers growing up in western Europe at a time when Turkish embassy staff were the targets of ASALA, the [Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia].

"We all have our personal dictionaries, and my first perception of the word Armenian was somebody who wanted to kill my mother," she says. "It took me a long time to ask where all this hate was coming from."

Yet she insists The Bastard of Istanbul is much more than a

novel about 1915 and its aftermath.

"First of all it's a book for and about women," she says, referring to the four generations of female characters who make up the novel's fictional universe. "Indirectly, it's about the role women have played in fighting against historical amnesia in Turkey."

The point was understood well by a woman who approached her at a recent book-signing in the south-eastern Turkish city of Diyarbakir.

"She wore a headscarf, she was obviously conservative, and she told me she cooked biscuits every Easter," Safak remembers. "I was intrigued."

The biscuits turned out to be the woman's way of honoring the memory of her grandmother, whom she had discovered to be an Armenian orphan. Did other family members know the significance of her cooking, Safak asked her. "The men just eat," she replied.

"If we want Armenians to forget what happened in 1915, we have an obligation to remember it first," Safak says. "To do that, we must find an alternative to the aggressive, macho language of nationalism. An alternative voice can be created by following women's stories and women's memories."

"Many people think 1915 is the only thing we in Turkey are unable to talk about. That is not the case. This is a country built on a rupture in time. For many people, time starts with the founding of the republic in 1923, and everything before that is a foreign country. You feel as if you are walking over rubble, trying to hear if there's anything alive inside. If there is, you try to dig it up, bring it to light."

It's a perception she says has informed her fiction since she published her first novel in 1998. It has earned her success, in the form of three Turkish bestsellers and a handful of prizes. But it has also earned her enemies.

"I've been called everything from a traitor to a so-called Turk," she says. In a twisted way, the latter insult is surprisingly apposite. With her perfect English and her western ways, Elif Safak seems the epitome of what her countrymen call "white Turks"—members of the country's westernized elite.

Both in her life and her work, though, Safak is an enemy of easy categorizations. Her novels are peopled with outsiders, a dwarf and an obese woman in *The Gaze*, foreign postgraduates at an American university in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*, named Araf in Turkish after the Koranic word for purgatory.

"My ideal is cosmopolitanism, taking elements from wherever I choose, refusing to belong to either side in this polarized world," she says. The attitude lies behind her decision, much criticized in Turkey, to begin writing columns for a newspaper closely linked to an influential religious leader.

In the eyes of Kemalists, she says, referring to the followers of the architect of Turkey's secularist revolution, Kemal Ataturk, Turkey is divided into us and them, westernisers and Islamists.

"They see modernization in dualistic terms. You choose the West and get rid of the other side of the duality. That's wrong. Ambiguity, synthesis, hybridity: these are the things that compose Turkish society. We are western-oriented and eastern, and that is not something to be ashamed of."

In a society increasingly fascinated with its multi-cultural, imperial, Ottoman past, it's an argument that is gaining ground fast. But Turkey is still a country where polarizing cultural politics inform everything from the cut of your moustache to the way you say "hello", and where writing is the last thing a writer is judged by.

Tired of the attention that came with her growing fame, Elif Safak fled to the United States in 2001, only to return this year. In many respects, she says, the five-year period of exile was a revelation. Well-known in Turkey for her efforts to recuperate Persian and Arabic words purged from Turkish by the nationalists of the early Republic, she vividly remembers the first time she heard the word "chutzpah" used.

"Some in Turkey still get upset if you use 'ihtimal' rather than 'olasilik'," she says, referring to two words—one Arabic, one Turkish—for possibility. "The English language is blind to ethnic origins."

Using it, she adds, also gave her what she calls "an additional zone of existence". She illustrates the point with a story about the upper-class Turkish women she met while in the States. Like all well-bred Turkish women, swearing in Turkish was out of the question for them, but the same self-censorship disappeared when they spoke in

English. Safak used the same linguistic freedom to rather more serious ends: in 2004, *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* was published, the first of two books she has written in English. Hardly surprisingly, the linguistic switch angered some in Turkey.

"There were articles saying I belonged to American literature now, that I was no longer one of 'us'," Safak remembers. "But I don't see language as an either/or choice. Sometimes, it is good to be right on the threshold in between things, both an insider and

an outsider."

Despite personal satisfactions, though, she ultimately found that the United States remained as inimical as Turkey to the cosmopolitan vision she has espoused.

"For the average American, I'm a Muslim woman writer, and expected to produce accordingly," she says. "Why should I? Why can't I tell the story of a Chinese man?"

Smiling, she remembers a book-reading evening in Boston that she shared with an Indonesian novelist and a Canadian of Indian origin.

"I assumed we would have something in common, maybe our style or our choice of themes," she says. "In fact, all we shared was our non-western origin. You sometimes feel like something you add to a salad to give it color, something which has no taste."

In a rare critical review of Orhan Pamuk's *Snow*, published in the *Atlantic Monthly* late in 2004, Christopher Hitchens observed that the West had for some been searching for "a novelist in the Muslim world who could act the part of dragoman, an interpretive guide to the east". The Egyptian novelist, Naguib Mahfouz, was one, he added, Orhan Pamuk another. With one foot firmly planted in two worlds, and as rational as the most rational-minded westerner could possibly wish, Elif Safak might seem a perfect writer to take up the baton. Already some critics see her as challenging Pamuk as Turkey's foremost novelist.

Despite the disappointment she feels at the West's limited interest in Turkish literature, she has no desire to be anybody's dragoman. For her, the fetishization of "exotic" authors is profoundly dangerous, an implicit acknowledgement that cultures are as monolithic as the advocates of a "clash of civilizations" would like us to believe.

"No one person can be the representative of a culture, least of

all one as multi-faceted and confused as Turkey's is," she says.

Above all, an author employed to play the role of dragoman is implicitly expected to tell his own story. That, Safak concludes, is a travesty of the role of writing.

"Literature is not telling my own story. It is the ability to stop being myself, to transcend the self that has been given me by birth. That includes religious boundaries, ethnic boundaries, and national boundaries."

US Representatives

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

The representatives of the ARS and ARF focused on the Armenian community's actual efforts to secure relief material for the refugees of Lebanon and means of transporting it to Lebanon in the current situation. The ARF representatives informed the Minister that the Armenian community in the United States is taking part in political activities supporting the territorial integrity of Lebanon and calling for an immediate cease fire, condemning attacks on civilian targets and the powers stalling the efforts to reach an immediate cease fire.

At the end of the meeting, all attendees expressed their readiness to meet again at a later date and keep the lines of communication open for the sake of the people of Lebanon.

Armenian Anthem

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

ernment, will likely draft a separate bill that would uphold the status of "Mer Hayrenik." "We hope it will pass," he told RFE/RL. "Since there are no or almost no music composers in parliament, the vote will be more impartial."

Manukian also dismissed the commission's significance, saying that the Armenian authorities have not yet made a final decision on the anthem. "The ultimate decision will be a political one," he said.

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SEPTEMBER 30, 2006 • SAVE THE DATE • NAASR 50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA BANQUET AND SYMPOSIUM on "Armenian-Turkish Dialogue and the Direction of Armenian Studies." Both events will be held at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge, MA. Call 617-489-1610 or e-mail hq@naasr.org for more information.

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OCTOBER 20, 2006 • CHILDREN OF ARMENIA FUND (COAF) will hold its annual, A Generation Being Saved Awards Dinner at 7:30 p.m., at Cipriani 42nd Street in New York City. For more information, please contact Mariam Dilakian at (212) 994-8234 or mdilakian@coafkids.org.

OCTOBER 26, 2006 • GUITARIST IAKOVOS KOLANIAN IN CONCERT. In Merkin Hall at Goodman House, NYC. 8PM. Reserve the Date. Details to Follow. Pomegranate Music.

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ANCA Telethon

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

efforts."

The ANCA Telethon, a six-hour May 21st broadcast, was seen in hundreds of thousands of homes across the United States. The program featured hosts from across the country, remarks by U.S. elected officials and Armenian American community leaders, performances by leading Armenian entertainers, and a variety of documentaries featuring different aspects of the Armenian Cause.

Donations to the Telethon—during the broadcast and in the weeks that followed came from all elements of the Armenian-American community.

The success of the Telethon is unprecedented for an Armenian-American community grassroots organization. The program kicked off the ANCA Capital Campaign, designed to raise \$5 million in support of ANCA educational programs and the newly purchased ANCA headquarters in the nation's capital.

The ANCA has been expanding its operations in Washington D.C. to meet the increasing portfolio of work needed to pursue vital issues of concern to the Armenian-American community. This year the ANCA moved into its new headquarters building that was purchased in February, and has been expanding its broad based community outreach programs including the ANCA Capital Gateway Program. Funds raised will primarily become part of a permanent capital fund for the organization.

Since the success of the Telethon, the ANCA has embarked on a number of national, regional and local initiatives, recently completing its 21st annual Leo Sarkisian Internship program in Washington, DC, as well as various regional and local internship programs. Chapters and activists nationwide are gearing for the November Congressional elections, with the ANCA "Hye Voter Turnout" program expanding to educate Congressional candidates across the country about Armenian American concerns. In

September, the ANCA will be hosting a national conference, geared to bring together activists from across the United States to share their experiences and learn how to strengthen the ANCA

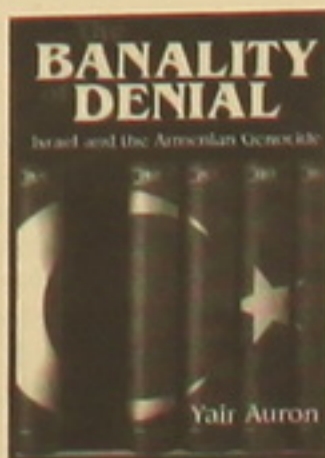
grassroots network.

Titled "Grassroots Makes the Difference," the conference, will be held from September 14 to 17 at the Embassy Suites Conference Center in Washington, D.C.

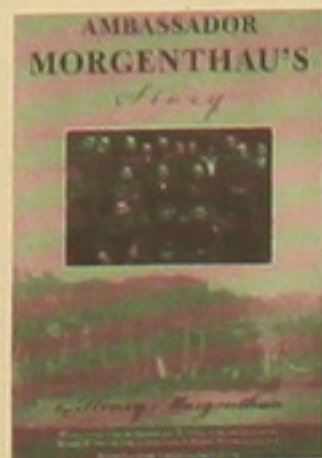
For more information, or to register, visit: www.anca.org/conference.

On-line donations are still being accepted for the ANCA Telethon at <http://www.anca.org>.

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Critics' Forum

An African Journal: The Translated Stories of Raymond Boghos Kupelian

BY HOVIG TCHALIAN

The recently published collection of stories by Raymond Boghos Kupelian, *African Symphony* (AuthorHouse, 2006), marks a return of sorts, for both the author and his readers. The volume translates Kupelian's second collection of stories of the same name, originally written three decades ago in Armenian. They also chronicle the thoughts and experiences of a man who emigrated to West Africa from Lebanon, where he grew up, leaving yet again 20 years later for Southern California, where this first English-language volume now appears.

It is significant that Kupelian left Lebanon voluntarily. A recent article quotes him as saying that "the beauty of the forest, ... nature ... everything was different" in Africa than it was in Lebanon (Glendale News Press, 8/01/06). There is little or no nostalgia for Lebanon, no longing for the past, in Kupelian's statement, but a search for something new. And that same spirit of discovery is evident in the volume, which seems more concerned with what the author's biography refers to as the "immediacy" of its subject.

The tales themselves do not exhibit the structure of the classical short story—with its dramatic conflict, swift progression and equally dramatic conclusion. Kupelian's stories feel more like journal entries written on a tranquil beach, one sentence at a time, then reworked months or years later. They invite a reading that shares that same leisurely spirit.

One of the better-known stories in the collection, "Surie Una Man," is written in that leisurely spirit. It tells the tale of Surie, an African servant who takes a younger second wife and jeopardizes his manhood and his family's well being in the process. The story is perhaps the collection's least convincingly translated. Certain passages sound awkward, almost as though they had been translated verbatim from Armenian, such as in this passage, which describes Surie's brief brush with schooling: "Next day, in the evening hours, for the first time in his life, Surie stepped into school! Sitting like a bishop in the back of the car, he entered through the gate of the establishment." (52).

Much better translated is "The Bush in the Man." In it, Bomboli, a disgraced Minister of Education now awaiting trial in jail, mourns the loss of his former glory. It begins with a description of Bomboli's recurring dream, in which a boy fishing in a boat is attacked by a crocodile, which turns out to be a man in disguise who takes the boy's body deep into the jungle. The rest of the story takes a cue from the dream, weaving in and out of the minister's thoughts and telling a kind of morality tale or fable. Along the way, we find out that the minister, a former schoolteacher, had a rapid rise to glory and an equally rapid demise, after being accused by British authorities of witchcraft and cannibalism. The story succeeds in touching on issues of culture and colonialism, without being unnecessarily didactic or preachy.

Less successful is "Despot," a story of a white Englishwoman who falls in love with an African man who later becomes his (unnamed) country's ruler. After his exile and death, she is pressured to publish her journals, which recount the torrid and well-publicized affair. But she refuses on principle. Here is where the leisurely spirit of the book goes awry. The tale seems to tie episodes loosely together, while balancing an apparent moral at the center of it. All the while, the narrator's voice intrudes too often, as in this example, where he explains the woman's actions: "It was evident. Hers was an idealized love for an absolutely great man. She needed to keep it immaculate" (70).

By far the best story in the collection is "Kookoo Sherif." It is the wrenching but subtle tale of the African girl referred to in the title, molested by a Middle Eastern shop-owner, in exchange for a pair of shoes she has spotted in his store window. The repercussions of that emblematic, brutal barter at the heart of the story-goods for people-reverberate until the end. But the tale also allows the girl's story to unfold gradually and convincingly. Kookoo grows into a woman of the streets and eventually falls in love with a young African revolutionary, who is soon imprisoned for his ideas. In the end, she manages to turn the tables on her oppressors by pretending to be the mistress of a high-ranking mulatto official (mulattos in some cases being the offspring of illegitimate unions between black Africans and white immigrants).

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The scandal the story creates allows her to trick him and her own past oppressors (the shop-owner chief among them), freeing her lover from prison in the process. The story develops from conflict to resolution in sure-handed and compelling fashion, using the tension of the narrative to tie the various details together. It embodies better than any other story in the collection the promise fulfilled more fully in Kupelian's later works.

The book's first story and its last tie the collection together and add the structure and cohesion sometimes missing from the individual tales. "A Diamond Tale" starts off the collection and is itself perhaps the best structured in the volume. It recounts a conversation between the narrator and a local judge, who decries the fact that people have been killed for the sake of the precious stone in the title. The judge recounts stories of barbaric acts—such as when a young boy working as a "sen sen boy" (or "sand boy"), looking through freshly dug dirt for diamonds, rubs the sweat off of his face, only to be wrongly accused of swallowing a diamond and murdered. The story ends in a reversal of sorts, when the narrator announces that the judge has been poisoned to death, after having invited the narrator to "hear a diamond tale" by sitting in on the murder hearing at his court the following day.

The tale also includes an interesting look at Middle Eastern immigrants in Africa, people the locals refer to collectively as "Syrians" (the writer among them). They are portrayed as good people occasionally gone bad, under the glare of the sun and the constant temptation of riches. With the introduction of the "foreigners" into the African context, this first story acts as a fitting beginning to the book. The act is completed in the final story, "Washed by the Waves," which tells the story of an idealistic black American woman who comes to Africa looking for peace and leaves disillusioned, never to return. The story describes her love affair with a local official, a married man. It also recounts the parallel, and sometimes strangely incongruous, story of the narrator's short-lived affair with a Scottish woman. The tale also sounds the note of universality in the collection, of the sameness of cultures—their loves, cruelties and disappointments—that far outweigh their differences.

The volume's cover art and original illustrations, drawn by Armen Minassian and the writer's son, Roger Kupelian, complement the volume well and represent perhaps its most pleasant surprise. The collection could have benefited as well from a longer introduction, placing the stories in the writer's larger body of work and its original Armenian-language context. The volume currently includes a good but brief biography that gets lost at the very back of the book.

All in all, Raymond Boghos Kupelian's *African Symphony* is an interesting look at a different diasporan existence—not the forced exile of the immigrant but the voluntary travels of a man in search of something greater.

Additional information about the writer and his works may be found at www.raymondkupelian.com.

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Hovig Tchalian holds a Ph.D. in English literature from UCLA. He has edited several journals and also published articles of his own.

You can reach him or any of the other contributors to Critics' Forum at comments@criticsforum.org. This and all other articles published in this series are available online at www.criticsforum.org.

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My Turn

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deals, an Azerbaijani military official defended the purchase, saying "our country's interest in Israeli weapons is natural as this country possesses up-to-date types of weapons, military hardware, and special equipment. Weapons sales and shared-threat perception have smoothed intelligence and security cooperation. Israeli firms built and guard the fence around Baku's international airport, monitor and help protect Azerbaijan's energy infrastructure, and even provide security for Azerbaijan's president on his foreign visits. Israeli intelligence operatives help collect human intelligence about extremist Islamist organizations in the region and monitor the troop deployments of Azerbaijan's neighbors especially Iran. In a Washington Institute for Near East Policy analysis, analysts Soner Cagaptay and Alexander Murinson alluded to reports that Israeli intelligence maintains listening posts along the Azerbaijani border with Iran."

Bourtman further observes that Turkey "has benefited the most from the development of Azerbaijani-Israeli cooperation." In August 1997, when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Baku, he and Pres. Heydar Aliyev "discussed various issues ranging from new oil deals, to Iran's nuclear ambitions, to trilateral cooperation between Israel, Turkey, and Azerbaijan," Bourtman writes. Despite rosy reports by Azeri officials and American-Jewish organizations about the freedoms enjoyed by Jews in Azerbaijan, Bourtman refers to an article in the Feb. 15, 2006 issue of Haa'retz newspaper which ominously reported that Israeli officials "worry about the recent spike in violence by radical Islamists against Jewish communities in Azerbaijan."

The month-long massive Israeli bombings of Lebanon could make Azerbaijan's leaders more cautious in their courtship of Israel and strain the ties between the two countries. As a sign of increasing tensions, already there have been several public demonstrations against these bombings in recent days in front of the Israeli Embassy in Baku which the authorities brutally dispersed. Even before this latest negative turn of events, Bourtman reported that Azerbaijan had decided "to curtail expansion of cooperation with Israel," not wanting to be seen by fellow Muslims as being too close to the Tel Aviv government. Interestingly, he writes that Azerbaijani authorities also feel

that "they have exhausted the use of pro-Israel groups in Washington."

It looks like the Azeris used the Israeli lobby when it served their interests, and now that close association with Israel has become a liability, they have decided to ditch the Jewish lobby unceremoniously.

Pipeline

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and external corrosion."

The danger of corrosion in Alaska was brought to the attention of the BP board two years ago by a former consultant, who had become a conduit for concerns from internal whistleblowers. BP is conducting a review of safety and ethics procedures—including protections for whistleblowers—throughout its U.S. operations. The company is facing a criminal investigation in Alaska, as well as tough fines from regulators.

Nick Hildyard, of another environmental monitoring group, The Corner House, said: "A management culture that treats credible concerns over safety as something to be resisted serves neither the public nor shareholders. Alaska shows only too clearly the long-term costs."

ANCA Desk

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7. The dual blockade by Turkey and Azerbaijan strangles the development of the region's freest market economy. On the Heritage Foundation's most recent Index of Economic Freedom, Armenia is ranked one of the 30 freest economies in the world, tied with Japan at 27th and ranked higher than Norway, Israel and France. Armenia's neighbors are far behind with Turkey ranked 85th in the world, Azerbaijan dropping from 103rd to 123rd, and Georgia at 68th.

8. Armenia has repeatedly urged Turkey to open its borders so the two countries could establish relations and trade without any preconditions. Nevertheless, Turkey continues to reject these offers towards regional peace and stability. The proposed railway to exclude Armenia will prevent economic integration, undermine stability in the region, and assist Azerbaijan to realize its repeated threats to attack Armenia.

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DOWNTOWN MILWAUKEE

August 31 - September 4, 2006

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thursday, August 31

8:00PM Welcome Party in Downtown Milwaukee featuring Gor Mkhitarian at the Safehouse

Friday, September 1

8:00AM AYF Golf & Alumni Open at Brown Deer Golf Course, home of the PGA US Bank Open

9:00AM AYF Tennis at McKinley Park (facing Lake Michigan)

10:00AM Harley Davidson & Miller Brewing Company Tours (advance reservations required)

1:00PM Miller Brewing Company Tour (advance reservation required)

5:00PM AYF Swimming at South Milwaukee High School

8:00PM Alumni Reception & Dance featuring John Berberian, Roger Krikorian, John Harotian, Bruce Gigarjian, Ara Topouzian at the Hyatt Executive Ballroom & Atrium

10:00PM AYF Dance featuring Paul Baghdadian and Band from Los Angeles at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom

4:00AM Hook-up featuring DJ Chris Habibian

Saturday, September 2

9:00AM AYF Softball Tournament at South Milwaukee High School

9:00AM Visit Racine Tour (advance reservation required)

1:00PM Milwaukee Riverwalk Brewery Tour (advance reservation required)

9:00PM AYF Olympic Dance featuring Richard Hagopian, Mal Barsamian, Ara Dinkjian, Bruce Gigarjian at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom & Atrium

2:00AM Hook-up featuring DJ Chris Habibian

Sunday, September 3

9:00AM AYF Track & Field at South Milwaukee High School

12:00PM 73rd AYF-YOARF Olympics Opening Ceremonies

9:00PM AYF Olympic Grand Ball featuring Onnik Dinkjian, John Berberian, Hachig Kazarian, Ara Dinkjian, Roger Krikorian at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom & Atrium

2:00AM Hook-up featuring DJ Chris Habibian

Monday, September 4

9:00AM Farewell Picnic Brunch at Pere Marquette Park (across from Hyatt)

For more information or to make on-line purchases go to:

www.ayfolympics.org**AYF Olympics**

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Habibian from 2:00 to 6:00 a.m. Come Monday, everyone will wake up to the smell of *basturma* and eggs and *foule*. All you need

to do is walk across the street at 9:00 a.m. to Pere Marquette Park and the first ever AYF Olympic brunch.

This is what we have all been waiting for over the past 23 weeks. We hope you have en-

joyed this column and hope you can get through the next three weeks without it. That's right, the official column of the 2006 AYF-YOARF Senior Olympic Games is coming to an end. It's time for some Hye Life! *Pari Desak!*



...PARI DESAK

Can you believe it? It's been 23 weeks since we first uttered the words "*Gemutlichkeit* and *Pari Yegak*" and only three weeks remain until you can finally experience Milwaukee's Hye Life at the 73rd Annual AYF-YOARF Senior Olympic Games in Downtown Milwaukee.

Those of you who decided to arrive on Thursday will be properly rewarded with the opening Welcome Party at Downtown Milwaukee's Safehouse featuring Armenian singer-songwriter Gor Mkhitarian.

Doors will open at 8:00 p.m. and close at 2:00 a.m., so be prepared for a long evening of *gemutlichkeit*. Admission is \$20 at the door, unless you purchase a gold or silver HyePass by August 25 or a discounted wristband that will only be available at the AYF Welcoming Table at the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee prior to the party.

Olympic golfers and tennis players will wake up with the sun to get to Brown Deer Golf Course, home of the PGA's US Bank Open, by 8:00 a.m. and McKinley Park tennis courts, on Milwaukee's lakefront, by 9:00 a.m., respectively. Meanwhile, 35 late risers will meet with two of Milwaukee's hometown giants, Harley Davidson and Miller Brewing, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and a stop for lunch at Bigg's Roadhouse for a traditional Wisconsin all-you-can-eat fish fry.

Friday's main event will be the Olympic swim meet at South Milwaukee High School at 5:30 p.m. Located only 15 minutes away along Milwaukee's lakefront, athletes and spectators will get to know South Milwaukee very well as they spend the first of three days at this public school campus.

AYF Alumni and many others will zip back to the hotel at 8:00 p.m. for the Alumni Reception and Dance in the Hyatt's Executive Ballroom and Atrium area. Attendees will feast on Armenian and Middle Eastern fare and be feted by the music of John Berberian, Roger Krikorian, John Harotian, Bruce Gigarjian and Ara Topouzian. Admission is only \$15 and includes a private shopping spree at the Hairenik Bookstore. Not to worry for those of you not attending the Alumni Reception, the Hairenik Bookstore will be open every night from 8:00 p.m. until 4:00 a.m.

Not everyone will need to hurry back to the Hyatt for the evening's entertainment as Paul Baghdadian and his band from Los Angeles will take the stage in the Hyatt's Regency Ballroom at 10:00 p.m. Admission is only \$25 and will feature a special set of Armenian revolutionary songs at 1:00 a.m. Admission also includes the Midwest debut of DJ Chris Habibian for the early morning hook-up from 4:00 to 6:00 a.m.

AYF softball players and their fans will return to South Milwaukee at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday for the start of the AYF Softball Tournament. If you're not a player or fan, start your day on the Milwaukee Trolley Loop, which stops in front of the Hyatt every 30 minutes, and ride free to many Downtown Milwaukee attractions so you can use your very own Experience Milwaukee 2 for 1 coupon book (note: you must purchase a HyePass to Experience Milwaukee).

If you're really lucky, you reserved a place on the Milwaukee Riverwalk Brewery tour at 1:00 p.m. and will cruise to three riverfront microbreweries for some frosty samples.

The evening's festivities will begin at 8:00 p.m. with a special book presentation and signing by Matthew Karanian, co-author of the *Stone Garden Guide of Armenia*. A fresh, new second edition of this tour book will be available for the first time during the Olympic weekend. By 9:00 p.m. everyone will be ready to dance the night away to the music of Richard Hagopian, Mal Barsamian, Ara Dinkjian and Bruce Gigarjian. Admission is \$20 and includes a second hook-up featuring DJ Chris Habibian from 2:00 to 6:00 a.m.

Everyone will make their way to South Milwaukee on Sunday for the start of the track and field events at 9:00 a.m. with the opening ceremonies at 12:00 p.m.

The Olympic Grand Ball and the crowning of an Olympic champion will commence at 9:00 p.m. in the Regency Ballroom with the all-star lineup of Onnik Dinkjian, John Berberian, Hachig Kazarian, Ara Dinkjian and Roger Krikorian. Admission is \$25 and includes a final marathon hook-up with DJ Chris

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