

Zaven Der Yeghiayan

Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, 1913–1922

My Patriarchal Memoirs



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“

DEDICATION

*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth . . .
that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!”*

Revelation 14:13

Foreword

Memoirs, particularly crisis memoirs, are stories of events recounted by survivors. Unlike autobiographies, memoir writers chronicle memorable experiences lived through in the past. Memoirs are human testimony. As such, they are a valuable resource for historical research. Nevertheless, objectivity in memoirs is sometimes colored by the experiences of the memoir writers, and it is only through thoughtful reflection and consideration of the chronicled events that the reality of the history in memoirs is revealed and human consciousness is stimulated.

This book is the English-language edition of the Memoirs of Zaven Der Yeghiayan, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople during and in the aftermath of the First World War (1913-1922). His memoirs first appeared in the Armenian language under the title “My Patriarchal Memoirs—Documents and Testimonies” in June 1947, published in Cairo, Egypt.

It took many years for my great-uncle, Patriarch Zaven to write his memoirs. There were several reasons for this, foremost of which were his health and advanced age. Moreover, retrieval and compilation of the records and documents in Jerusalem and European centers during the Second World War years was difficult and lengthy. However, with the assistance of his Constantinople aide, Arshag Alboyadjian, he was able to complete the manuscript before his death in June 1947. He was close to 80 years in age when he passed away—only few weeks before the book was published.

The Memoirs cover the momentous years of his Patriarchal period, from his election in 1913 to his withdrawal in 1923—a traumatic period for the Armenian nation, a period marked by the disastrous rule of the Young Turks (Ittihadists) and their criminal legacy of annihilation of the Armenian population in Ottoman Turkey. It was a decade that saw the end of the Armenian people’s presence in their ancestral lands—an end through dispossession, destruction, and obliteration of the memory of an ancient people in Turkey.

The Armenian Patriarchate in Constantinople had been an eminent institution for more than four-and-a-half centuries. The history of the Patriarchate goes back to the early years of the Ottoman Empire, when, after the fall of Constantinople and the end of the Byzantine Empire, Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror invited his friend Archbishop Hovagim of Bursa to Constantinople in 1461 and vested him with the Patriarchal authority over the Armenian *millet* (nation).

The Armenian Patriarchate played a vital role in the religious and civil life of the Armenian population throughout the Ottoman centuries. It had a particularly notable role after the promulgation of the National Armenian Constitution in 1863 that widened the rights of the Armenian nation and defined the statute of the Patriarch as the representative of his people to the Sublime Porte.

The Patriarchate served as the autonomous government for the Armenian nation in the administration of their affairs until the First World War, when the Young Turks and their fol-

lowers undermined its authority, reducing the Patriarchate to a shell and forcing the withdrawal of then-Patriarch Zaven.

It is in the memoirs of this man, who was the leading Armenian Church figure in Ottoman Turkey at that time and who had the misfortune of witnessing one of the greatest tragedies that had befallen his people since their Christianization, that makes this book such a unique document. To the extent that the book provides a perspective on the darker folds of the times, it tells us much of how history was made and something too of the dilemma of a man burdened with the salvation of his people against overwhelming and conflicting world power interests.

Patriarch Zaven's recounting of his agonizing conversations with Talaat Pasha and other leaders of the Young Turks, his appeals to the European political and Church leaders, his encounters and disappointments with Armenian figures, and his critical observations and pointed anecdotes, rendered sometimes in great detail, provide glimpses of the mentality of the times. It is a story about deceit and betrayal, dashed hopes and diabolical mindset.

After nearly one hundred years, the memory of that great calamity continues to haunt the Armenian consciousness. It is hoped that publication of this English-language edition of Patriarch Zaven's memoirs will reach a new generation of wider readership, will contribute to the understanding of the genesis of that fateful event, and thereby will help open the path of truth for both Turks and Armenians to face the reality of history.

I would like to express my appreciations to Ared Misirliyan for his competent translation of a linguistically and culturally difficult Armenian text, and to Vatche Ghazarian for his erudite research and advice in preparation of the historical background material and annotations for the book. My appreciation goes to all those family members for their encouragement and perseverance in publishing this book. I am particularly indebted to my cousins, Dr. Stephan A. Ovanessoff and Mrs. Sona Feshjian-Karakashian, for their loyal support in seeing that publication of this English-language edition of our great-uncle's Memoirs becomes a reality.

Melcon G. Melconian

Princeton, NJ
April, 2002

Translator's Preface

Patriarch Zaven Der Yeghiayan's memoirs constitute a significant eyewitness account to the events that befell the Armenians of Western Armenia (or, Turkish Armenia) during World War I. Written by the spiritual and administrative head of the Armenian Nation in the Ottoman Empire, a man of commitment, integrity, and courage, these memoirs contain a wealth of comments and observations, much of which may not be found elsewhere and which complement and corroborate the historical record.

Autobiography has a special place in an author's life. People often undertake to write their autobiography in the twilight of their life. This is much the case with Patriarch Zaven's work. Maneuvered out of office, declared an undesirable by the Turkish Republic, and self-exiled to Baghdad, he did not have access to records in Constantinople—although he visited the St. James monastery in Jerusalem to see copies of some of them. He also admits to occasional lapses of memory.

Executives are not always the most accomplished of writers. In his role as the Patriarch of the Ottoman Armenians, Zaven headed the Armenian National Administration. He had proven himself a skillful administrator since his early days in the service of the Armenian Apostolic Church, but, when drafting, revising, or finalizing official letters or reports, he often received the advice and assistance of jurists, philologists, journalists, etc. This approach, which had served him well in his active years, was not available to him later, and the Patriarch appears to have written his memoirs in Baghdad entirely by himself.

The inadequacy of the proofreading in the 1947 Cairo printing of the memoirs is illustrated by the following examples: the omission of the author's baptismal name; the cumbersome chapter structure, where Chapters 3 and 5, on Abp. Zaven's two terms of office as Patriarch, are broken down into numerous disjointed and repetitious sub-chapters; the unnecessarily long sentences (many run from 10 to 20 lines), which actually contain several smaller sentences joined with causal conjunctions; the inconsistency in the spelling of numerous personal names and titles; and the verbatim repetition in two separate places of Krikor Zohrab's speech at the Armenian National Assembly's session following the 24th/25th of April 1915 arrests of the Constantinople Armenian intellectuals.

Due to the historical value of the work, preserving the authenticity of the original text was considered a priority in this translation. Some of the long sentences were broken down into their component shorter sentences, and the spelling of people's names (but not always their titles) was standardized. The original text in Western Armenian was translated into English, but numerous expressions in Turkish, Arabic, or Western European languages were retained and explained in square-bracketed citations or footnotes.

In the transliteration of proper nouns from Armenian, the Western Armenian sound values were used in a close approximation of the U.S. Library of Congress recommendation, but with several modifications to avoid diacritical marks. An exception was the representation of the unrounded high back vowel (the 8th letter of the Armenian alphabet) with the symbol *ē*.

In rendering Turkish-language expressions—all given in Armenian alphabet in the text—rather than adopting contemporary standard Turkish spellings, a transliteration preserving the particularities of the dialectal usage of the time was adopted. Here again, the unrounded high back vowel sound (the 11th letter of the modern Turkish alphabet – sometimes referred to as the “dotless i”) was represented with the symbol *ĭ*.

An important issue in translating the present work was to remain aware that certain passages in the Armenian text had already been translated *into Armenian*, either in the Patriarch’s diaries or for the purposes of the 1947 Armenian-language edition. For instance, the conversations between the Patriarch and the various Ottoman statesmen must surely have taken place in Ottoman Turkish; the letters the Patriarch exchanged with representatives of European powers must have been in one or another European language. Because the mentioned passages (and others of the same nature) were already *translated into Armenian* for the 1947 edition and are now *translated into English*, there is some uncertainty as to their content and style.

The translator thanks Dr. Levon Avdoyan of the Library of Congress and Messrs. Nourhan Ouzounian and Vincent Salaün of Montreal for their help with various issues. Needless to say, the translator alone is responsible for any and all shortcomings.

Ared Misirliyan

Montreal, Canada
June 2000

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Preface

People have often urged me to put my memoirs on paper, taking into account the fact that, due to tragic circumstances, my reign as Patriarch occurred during what can be regarded as the stormiest period [in the history] of Armenians in Turkey.

After hesitating for a long time, when almost a quarter of a century has removed me from that period and I feel the approach of the last days of my life, I too think that it is not superfluous to revisit a past, where, because of my position [as Patriarch], I became one of the unfortunate leading actors.

There has been no other among the Patriarchs of Constantinople who has had as variable a fortune as I and has witnessed [such] days of glory and destruction.

To present the events, which for the history of our people were days of both dreams and tragedy, was a task that some suggested only I could accomplish, and they would urge me to carry it out, as a final duty, in order not to leave them in the dark.

By yielding to their wish, I undertook to write my memoirs just before the [Second World] War. Unfortunately, I lacked the necessary facilities in Baghdad, in particular the necessary documents, some of which I managed to obtain by a visit to Jerusalem.

Fortunately, having long had the habit of using a pocket diary, I let it guide me and worked as much as possible to reconstruct the sequence of past events and present facts, at times from memory and at others by using letters and documents that had fortuitously been saved.

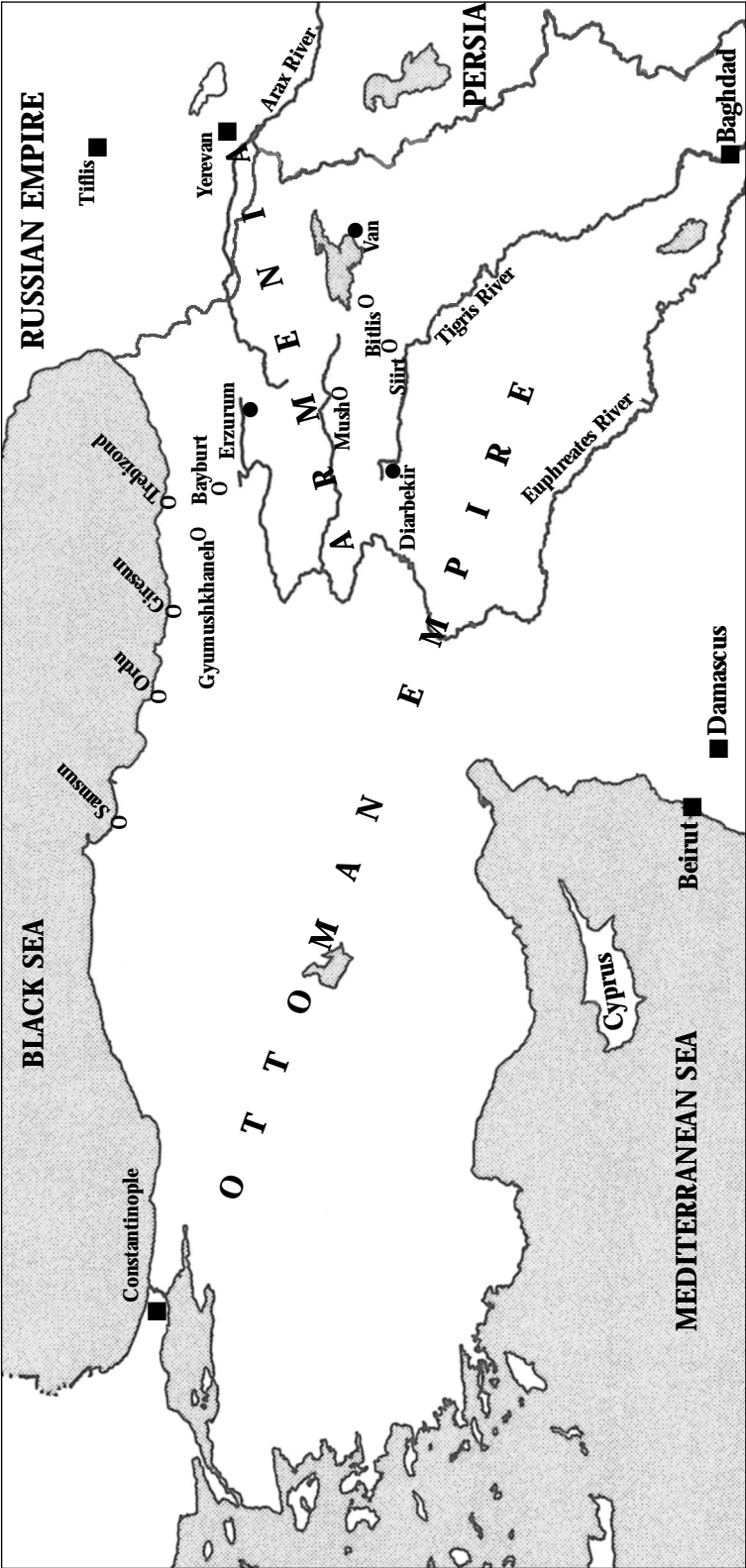
My effort has been to present my memoirs with unadorned simplicity, without embellishing and interpreting (analyzing) them, leaving the task to the reader. I have similarly refrained from repeating events that are known to the whole [Armenian] nation and have been covered by the press, time and time again, in order not to unnecessarily overburden these memoirs, which will aim to enlighten events hitherto unknown to the public.

This book is not an account of that period but rather an annotation to it.

As Patriarch, having taken no step without the knowledge of the [Armenian] National Assembly, I consider myself exempt from the duty of having to account for my actions, but desire for the purpose of history that the [Armenian] nation be aware of the efforts that have been made by the [Armenian] National Authorities to limit the extent of the evil [facing Armenians] as much as possible and [to know] that neither Patriarch nor Assembly has been indifferent to the barbarities of the Turkish Government and, similarly, after the armistice, have endeavored to make our Nation's sacrifices amount to something, unfortunately to no avail. With this viewpoint, I hope that these memoirs will be taken note of and be a positive contribution to contemporary Armenian history.

Archbishop Zaven

Baghdad, 7 May 1947



The black circles denote places where Zaven Der Yeghiayan served as Prelate and the white circles indicate places he visited before his election as Patriarch in 1913.

I. Life Before My Election as Patriarch

My name practically became part of the history of the Armenian Nation¹ after my election as Patriarch. However, up until that time, having served the Nation in various capacities, it was my past work that was to lead me to the throne that had been occupied by people of such fame and authority as [Archbishops] Khrimian, Varzhabedian, Vehabedian, Izmirlian, Ormanian, and Turian.²

To give a complete picture, I would like to say a few brief words about my past. I was born on the 8th of September 1868 (New Calendar) in the city of Mosul in Mesopotamia,³ where my father, Der Avedis Der Yeghiayan, a native of Sghert [Siirt] and ordained Kahana⁴ in 1861 in Mosul, was serving at the time. He had moved there to succeed his elder brother Der Hagop, who had been the first priest to serve the Armenian community of Mosul and had been sent there the very year the local Holy Echmiadzin church was built (1857).

My mother Marta (born Kharabian) was also a native of Sghert. My paternal grandfather, Der Yeghia, was himself the son of a priest, also called Der Yeghia. My maternal grandfather was Der Sahag. All these people were buried inside the Armenian Church of Sghert, as were my father's brother Der Hagop and our relatives Der Zakaria and Der Khachadur.

I had the good fortune of studying under the well-known teacher and patriotic educator Mihran Svajian,⁵ initially at the United Fellowship⁶ School in Sghert and later at the Baghdad [Armenian] National School.

Following graduation, I worked as a teacher from 1888 until 1890. In 1890, following my teacher Svajian's suggestion, I applied to the Theological Seminary at Armash,⁷ which had opened its doors the previous year, my intention being to serve the Nation through the Church. My application having been accepted, I enrolled at the Seminary on the 25th of December 1890 and completed my course of studies.

I became a *sargavak* [deacon] in 1892. In 1895, I was appointed *apegha* [a monk] by Archbishop Ormanian⁸ and was renamed "Zaven." In 1896, the Archbishop also bestowed upon me the rank of Vartabed.⁹

Unfortunate occurrences, such as the Ottoman Bank incident of 1896 and the ensuing massacre in Constantinople,¹⁰ disrupted the peaceful functioning of the Armash Seminary, and with [Patriarch] Izmirlian's resignation, Bishop Partoghimeos Chamchian was appointed Patriarchal Vicar. He was an opponent of the Seminary and, as a man of the old school, did not agree that Armenian clergy needed to receive higher education. He preferred that clergy receive an education befitting only the ranks of the minor orders.¹¹ Indeed, when the Seminary's benefactor, Apig Unjian¹² of blessed memory, was jailed, Chamchian considered this a good opportunity to shut down the Seminary.

As a result, Vice-Abbot and Superintendent Ormanian, Internal Rector Yeghishé Vartabed Turian, teachers, and other members of the staff were dispersed, as were the five Vartabeds who had been my Seminary classmates—Papken, Khosrov, Mushegh, Sëmpad, and Mashdots.¹³

Aghan Vartabed and I stayed on in Armash a while longer to extend a little the death throes of the Seminary. I assumed the role of Administrator and Aghan Vartabed that of Internal Rector.

Fortunately, Ormanian was soon elected Patriarch (6 November 1896), and this saved the Seminary from final destruction.

Shortly after Ormanian's election, on the 27th of January 1897, I went to Constantinople. Ormanian appointed me preacher, first in Samatia and then in Khas-Kyugh [Hasköy]. He also made me the Receptions Official of the Patriarchate, to train me in administrative affairs and to prepare me for duty in the Provinces. The Joint Assembly, having decided to send all graduates of the Seminary to the Provinces, appointed me Prelacy Vicar for Garin [Erzurum] in January 1898. As with all my Seminary classmates, I had made it a matter of unwavering principle to serve the Nation and the Church by going to the Provinces and seeking spiritual satisfaction there. As a result, with Ormanian's encouragement, I accepted the position and left for my place of appointment [Erzurum], where I arrived on the 23rd of February [1898]. Shortly after my arrival, I was appointed Prelate of Garin, and stayed there until May 1906.

It is not superfluous to point out here that the Archbishopric of Upper Armenia, located in the heart of Armenia, constituted the most important Diocese in all of Armenia because of the vast area it covered, the very significant educational work carried out by the Sanasarian School¹⁴ located there, and the proximity of the [Russian] frontier. Archbishops Vehabedian and Ormanian had each officiated there, and it was difficult to be a worthy successor to them. Indeed, each of the successors to Ormanian had stayed in office for short periods. Having succeeded in staying there for eight years, in May 1906 I resigned and returned to Constantinople, where I became the preacher in Yeni-Kyugh [Yeniköy] and Makri-Kyugh [Bakirköy].

In 1908, in the days of the reestablishment of the Ottoman Constitution,¹⁵ I was appointed Prelacy Vicar for Van. I was still the Vicar of Van when I was elected Prelate for Diarbekir. I moved to Diarbekir and stayed there until 1913, the year I was elected Patriarch. During my time in Diarbekir, Catholicos Izmirlian [of Echmiadzin] ordained me a Bishop in 1910. As is obvious from the above enumeration, I had spent my youth and the better part of my life in monasteries and cities in the Provinces. I had only lived in Constantinople for three years and had not had the opportunity to cultivate broad and significant contacts there.

Having undertaken duty in the Armenian Church during the despotic rule of Sultan Hamid, I was generally cautious in putting things down in writing or engaging in extensive correspondence. Even indispensable correspondence that I sent—to the Patriarchate or elsewhere—was written succinctly and without much deliberation. This had become a habit for me. Even after the declaration of the Ottoman Constitution (1908), when such extreme prudence was no longer necessary, I continued to act in the same manner. Although I had numerous acquaintances in Constantinople, I did not maintain an ongoing correspondence with any of them during the time I was in Diarbekir, with the exception of Ormanian Srpazan,¹⁶ whose paternal care I had enjoyed during my studies at the Seminary, and later, when I was in the Provinces.

I had always been close to Ormanian and had benefited greatly from his advice.¹⁷ Ormanian, for me, was a role model; his competence, his impeccable manners, his political orientation, and his upright nature had all left a deep impression on me. This is the reason I had not felt the need to maintain extensive correspondence with others and, as a result, was practically unknown in Constantinople. Only a few members of the National Assembly knew

me personally and so my election as Patriarch was a surprise for me, and perhaps many others, because the members of the Assembly did not know me and may only have read about me in occasional newspaper articles.

Those who knew me well in Constantinople were the Archbishops Ormanian and Turian and Krikoris Vartabed Balakian. The Ottoman parliamentarian Dr. Nazaret DagHAVARIAN¹⁸ had stopped in Diarbekir during his tour of the Provinces and had had the opportunity to see me at work.

Following the resignation of Patriarch Arsharuni, while discussions for the election of a new Patriarch were in progress my name was put forward—I am not exactly certain how—as a person who knew the Provinces well and who could address the demands of the present time. This was a moment of great psychological significance for the Armenian Nation. The issue of the Armenian Reforms,¹⁹ through the significant support of the Russian government and the work conducted by Armenians under their guidance, had reached such a point that a successful resolution seemed to be at hand.

The Armenian National Delegation,²⁰ authorized by Catholicos Kevork V²¹ and headed by Boghos Nubar Pasha,²² had made representations to European governments in the aftermath of the Balkan War and succeeded in bringing forward this result. The Armenian Patriarchate, too, contributed to the Delegation's work.

There was great hope that the Reforms would finally be implemented. The general expectation was that the new Patriarch had to be someone who had lived for a long time among the Armenians of the Provinces and was intimately familiar with their lives and deprivations and with the rules of the Mixed Assemblies, the government's internal politics, the mentality of [Ottoman] officialdom, the weaknesses of the administrative apparatus, etc.

Archbishop Hovhannes Arsharuni, the Patriarch of the day, was a cultivated man who spoke Turkish, French, and German fluently. Nevertheless, he had never held a post in the Provinces, with the exception of an appointment in Brusa [Bursa], which may almost be considered a suburb of Constantinople. Even in Brusa his presence had been nominal; he had always relied on a Vicar who replaced him for six months out of the year, which he spent in Constantinople. The Armenian Provinces were entirely unfamiliar to him. In addition, his weak physical state contributed to his being considered unfit to satisfy the demands of the times.

In addition to Arsharuni, there were several old bishops, such as Bp. Drtad Balian, Bp. Sdepannos Hovagimian, Bp. Maghakia Derunian, Bp. Krikoris Hovhannesian, Bp. Hëmayag Timaksian, and others. They, too, were considered unsuitable for several reasons. As I came to learn later, there was a strong current for electing a clergyman from the younger generation so that he would be able to conduct the affairs of the Patriarchate and direct the meetings around the issue of the Reforms in a competent manner, making appropriate use of his own experience and the information at his disposal.

There were several recently ordained bishops who belonged to this "younger generation": Bp. Papken Gyuleserian of Angora [Ankara], Bp. Sëmpad Saadetian of Garin [Erzurum], Bp. Torkom Kushagian of Sepasdia [Sivas], Bp. Garabed Mazlëmian of Bandërma-Balikesir, Bp. Mgërdich Aghavnuni of Egypt, and Bp. Taniel Hagopian, the Vicar of the Jerusalem Patriarchate. If not all, at least half of the bishops mentioned would have satisfied all the prerequisites [for the Patriarchal Throne].

For some reason they were all overlooked. How this came about is explained by Vahan Papazian, who, in addition to being the Secretary of the [National Assembly's] Security

Committee, was at that time a member of both the National Assembly and the Political Assembly. As a party member (Tashnagtsutyun²³), he kept up with the developments of the day [and wrote the following]:²⁴

In early August 1913, Patriarch Arsharuni resigned and Abp. Jevahirjian was elected Vicar. Consultations were being held among the factions within the National Assembly for the purpose of electing a Patriarch who would be well adapted to the times and the prevailing conditions. There was a general willingness to elevate to the Patriarch's throne one of the young Prelates coming from the Armenian-inhabited Provinces. Such a person, having long lived in the Provinces, would know the Armenian people closely, through personal experience, and be intimately familiar with the Nation's psychology and needs. Such a person was deeply necessary during these extraordinary times. Everyone being of this opinion, the customary intrigues and bitter fights did not take place around this issue.²⁵

Still, these lines do not fully explain how my name came to lead the list of candidates.

Abp. Ormanian, who was generally a caring father toward his students, appears to have made persuasive remarks and thus played an important part in my election. In an intimate letter to me, dated the 20th of July 1913, he offers clarifications on the circumstances that prevailed on the eve of my being elected Patriarch.

Here I reproduce that letter in its entirety:

I have received your letter of the 26th of June [1913]. Your letter pertains to the Nation's condition, and because this condition has now acquired a definite character, I will tell you in a forthright manner what happened, although you may have gathered enough information about these events from newspapers and correspondence. It appears that the situation in the Patriarchate had been almost stagnant when the massacre at Rodosto [Tekirdagh] stirred the waters. A group from Rodosto approaches the Patriarch, who sallies forth with an unexpected *chêkêsh* [harsh remark]²⁶ and scolds them by saying, "You must certainly have provoked it!" The petitioners are shocked. The Patriarch, embarrassed, says something about resigning. He goes home and writes a letter of resignation, reads this letter to several people, and hence rumors start that the Patriarch has resigned. The Political Assembly dispatches a message to the Patriarch so that he does not take any action before the deliberation of the Assembly. On the day of the Assembly, with the Patriarch present, he is asked for an explanation, to which he responds that the newspapers must have invented these words, that this matter was no business of the Assembly, and that [were he to resign, then] the Assembly, too, ought to resign. The matter is closed, but Arsharuni's prestige sinks lower, and opinion is such that he should definitely be removed. Representatives of various factions come together to discuss the election of a successor. After deliberate discussions, they leave aside Ormanian and Turian, give up on the old-timers, and find Zaven to be the most suitable. An agreement is reached with the condition put forward by the Tashnagtsutyun that at least Ormanian should not be on the Religious [Assembly]. They write a paper to this effect and deliver it to Balakian, so that he encourages the Patriarch to write his resignation in accordance with the paper, and do this in a simple manner so as to avoid problems. The Patriarch

does not receive the proposal in good faith and says that he will write an argumentative letter [of resignation], his intention being to bring down the [National] Administration with him. He is encouraged by Sēmpad Pyurad and Vahan Toshigian. However, others get involved in the matter and finally the Patriarch agrees to write a plain resignation. This resignation was presented to the National Assembly yesterday and it was accepted with great ease.

Only one vote was cast against—by Bp. Maghakia Derunian of Diarbekir. The three empty seats in the Political Assembly have been filled, and Shahrigian occupies one of them. The Religious Assembly has been elected as well, and I was among those elected to it. This was considered a breach of trust by the Tashnagsutyun, but [I was elected] mainly by those members who had not committed themselves to the [above-mentioned] precondition. There were many others who did abide by it, as can be seen in the outcome of 38 votes out of 63. But, this morning I sent my resignation to Chairman Daghavarian. I do not wish to see the arrangement ruined. On the other hand, I justified my resignation on the grounds of my work on the *Azabadum*,²⁷ and my conviction that I was unlikely to perform my duties successfully without the Political Assembly's support. Now the intention is to appoint a Vicar, who will either be Timaksian or Jevahirjian, hold elections immediately, and fill the Patriarch's chair within a month and a half.

By the time you receive my letter, you may already have received news of the election through a telegram, or you are bound to receive it in the coming days.

Now that matters have reached this stage and you will soon be revered as Patriarch, I have a few things to say before you ascend the throne.

I have played quite a significant part in these developments, by forming other people's minds and talking to all those who were asking me who would be the most suitable person from the younger generation. I gave your name to all and demonstrated that you have skills as an administrator, a statesman and a linguist, that you are well mannered and possess an alert mind, and are hard-working and observant.

These points I have made and done so with conviction.

What I do suggest is the following: You should fill your pockets with lead; avoid familiar, intimate and careless manners; and safeguard the Church's traditions jealously and precisely. Do not get tarnished through interpersonal relations, and do not give others the opportunity to spread rumors about you.

One of the reasons why Arsharuni was discredited was that he did not discriminate as to where he went and with whom he associated himself. He took part in family entertainment, spent time in pharmacies and barbershops, and went into proper as well as improper places.

Now that I have opened my mind to you, in a way I have fulfilled the last remaining part of my duty toward you as a father and a clergyman. From now on, I should be less stern toward you; instead I hope to console myself by witnessing your success and glory, and taking enjoyment in it.

I consider this work assured. By resigning immediately, I have removed all ambiguity that might have arisen on account of my being elected to a post myself.

I do not know whether there will be other occasions to write again. In any event, I wish to congratulate promptly both you and myself.

For me, it is a nobler thing to have been a father to the King.

I embrace you with love,

Abp. Magh[akia] Ormanian

A last bit of advice: Moderate your ‘Ormanianophilia’—there is no point in doing unhelpful things.

This letter, which exposes and clarifies the circumstances of my being elected Patriarch, is complemented with the following letter dated from the 6th/17th [19th] of November 1913, which Vahan Tekeyan²⁸ wrote to me from the Surp Garabed Monastery of Gesaria [Kayseri] after my arrival in Constantinople:

Having left Constantinople two days after the National Assembly exercised its choice in favor of Your Eminence, I am sorry that at the time of your undertaking the high office of Patriarch, I am unable to express to You my cordial congratulations in person and to serve You to the best of my ability. I ask you to accept from afar the expression of my sincere feelings, which arise from my certainty that in Your Person we have elected the worthiest choice for the benefit of the Nation.

Despite not having met Your Holiness in person, I am familiar with Your activities and have used my vote in Your favor with a clear conscience, putting my trust in the testimony of several reliable friends. It is so difficult nowadays to cast one’s vote in the election of various officials for the National Administration! Allow me to say without affectation and without any secondary motives that Bp. Balakian and I worked together to bring Bp. Arsharuni’s term of office to an end, which had become impossible to continue. The two of us “conspired,” planned and shared the work, as it was essential to agree in advance in order to get the others to agree on a successor; and we decided on Your Holiness as the most competent person who could serve in this demanding position. There was no need to persuade one another of the pathetic condition of your predecessor, as we witnessed it first-hand every day. Our hearts were singed, but there remained the need to unite around a person who could be elected. We were asking one another, “Who do we have?” and both of us were afraid to pronounce the name that was at the tip of our tongues, for fear that the other might not agree, or that he could, based on different information, ruin our personal conviction. Personally I felt deeply happy—equal to happiness felt due to an event in one’s personal life—when the Vartabed supported me fully on the idea I had expressed timidly, adding that he, too, knew Your Eminence very little on a personal level, hardly any more than myself. And already if it were necessary to persuade even the most malicious person as to the unselfish nature of our “conspiracy,” it should have sufficed that both of us were voluntarily away from Constantinople just at that moment when the Patriarch we desired is assuming his duties.

According to these three reliable testimonies, following Bp. Arsharuni’s resignation from the Patriarchal throne, all factions of the National Assembly in Constantinople were in agreement that one of the young bishops who had held posts in the Provinces, and who knew the people and the land, should be elected as the successor. Among these Bishops, I was considered the most suitable, given that I had officiated in Garin, Van, and Diarbekir for nearly 15 uninterrupted years.

The Patriarchal elections were held on the 30th of August 1913, with the participation of 82 delegates. I received 64 votes, Abp. Yeghishé Turian 11, and Bp. Sdepannos Hovagimian 1; 6 votes were cast blank. The Liberals and Tashnagtsutyun had no choice but to reach an agreement; the former had voted for Turian and the latter had cast their votes blank.

I received the news of my election on the day of the election through a telegram that the deputy of Diarbekir, Dikran Nakashian, sent me. A second, official, telegram arrived on the following day, from the Vicar of the Patriarchate, Abp. Jevahirjian.

I was subject to a *fait accompli*. Because I was under Abp. Ormanian's influence and I followed his example, it was clear to me that shirking from duty would be unacceptable. Relying on God and submitting myself to the will of the Nation, I started to prepare myself for my duty. I was already aware of the difficulties surrounding the Patriarch's position, but I could not have foreseen the exceptional, bitter tribulations that awaited me. Even had I foreseen them, given that the Nation was calling me to duty, I would not have hesitated to serve it to the best of my ability. This is the spirit and mentality that Abp. Ormanian had instilled in his students, just as he had made it a principle of his life not to shirk from duty, no matter what difficulties that duty might entail. And I, having chosen him as my role model, could certainly not do otherwise.

Ormanian, whose memory I always carry with gratitude and blessing, was truly a great mentor to me in difficult circumstances and has always nourished love and compassion for me. After my return [from exile] to Constantinople in February 1919, eyewitnesses told me that, after the Armistice, on hearing that I was alive and due to return, Ormanian was hugely overjoyed and anticipated my return with impatience. Unfortunately, having suffered a stroke and being bedridden in great agony for two days, my great teacher passed away on the 17th of November 1918, before my arrival in Constantinople. In his unconscious state, he reportedly had my name, "Zaven, Zaven," constantly on his lips.

II. Journey to Constantinople

Within a few days I had completed my preparations, and, in accordance with the wishes expressed at the Prelacy meetings [in Diarbekir], I appointed Mgërdich Vartabed Chêlghadian, a graduate of the Armash Seminary and at the time based at the Lofty Holy Mother of God Monastery at Arghen [Ergani], as Prelacy Vicar, so that he would oversee the affairs of the Prelacy.

On the 8th of September [1913], one day before I left Diarbekir, I offered Mass at the Mother Church and my final blessing to the parishioners, whose pastor I had been for the previous four years. After the Mass Service, a farewell ceremony was organized at the Prelacy, during which I received the following text [from the parishioners], which I have cherished as a sweet memory and the expression of a grateful people.

You have only occupied the Prelate's chair at Dikranagerd for four years, and the local Armenian populace has just begun to take a deep breath of relief and satisfaction for having found in Your Holiness an ideal Prelate, and already a voice is heard from Constantinople, inviting You to occupy the Patriarch's venerable throne.

Allow us, then, to briefly reflect upon Your tour of duty in our midst, a time that will remain forever memorable and unforgettable in the annals of our community's life.

Not only from the Nation's official bodies, but also from the lips of the entire Armenian community, it had become customary to hear pride-filled satisfaction and praise in Your regard. But there is no need for mouths to praise Your prolific nation-building work—the concrete results speak loudly for themselves.

Is it not a misfortune for the people of Dikranagerd to lose a Prelate whose term of office was a reflection of [his] valor? Let us mention, Holy Father, Your organizational spirit, through which the National Assemblies were always kept duly organized and busy at work, and You knew how to surround yourself with the best and the most useful elements. In your relations with others, You pursued and protected zealously and valiantly the interests of the Nation, but while doing so You always remained respected and trustworthy in the eyes of the government. You cultivated highly desirable fraternal relations with the Armenian denominations of our city, as well as with the other Christian communities, thereby bestowing upon the Armenian community the preponderant status it deserves.

Let us continue the list. With Your prudent nature You always tried, and partially succeeded, in preventing partisanship taking a serious nature and subjecting the Nation's educational-religious life to calamity. You promoted educational work and succeeded in keeping our schools always open and in charge of their responsibilities. You paid earnest attention to the problems of both the Armenian peasant and the bourgeois. You spared no efforts to find a cure for their pains, and,

when necessary, You traveled resolutely and energetically across mountains and plains.

You lived Your life filled with the Nation's pains; not one day did we see You thinking about Your comfort. Rather You spent Your nights, guided by a spirit of patience, working in candlelight on piles of petitions or conversing with a co-national who had come to ask for Your help and advice.

Our loss is great, Holy Father. However, we are consoled by noting that You are leaving us to assume the highest chair of responsibility, on which our eyes, too, are fixed, and from which chair hang all hopes for our Nation's existence. Let us be consoled, then, by thinking that the esteemed National General Assembly is rightfully inviting You to the Patriarch's throne, thereby wishing to say that they, too, are in appreciation of Your activities in the Provinces for the last 18 years and the experience You have gained. We applaud, therefore, this auspicious call, stating on this occasion that, whereas the National Central General Assembly observed and judged You from afar, we saw and touched you in our midst. Evidence of Your qualities can be seen in the minutes of the local National Assemblies, in the Provincial Assemblies, in the exceptional and unanimous trust You enjoy, and in the heart of the Armenian nation that has overflowed with joy for the last several days.

The call You have received cannot be refused, and, if the Patriarch's throne is an honor, then it is Your right; whereas if it is a duty filled with responsibilities, then it is Your obligation to undertake it, and You are undertaking it today with self-confidence.

We wish to pause a moment to remind You, Holy Father, that there was still much work to do in Dikranagerd, especially the project of building a school, which would have required Your energetic efforts and for which we had high hopes, knowing also the willingness of the Nation to make sacrifices and perform its part. This project, too, will have to wait for Your successor. But, considering that You have studied the needs of our Province and that You are intimately familiar with the conditions and the circumstances here, we ask You to always think of us as Your second homeland and to assign here such successors whose terms in office prove to be a continuation of Your National activity.

Permit us, Holy Father, to express our deep gratitude and our congratulations. We wish You well in your new position, although our happiness is mixed with tears. We hope that Your duty as Patriarch will not only be to deal with the Armenian nation's tears, but, instead, during Your term, that the sun of justice and liberty will rise above our Fatherland, and You will, from then on, think mainly about this suffering Nation's education and the flowering of its national life.

We hope that the esteemed National Central General Assembly will give You its full support toward the attainment of the desired goals. Once again, we express to You our congratulations, and we join the Armenian nation in shouting, "Long live our Father, the Patriarch-Elect!"

Dikranagerd, the 21st of February 1913

[SIGNATORIES] Provincial Assembly of the Armenians of Dikranagerd: Hagop Topalian (Secretary), Hovsep Boyajian (Chairman). [Members]: Priest Avedis Sarkisian, Priest Krikor Hekimian, Harutyun Boyajian, Garabed Keshishian, Boghos



Bishop Zaven der Yeghiayan as Prelate of Diarbekir, surrounded by prominent Dikranagertsis, 1913.

Fermanian, Garabed N. Boghosian, Dikran Varzhabedian, Ghazar Kinajian, Kevork Keoroghlian, Dikran Ilvanian, Garabed Krikorian, Mgërdich Yegenian, H. Donjian, M. G. Kasbarian, Boghos Temoian, Boghos Kljian, Garabed Teghrarian, Hovh[annes] Keatibian.

Political Assembly of the Armenians of Dikranagerd: Harutyun Keshishian (Secretary), Mgërdich Yegenian (Chairman). [Members]: Dr. Vosgian H. Topalian, H. D. Boghosian, B. Temoyan.

On the same day, I paid a farewell visit to the Governor. The following day, on the 9th of September [1913], I set out from Diarbekir in the midst of public festivities and parades, similar events taking place all along my way to Constantinople. The details of these events may be found in the journalistic record of the time.

The government had given orders for an absolute show of courtesy toward me [en route during my journey]. I have to confess that the officials of the State did not fail in this regard; they treated with respect and honor the spiritual leader of the Armenian nation, who, traveling through the Armenian-inhabited provinces, was heading towards Constantinople.

The Central Administration had expressed its wishes, through a proposition of Kegham Der Garabedian, that I travel by way of Paghesh-Mush-Garin-Trebizond [Bitlis-Mush-Erzurum-Trabzon], so that the most-forgotten corners of Armenia, among them Kegham's native land of Mush, would be infused with enthusiasm and that the Patriarch, too, would see the prevailing conditions of those areas firsthand. I went along gladly with their wish, not only with a desire to see Mush and its famed Surp Garabed Monastery, but also to visit my ancestors' cemeteries in Sghert, which necessitated only a small deviation from the proposed route. Therefore, I set out from Diarbekir for Farghin—the real Dikranagerd—where I arrived on the 10th of September, and stayed for only one day. On the 13th of September, I reached the entirely Armenian-inhabited village of Gyundijeno in [the district of] Bsherig; I stayed the night there and blessed the brave villagers, who had succeeded in protecting themselves against the onslaught of thousands of Kurds in 1895.²⁹

This village constituted the farthest point of the Diocese of the Diarbekir Prelacy. I had been very fond of these underdeveloped areas, Silvan and Bsherig, and liked their people, who despite being Kurdophone were good Armenians and good Christians. From Bsherig, I continued my route to the district of Gharzan, which was subject to the Diocese of Sghert, with the town of Zog as its administrative center. The priest there was Der Sarkis, a distant relative of mine.

On the 16th of September, as we were approaching Sghert, Governor Mustafa Abdul Khalik,³⁰ accompanied by several officials and Muslim notables such as *muftis* and *hakims* and numerous Christian—especially Armenian—inhabitants, came all the way to the Gazur river, which is about one hour from the city.

It is worth noting that the Deputy of Sghert, Abdul Rezak, was personally at the head of all the arrangements of the reception, within the city and even at the Prelacy. For the people of Sghert, my visit occasioned boundless joy and pride. They thought of me as a fellow *Sgherttsi*, because I was the child of *Sgherttsi* parents, I had spent a part of my childhood there and had numerous relatives in the city.

On the day after my arrival in Sghert, the Prelate Kevork Vartabed Nalbandian,³¹ after Mass at the Sts. Tateos and Partoghimeos Church, performed a solemn requiem on the graves of my ancestors, who, as I mentioned earlier, were buried in the right chancel and

immediately behind the church. After the requiem, a celebration took place at the church, with the participation also of the city's Assyrians.

On the 19th of September, I left Sghert in the company of a delegation that had come from Paghesh, headed by the Prelate Suren Supreme Vartabed Kalemian. Suren Vartabed Kalemian was a former student of the Armash Seminary (martyred in 1915). On the 20th of September, as I was entering Paghesh, a noteworthy incident occurred, and I mention it as an interesting event. As stated, wherever I went, government officials—in accordance with the Central Government's orders—met me and did whatever they could to provide for my comfort and sent me on my way accompanied by military policemen.

I observed that, despite the government having set a tent outside the city [of Paghesh], only the Prefecture's *mektubji* [clerk] and several secondary officials had come to greet me. When I saw this, despite my usual habit of directly visiting the Governor of each Province I passed through, I rested in the tent for a few minutes, then entered the city and went directly to the church. After resting for a while at the Prelacy, I went to the house of the local notable Khachmanugian, who hosted me during the two days of my stay in Paghesh.

The Governor—whose name unfortunately I cannot recall—seeing that I had not paid a visit to the Government House upon my arrival at the city or afterward, considered this a sign of dissatisfaction on my part. Concerned that his conduct toward me might be reported to Constantinople, he regretfully called Khachmanugian to his office and requested that the latter organize a feast the following evening and include the Governor among the invited guests, so that he might have a chance to win me over. [In making this request], the Governor confessed that he had erred toward the Patriarch by following the advice of some fanatical local chieftains.

It is unnecessary to say that Khachmanugian did as the Governor asked. To completely erase the memory of what he had done, the Governor not only came to bid me farewell when I was leaving Paghesh for Mush, but left for Mush after me and, benefiting from my spending a night at the large village of Khas Kyugh on the Plain of Mush, reached there before I did and joined the Governor of Mush, Servet,³² and other officials in welcoming me to Mush.

The Armenian population of Mush had come out to greet me, led by the Prelate of Mush, Bishop Nerses Kharakhanian³³ and the Abbot of Surp Garabed Monastery, Vartan Vartabed Hagopian.³⁴ Among those greeting me was Rupen,³⁵ a leader of the Tashnagsutyun, accompanied by a group of fighters.

During my two-day stay in Mush, I resided at the Prelacy. On the second day of my arrival, a military parade was organized in my honor in the field across from the center of the city. Present were the Governor, the Prefect, military and civilian officials, and other notables.

From Mush, I headed to Surp Garabed Monastery,³⁶ which I passionately wanted to see. After completing my vow at this magnificent and historic shrine of our forefathers, I was compelled to assume the role of a judge. I had barely arrived at Surp Garabed when Vartan Vartabed told me about a dispute that had been simmering between himself and Bishop Nerses on the matter of the selection of a site for a school that was to be built.

An Armenian woman who resided in Moscow, moved by piety, had donated a sum of money for the construction of a school within the grounds of Surp Garabed Monastery. The donation had reached the Patriarchate in Constantinople, and it was communicated to Mush that Prelate Bishop Nerses Kharakhanian and Abbot Vartan Vartabed Hagopian should come to an agreement on the site, after which the money would be released and sent over in installments.

Bishop Nerses Kharakhanian, under the influence of Rupen “Pasha”³⁷ and with the latter’s collaboration, demanded that the school be built at a place known as Veri Parakhner, in a gorge located at a considerable distance from the Monastery, so that the students should not feel obliged to attend church frequently and could remain detached from religious influences.

Abbot Vartan Vartabed Hagopian wanted the school to be built right next to the Monastery, on the precise site where Bishop Mampré had once undertaken to have a school built but had been unable to complete. This half-finished building stood on higher ground than the Monastery, which it dominated. Vartan Vartabed considered this site to be far more suited for its purpose, for the following reasons:

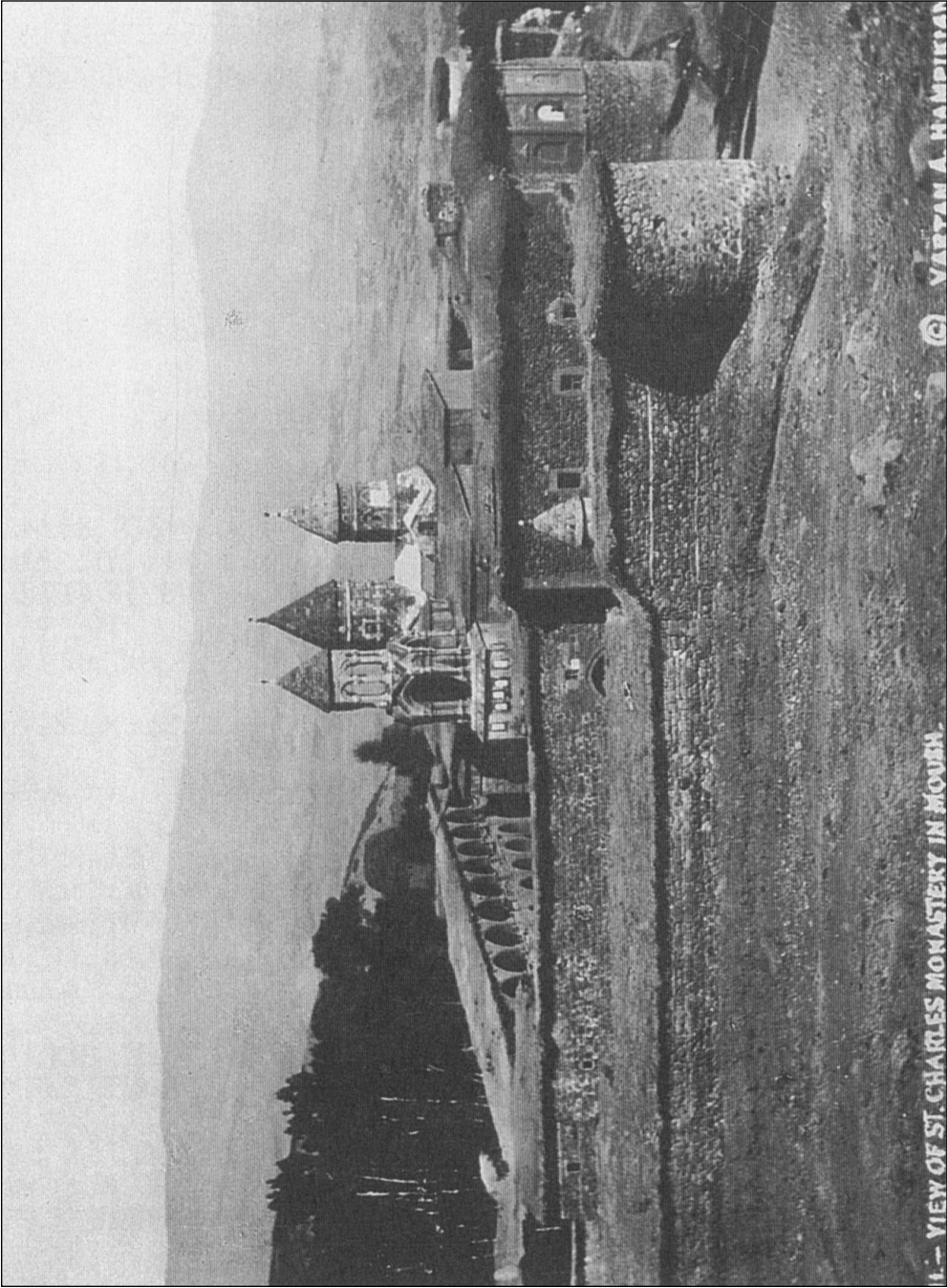
- (a) In times of peace, the students could come to church on Sundays, if not on other days, give spiritual comfort to the pilgrims, and liven up the Monastery and the church;
- (b) If, God forbid, the country entered a stormy period again, and there were attacks against our people and the Monastery, this building, which was expected to be quite solid, could at least provide a sanctuary for the members of the monastic order and could even—with its imposing position above the monastery—contribute to the monastery’s defenses. The other proposed site, far away in the gorge, was exposed to attacks from all sides.

I agreed with Vartan Vartabed and left. I should also note that, after reaching Constantinople, Bishop Nerses Kharakhanian contacted me about the money for the building. I wrote that the money could be sent as soon as the site shown by Vartan Vartabed had been selected and the foundations prepared. As soon as Rupen heard my response, he requested the help of his party’s head office in Constantinople. Vramian³⁸ came to the Patriarchate and demanded an explanation from me. I explained to him the views of Vartan Vartabed and said I was in agreement with them. Vramian looked me in the face with surprise and said, “Are you trying to say that we will spill more blood?” “Certainly,” I responded, and went on to explain how the former Governor of Diarbekir, who was not an Ittihadist³⁹ and who has since left that post, had visited me at the Prelacy and said, “Your *komitajis*⁴⁰ are so gullible! They would be really surprised if they could see the things that Talaat⁴¹ has been writing to me!” Vramian kept his silence and did not insist.

Events interfered and the school was never built. As for poor Vramian, a year later his was the first blood spilled; he was arrested in Van by the orders of Talaat, whom he had thought of as his friend, and Abdul Khalik arranged to have him killed in Paghesh. I relate this event because it is very significant, and it illustrates the state of mind of the time. My purpose here is to demonstrate our naive belief, which caused the downfall of almost the entire Nation.

After my visit to the Surp Garabed Monastery of Mush, I continued my way on to Boulanëkh, Manazgerd and Khnus [Hinis], passing also through Karachoban and Pert. At Khnus, the delegation from Garin [Erzurum] had come to meet me. On the one hand, Khnus was a district administered by the governorate of Garin; on the other it was a curacy subordinate to the Garin Prelacy. Therefore, as the former Prelate of Garin, I felt that from here on I was entering familiar ground. In a manner of speaking, I was coming back home to areas that I knew intimately, because I had visited these districts of my former Diocese many times.

From Khnus, we moved on to Pasen [Pasin] and then arrived in Garin on the 7th of October [1913]. The people of Garin had spared no effort in organizing a magnificent



The Monastery of Surp Garabed in Mush, c. 1900 (Courtesy of Dr. Levon Avdoyan).

reception to honor their former Prelate. They had sent one delegation to Khnus and a second and larger delegation headed by Prelate Bp. Sēmpad Saadetian all the way to the heart of Pasen, the town of Hasan Kale [Hasankale]. Closer to Garin, a vast crowd had come by carts, on horseback, and on foot to Deve-Boyun to greet their former Prelate.

Also present were the Governor and state officialdom, accompanied by policemen and military policemen on horseback. As in other places, here too, I went directly to the Governor's offices and expressed my gratitude for the care shown by the government and the glorious reception organized by its representative. Then I went to the church, where I blessed the crowds of faithful.

Garin had been my first appointment, where I had served uninterruptedly for eight years. I loved the people of Garin, and they loved me in return. Even until recent years, people of *Garnetsi* origins, whenever they met me, would call me, *Mer Hayr Surpē* [Our Reverend Father], and I, in turn, being so familiar with the life of the community in general, and that of its individual members, had always had a particular interest in [the well-being of] their younger generation.

As soon as I arrived in Garin, the *Garnetsi* faithful sent a telegram to His Holiness Catholicos Kevork in Echmiadzin, requesting his pleasure to bestow upon me the rank of Archbishop and—if possible—to do this while I was still in Garin. They received a response by telegram when I had already reached Papert [Bayburt], and they forwarded it to me there. I sent a telegram of gratitude to Echmiadzin.

The Prelate of Garin, Bp. Sēmpad Saadetian, was a classmate of mine from the Armash Seminary. The two of us had been anointed together to the ranks of Vartabed and Bishop. He had initially been appointed to Shabin-Karahisar [Shebinkarahisar], from where he had succeeded at the post of Prelate of Garin, elected by the *Garnetsi*. Bishop Sēmpad extended to me every courtesy and respect.

It was my good fortune to conduct the commemorative Mass at the Mother Church of Garin and preside at the ceremonies on the occasion of the All-Armenian celebrations of the 1500th anniversary of the invention of the Armenian alphabet and the 400th anniversary of the printing of the first Armenian book.⁴²

During the five days I spent in Garin, Bishop Sēmpad made it possible for me to have numerous meetings: on the first day with government officials—including the Governor, on the second day with the Consuls stationed in the city, on the third day with the National Assemblies, and, on yet another day, with the other notables, all of whom were faces well familiar to me already.

Similar ceremonies marked my departure from Garin. After spending one day each in Papert⁴³ and Gyumyushkhaneh [Gainsdshane], on the 20th of October I reached Trebizond.

When I arrived in Trebizond, I found there two delegates who had been sent from Constantinople: [Bp.] Maghakia Derunian from the Religious Assembly and Harutyun Zeki from the Political Assembly.

I stayed in Trebizond for four days, enjoying the hospitality of Gaydzag Arabian, an honorable, upright, and patriotic man. During this time, I met several times with Governor Bekir Sami,⁴⁴ who, together with his staff, had already come to greet me at the entrance of the city. I had known him from his days as Governor of Van, which I had left in 1909 to go to Diarbekir.

The Prelate of Trebizond was Kevork Vartabed Turian,⁴⁵ a native of Rodosto [Tekirdagh] and a well-educated man. He had resigned as Director of the Calcutta Philanthropic

Academy,⁴⁶ come to Constantinople to be ordained as a Vartabed to serve the Church and the Nation, and been sent to Trebizond.

During the time I was in Trebizond, I dealt with a dispute and disagreement among Assembly members that I was able to resolve. Then, following the request of the Assembly members, I bestowed upon Kevork Vartabed Turian the rank of Supreme Vartabed. The day after I arrived in Trebizond, the government informed me that, with an order received from the Ministry of Interior Affairs, [the maritime transportation company] *Seyr-i Sefayin* had assigned the ship *Gyul Jemal* to take me to Constantinople. On the same day, the Russian Consul also sent me word that a Russian ship serving Black Sea ports was scheduled to arrive in Trebizond to transport me to Constantinople. I turned down, with appreciation, the Russian Consul's offer, which act left a very good impression on the [Ottoman] government.

On the 24th of October [1913], I left Trebizond, accompanied by the delegates of the Central Administration and Karekin Vartabed Khachadurian (subsequently a Bishop and now in South America⁴⁷), who had joined my entourage in Mush.⁴⁸ Also traveling on our ship were Ahmed Aghayev, a native of the Caucasus and an active and well-traveled member of the Ittihad, and Karekin Pastërmajian (Armen Karo),⁴⁹ who had joined me in his native Garin, where he had been on a visit, and was on his way back to Constantinople.

The sea voyage lasted five days. Our ship stopped at Ordu, Girason [Giresun], and finally Samson [Samsun], where the local Prelate, Hamazasb Vartabed Yeghiseyan⁵⁰ had organized welcome and farewell ceremonies and receptions in my honor.

A violent storm made our journey from Samson to the Bosphorus rather uncomfortable.

On the 28th of October, our ship entered the Bosphorus Straits. Among the first to greet me were representatives from several Ottoman ministries, who had taken steamboats to Anadolu Kavak. From on board the *Gyul Jemal*, I listened to their welcoming messages. I thanked the messengers and asked them to convey my respects and thanks to their respective Ministers, and then our ship continued on its way.

A short distance later, two ships crossed our path. One had been rented by the Patriarchate and the other by the United Fellowship. The Acting President and the members of the Administration, as well as the representatives of the United Fellowship, came on board the *Gyul Jemal*. They accompanied me to their ship, which took us directly to the wharf of Kum-Kapu. An uncommonly magnificent procession was formed there. The government had sent a guard of honor of about 50 military policemen, who were standing in two rows. The priests of the Mother Church and of the churches in the nearby quarters were there, all of them in chasubles, also many acolytes in robes, headed by the Patriarchal Vicar. I was offered a cope to wear, and I led the procession through the crowds and on to the Mother Church. The Mother Church was filled with people. I entered and blessed all, then I ascended upstairs to the Patriarchate, the construction of which had only recently been completed.

I spent my first few days in Constantinople receiving visitors. The Dragomans⁵¹ of most of the Consulates, members of various organizations of the Nation, and the prominent figures of the Constantinople Armenian community came to welcome me and wish me success. After these inevitable formalities, I took my constitutional vows at the Mother Church on Friday, the 8th of November 1913, in the presence of the National Representative Assembly.

The Patriarchal Vicar, Bp. Kapriel Jevahirjian,⁵² delivered a speech, transferred to me the Patriarch's ceremonial staff [*asa*], and wished me success. Representing the National Assembly, its Chairman, Dr. N. DagHAVarian, congratulated me for having been elected to the post and wished me might.

After accepting the congratulations of all the deputies present, I went up to the Patriarchate. I had hardly sat down at my reserved seat in the Council Room when Archbishop Ormanian came and sat on the chair to my right, invited Archbishop Yeghishé Turian—also present in the room—to come and sit on my left, and said, “We, too, have the right to share in the glory of our spiritual son!”

On that same day, the delegation from the United Fellowship, headed by the Rev. Arsen Shmavonian,⁵³ paid me a visit. Rev. Shmavonian delivered a short address in which he expressed the Fellowship’s joy in seeing a former student of one of their schools elevated to the Patriarch’s throne and remembered the help I had extended to the Fellowship during my term as the Primate of Diarbekir; he concluded by announcing that, during a joint meeting of the Founders’ Assembly and the Administrative Assembly held on the 19th of October [1913], the Fellowship had declared me an Honorary Member.⁵⁴

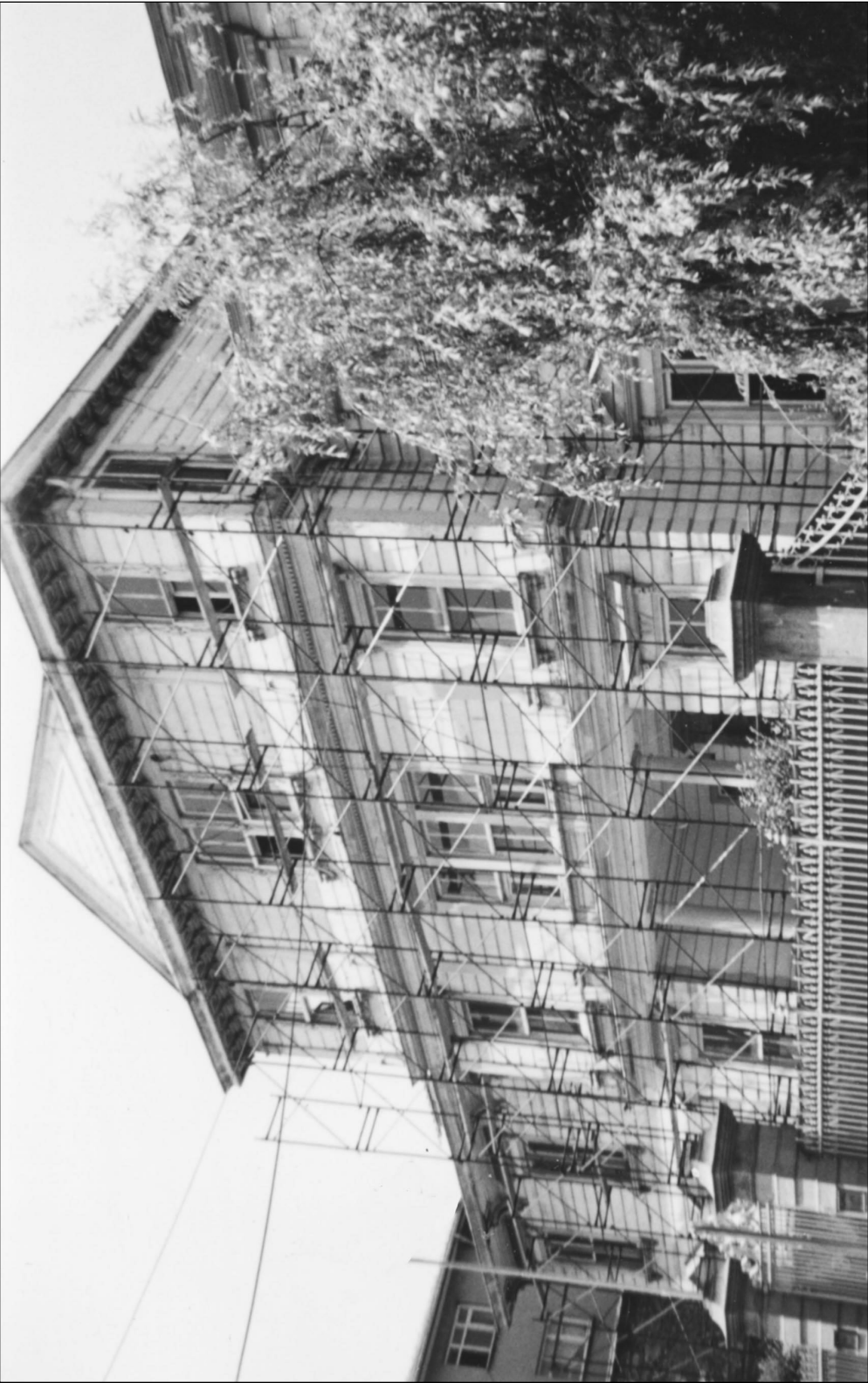
I thanked Shmavonian for his address and for the honor the Fellowship had bestowed upon me, and I mentioned the services the Fellowship rendered to the Armenians in the Provinces by providing them with educational opportunities, especially in the far and dark corners of the land, where our people, having already lost the ability to speak Armenian, faced the danger of losing their national identity as well. I recalled my own childhood, when I had arrived in Sghert as an Arabic-speaking boy from Mosul. At the Fellowship’s school in Sghert, I learned my own national tongue as though it were a foreign language and, over time, grew to become a proper Armenian. At that time, like many ignorant people, I would confuse nationality and religion, and think that the Armenians were descended from the Hebrews. These memories moved me deeply and brought tears to my eyes. Seeing this, my visitors were also moved.

The help that the Fellowship mentioned with such goodwill and which deemed me worthy of an Honorary Membership in their eyes, amounted to no more than my having extended a helping hand to the Society, in one of whose schools I had been educated and raised as an Armenian.

In 1909, when I was appointed to the post of Prelate in Diarbekir, the United Fellowship was subsidizing schools in my Diocese at Farghin (Silivan) and Gresira (Bsherig), amounting to 24 pounds⁵⁵ per year for each school. The supervision of the schools was entrusted to Mr. Vagharsh Arshaguni, Principal of the Fellowship’s School in Sghert, who did not visit them more than once or twice a year.

Once I learned about this situation, I wrote to the Fellowship’s headquarters, indicating that I would be pleased to undertake the supervision of the schools in my Diocese that they were supporting. I indicated to them that I considered this to be my duty, in order to help educate the parishioners entrusted to my care, and—inasmuch as I myself was a former student of one the Fellowship’s schools—I thereby hoped to have an opportunity to serve the Fellowship in an unselfish manner.

The Fellowship responded warmly to my proposal. From then on, I supervised these schools not only through my representatives but every year; after being present at the final examinations of the schools at the district center, I set out to visit the people living in the Kurdish-speaking regions of my Diocese. In this way I was also present at the year-end examinations and performances of the Fellowship’s schools; I prepared a report and sent it to their Administrative Assembly. In addition, I tried to help the Fellowship’s aid have a greater effect by distributing it differently, by increasing the number of schools that received at least some of it, and by helping the population become accustomed to self-help.



The Patriarchate as it looked in June 2001, during its renovation.

In the Silivan and Bsherig regions, I had succeeded in setting up an extensive network of schools by giving financial help to certain schools, making school buildings available to others, and distributing free copies of the Fellowship's textbooks to still others. Kurdish-speaking Armenian children of both sexes had thus started to speak their mother tongue properly within two or three years, to such an extent that the Armenians of Diarbekir would say admiringly, "They speak better Armenian than we!" Now the United Fellowship's Governors were showing their appreciation for my relatively minor services, and in such a ceremonial manner!

After taking my constitutional vows, I undertook the tasks of my new position, although there still remained ceremonial obligations that had to be performed. The chief among these was that of presenting myself to the Sultan, which I carried out several days later. I had written a short speech addressed to Sultan Muhammed Reshad⁵⁶ that consisted of nothing but the usual rhetoric, which—in keeping with the established custom—was submitted for the government's prior approval. As the newly elected Patriarch, I expressed my Nation's loyalty and requested His Majesty's and his government's protection and assistance. Traditionally Sultan Hamid⁵⁷ and his predecessors responded to the Patriarch's address with a few words expressing their paternal love toward their subject Armenian Nation, promising always to keep the Nation as an object of their solicitude, and sending their greetings to their loyal Armenian subjects through the person of the Patriarch. Despite this established convention, Sultan Reshad sent us on our way with a simple, *Memnun oldum* [I am pleased].

The Sultan's behavior did not fit with the government's prevailing attitude toward the Armenians at that time, but I did not attribute great significance to it, because the Sultan and Crown Prince Yusuf Izzeddin had been kept under such pressures during Sultan Hamid's reign that they had given themselves to alcoholism and ruined mind and body.⁵⁸ It is evident that the Sultan, not being able to say a few phrases appropriate to the occasion, had contented himself by simply uttering those two words.

After the formality of this royal audience, I was led to the First Chamberlain's room, where I was shown hospitality and decorated with the Mejidieh First Order Medal. The fact that this medal was awarded at the first audience was at that time considered a sign of extraordinary sympathy toward me.

After my visit to the Sultan's palace, I paid visits to the Grand Vizier and the Ministers and, in the following days, to all the Ambassadors who had sent their First Dragomans to welcome me. On this occasion and in accordance with the established custom, I also visited the Greek Patriarchate, the Bulgarian Exarchate, the Chief Rabbinate of the Jews, and the center of the Protestant community.⁵⁹

After finishing this series of visits, becoming familiar with the environment, and learning a little about matters presently at hand, I truly became aware of the difficulties and multiple demands on the office of the Patriarch.

III. My First Term as Patriarch (1914-16)

A. Before the Approval of the Reforms Program

When I undertook my duties, the most important issue on the agenda was the Armenian Reforms. This issue had arisen during the term of my predecessor, Hovhannes Arsharuni, and it was still under negotiation, between the Ottoman and the European—particularly the Russian—governments, between the [Armenian] National Delegation and the Foreign Ministries of the Great Powers, and between the [Armenian] National Patriarchate and the foreign Embassies [in Constantinople].

As is generally known, the pleadings of several patriotic and prominent persons living on Russian territory and of the Constantinople Patriarchate had led Catholicos Kevork V of All Armenians to apply to the Russian government and to appoint—with the latter's approval—Boghos Nubar Pasha as his representative to European governments and several patriotic and intelligent personalities as his advisors.

Boghos Nubar Pasha, of blessed memory, who was prepared to make any personal sacrifice necessary to bring his assigned task to a successful conclusion, was engaged—together with his associates based in Paris—in negotiations with European governments. The Armenian National Patriarchate could certainly not remain an indifferent spectator to these activities. It, in its turn, was in communication with the Delegation headed by Boghos Nubar Pasha and—as a responsible and directly interested party—communicated its advice and suggestions.

The General Assembly and the twin Administrative Assemblies had this matter permanently before them and had formed the Commission on Security and the Commission on Exploitation. To support Boghos Nubar Pasha's efforts, Patriarch Arsharuni—in accordance with a decision the Assemblies had taken—would visit the Embassies, present the need for implementing reforms in Armenia, and plead with them to intervene on behalf of the Armenians.

Apart from this, competent individuals living in European states, and large numbers of people living in Russia, were undertaking contacts with government circles where they resided. Because of various antagonisms between the [European] states involved, the work was running into great difficulties, but, this time, Russia, being well disposed, took the initiative to push the negotiations forward, and these were crowned with success.

When I assumed my duties as Patriarch, the negotiations concerning the Armenian Reforms were continuing at a fervent pace. The issue had entered its most critical phase and occupied the minds of all Armenians and—naturally—the Central Administration, as a consulting entity to me, and myself.

The members of the Political Assembly at this time were Sdepan Karayan (Chairman), Vosgan Mardigian, Levon Demirjibashian, Harutyun Zeki, Sarkis Souin, Hampartsoum Boyajian (Murad), Apraham Der Hagopian, Diran Yerganian, Sëmpad Kyatibian, Vahan

Papazian, Arisdages Kasbarian, Dr. Garabed Pashayan, Kegham Der Garabedian, and Harutyun Shahrigian.

The members of the Religious Assembly were Bp. Hëmayag Timaksian, Bp. Maghakia Derunian, Bp. Mgërdich Aghavnuni, Yervant Vartabed Perdahjian, Anania Vartabed Hazarabedian, and priests Drtad Boyajian, Zarmayr Geozyurian, Dajad Pashayan, Khoren Harutyunian, Vashdag Kalpakjian, Husig Kachuni, Vahan Khoyian, and Arisdages Hisarlian. Also elected to this Assembly was Abp. Maghakia Ormanian, but he had submitted his resignation immediately, so as not to enter into conflicts and not to ruin the agreement that had been reached concerning the issue of my election.

Of the members of the Political Assembly, Vosgan Mardigian, Levon Demirjibashian, and Sëmpad Kyatibian were frequently absent.

As much as the Administration itself and these two Assemblies, two commissions played an extremely important role on the matter of the most important problem of those days: the question of the Armenian Reforms. One of these [commissions] had been elected from the National General Assembly and bore the name of "Consultative Commission on Exploitation." This committee consisted of Krikor Zohrab, Harutyun Shahrigian, Har[utyun] Kalfayan, and Tavit Der Movsesian. The other had been elected from the National Central Administration and bore the name of the "Commission on Security." It consisted of Abp. Yeghishé Turian, Hayg Khojasarian, Harutyun Kalfayan, Vahan Tekeyan, Tavit Der Movsesian, Harutyun Shahrigian, Krikor Zohrab, and Levon Demirjibashian. The Secretary of the Commission on Security was Vahan Papazian, who selflessly dedicated himself to his duties.

The Commission elected from the National Assembly was a supervisory body, whereas the Commission on Security played an active role and was the principal ally of Boghos Nubar Pasha's [National] Delegation. In this context, the Commission on Security provided the Delegation with information, made suggestions, and, in its own turn, cultivated relations with the Embassies, responded to their inquiries, and provided them with the explanations they requested. The work was conducted in a general atmosphere of harmony. All the political parties had gathered around the National Patriarchate and spared no effort to see the work succeed.

I consider it my duty to mention here with special appreciation the work conducted by the Tashnagsutyun Party. They had put into motion, without any exceptions, all their forces in Constantinople, in Russia, and elsewhere.

I recall with gratitude the services rendered by Krikor Zohrab in Constantinople and by Dr. Zavriev⁶⁰ in St. Petersburg for the Armenian Reforms. It is generally known that Dr. Zavriev was a member of Tashnagsutyun and that Krikor Zohrab, a sympathizer, was encouraged by party members in this activity. Zohrab was in almost daily contact with Andre Mandelstam,⁶¹ the First Dragoman and Legal Counsel of the Russian Embassy in Constantinople.

The Armenians of Turkey had lived a life of terror during the entire tyrannical reign of [Abdul] Hamid and were terrified of having relations with foreigners, lest they attract the State's suspicion to themselves. The re-establishment of the Ottoman Constitution helped eliminate this atmosphere, but, among the Armenians of Constantinople, despite the presence of a large number of people who had received a European education and were at ease in European languages, there was practically no one who had contacts with European diplomatic circles.

In the same vein, there was a class of Armenian effendis—graduates of the Turkish universities of Constantinople who occupied government posts—who were very cautious about becoming involved in Armenian national affairs, lest they attract the government's suspicions to themselves. During my period of duty, there were the exceptional cases of Krikor Zohrab, Kapriel Noradungian, and Sdepan Karayan, who selflessly served the Nation and did not hesitate to assume active roles in national circles.

As for the [Armenian] people, they were always interested in national developments, and all the more so after the re-establishment of the Ottoman Constitution, when political parties started to function openly and began to attract people's interest to the Nation's life. Consequently, and especially because of the involvement of the press, it was not possible to keep secret the developments concerning the Reforms.

The Nation was more or less informed about the attempts being made and the negotiations being conducted, and it waited, patient and restrained, for the Patriarchate to bring the matter to a successful conclusion. Under these circumstances, it is easy to understand that the Patriarchate's Assemblies had this matter permanently on their agenda, and they pondered and consulted about it to bring the greatest possible benefit to the Nation.

It is true that the Patriarchate had its Assemblies and the Patriarch was quite involved with them, but the Patriarch often felt the need—because of compelling circumstances—to discuss certain administrative matters and consult on measures with the Chairman of the Political Assembly and then to announce them to the Assembly, as was prescribed in our Constitution.⁶² Therefore, the Chairman of the Political Assembly, often called the Prime Minister, had an important role as the Patriarch's immediate advisor. During my term as Patriarch, I had the good fortune of having as my associates and assistants two prudent, patriotic, and energetic Prime Ministers, in the persons of Sdepan Karayan and Dr. Krikor Tavitian. I cherish their memory with blessing and gratitude; they became sincere collaborators during a sensitive period with multiple demands, when the quality and nature of our relations had acquired extreme importance.

It is well known that the National Constitution assigned to the two Assemblies of the Central Administration, each having 14 members, the responsibility of dealing with the matter of the Armenian Reforms, but it was difficult to discuss in an Assembly of 28 members the secret correspondence [the Patriarchate] was having with the National Delegation or other persons and the contacts [we] were having with the Embassies. There were numerous disadvantages to this secret correspondence, especially since—in its essence—this was an anti-State undertaking, given the Turkish government's passionate opposition to the European states' demands. It was evident that the Turkish government—to protect its State interests—had hired and put in place numerous spies who followed the Patriarchate's movements. Therefore, during the Karayan and Tavitian Administrations—following my initiative—the Joint Assembly decided that the Patriarch was allowed to act in consultation with the Chanceries of the Administrative Assemblies, communicating details of his activities only to them. Indeed, it was important to keep the Patriarchate's collaboration with Boghos Nubar Pasha as secret as possible from the government, given that the latter was ill-disposed toward the Armenians and convinced that the Armenians served the interests of foreign powers—especially those of Russia—who longed to occupy the Eastern Provinces of the Ottoman State. This viewpoint appeared to be accurate, because European diplomacy once again was interested in the Eastern Question and Russia was keen on raising the Armenian Question.

The Ittihadists, however, overlooked their own culpability. After taking power in 1908,

they had done nothing to restore the country. Quite the opposite, in a few short years they had lost the Empire's African and European possessions in the Tripoli and Balkan Wars. They had also been unable to bring about any improvement in how the country was run to satisfy the constituent elements of the Ottoman State, whose grievances continued in the same vein as before.

The European governments that had for a moment believed in the possibility of having the Ottoman Empire reconstituted, witnessing the situation, became disillusioned. Europe no longer had any confidence in a Constitutional Turkey, and the Balkan War gave the European states an opportunity to make the Eastern Question a subject for diplomatic negotiations. On this occasion, Russia, with the pretext that she found the instability and conflict in the [Ottoman] Provinces near her borders undesirable, encouraged and sponsored the issue of Armenian Reforms, supported the Armenians' demands, and put all possible pressure on Turkey, with the backing of England and France, who [had] wished to see Turkey reformed with her territorial integrity intact.

Germany, supported by her two allies, Austria and Italy, initially opposed the Russian proposal, but then—wishing to avoid facing a *fait accompli*—agreed to the implementation of reforms under European supervision in the six Eastern Anatolian Provinces.⁶³ The Ottoman administration not only wanted to benefit from the conflicts between the European states in order to scale down the Russian demands [for reforms in the Armenian provinces], also tried to win over the Armenians and to have the European controls removed at the request of the Armenians themselves—suggesting to the Armenians that they should abandon their demands for European supervision.

Based on its past experience, and at a time when circumstances were favorable and the European governments themselves had taken an interest in the matter, the Patriarchate could naturally not take such a step. Consequently, the Patriarchate was in continuous communication with the Sublime Porte⁶⁴ and with the Constantinople Embassies of the six Great Powers.⁶⁵

In the Patriarchate's relations with the Ottoman State, the accepted procedure was that, when the Patriarch went to the Sublime Porte, he was generally accompanied by the Patriarchate's *Chargé d'Affaires* and, on important occasions, by the Chairman or a member of the Political Assembly. During my term of duty, I always wished to follow this custom and take with me a member of the Assembly during my visits to the Sublime Porte.

The Assembly saw fit to send one of its members, the lawyer Diran Yerganian, but, seeing that in the course of visits to Ministries to discuss the Nation's business, the latter was pursuing his personal interests, I decided that it would be preferable to take with me the *Chargé d'Affaires*.

The topics of our petitions to the Sublime Porte were well known issues. These consisted principally of the following.

1. matters having to do with the *vakif* [endowment] holdings of our churches and schools
2. the issue of the death penalty given to Ashod, who had killed a policeman during the incident that followed the celebrations in Adapazar on the occasion of the 1500th anniversary of the invention of the Armenian alphabet and the 400th anniversary of the first Armenian printed book
3. the issue of the elections of the Ottoman deputies

4. the trade boycott that the Turks had put into effect in Sepasdia, Brusa, Edirne, and other Provinces that had been incited by the government with the intention of forcing Armenians to give up their demands
5. the unsafe conditions prevailing in the Province of Paghesh due to the killing of the *Mudir* [Director] of Khuyt by Armenians and the actions of the Kurds

Some time later, the following topics were [also] introduced.

6. the selection of officials to accompany the Inspectors General (or the Governors General)
7. the imprisonment of Hënehag⁶⁶ Party members accused of having participated in a plot to assassinate Talaat

I made many appeals on the above matters and received many promises, but nothing concrete was accomplished [thus]:

1. The matter of the *vakiîs* remained unresolved.
2. Ashod was hanged.
3. The boycott continued for a long time, until the start of the war.
4. The Governor of Paghesh, the primary instigator of local tensions, was not replaced for many more months.
5. The number of Armenian deputies in the Ottoman Parliament, despite our demands, was reduced from 17 to 13, and most of the seats went to people favored by the Ittihad Party.
6. The officials accompanying the Inspectors General were ones put forward by Ittihad.
7. All the jailed Hënehag members were hanged—as I will elaborate below—with the exception of Hëmayag Aramians, who was also “punished” after the end of the war, downed with a single avenging bullet in front of his house.

All this should suffice to demonstrate that our relations with the government left much to be desired. The government showed no goodwill toward the Armenians, and the Armenians, seeing this lack of goodwill, could not cultivate any hopes for improvement without European controls. The Patriarchate, therefore, could not refuse the controls, particularly since the European governments themselves were willing to implement them and, desirous of instituting the controls, started to have relations and meetings with the Embassies.

It was customary, during the Patriarch’s infrequent visits to the Embassies, for the Chairman of the Political Assembly to accompany him. Here I recall with gratitude the assistance Sdepan Karayan rendered me in helping take my initial steps. The Chairman of the next Administration, Dr. Tavitian, made great sacrifices and did not hesitate to do everything he could, by accompanying me whenever necessary.

Thus, the negotiations were taken forward at a fervent pace and they culminated on the 26th of January/8th of February 1914,⁶⁷ when the Vizier Sayid Halim Pasha⁶⁸ and the Russian Chargé d’Affaires P. Gulkevich signed an agreement in which the Sublime Porte agreed to announce in a communiqué its willingness to implement reforms in the Armenian-inhabited Provinces. These Provinces, which the Turkish newspapers were calling, “The Six Provinces of

Eastern Anatolia," were made into seven through an agreement and further divided into two Administrative Regions. The first Administrative Region consisted of the Prefecture of Van, Paghesh, Diarbekir, and Kharpert; the second Administrative Region consisted of the Prefectures of Garin, Trebizond, and Sepasdia. At the head of each Region would be a European Inspector General or Governor General, whose appointment would have to be approved by the European states. These officials would have the responsibility of supervising the administration, justice, and police apparatus and even the Governors and Prefects in their Region. They would appoint minor officials themselves and propose names to the Sublime Porte for the appointment of major officials. They would have the right to enforce the resignation of all administrative personnel, with the exception of Governors. Any changes affecting Governors were still left in the domain of the Sublime Porte. Land and census issues were within their authority. Within the limits of their authority, they would also have the use of the military forces stationed on their territory. The Hamidieh regiments⁶⁹ would be placed among the reserves. The equal distribution of government jobs between Muslims and non-Muslims was also part of their responsibility. In the Provinces of Garin, Van, and Paghesh, the [Provincial] General Assemblies would consist half-and-half of Christians and Muslims, until the numbers for each nation could be determined in a general census. In the remaining Provinces, effective immediately, deputies would be distributed proportionately.

The laws, decrees, and official announcements would be published in all the local languages. Court cases would be recorded in Turkish and—circumstances permitting—translations into the languages of the two sides of a court case would be appended. Also, the Inspectors General could allow the parties involved in a court case to use their own language at court and in dealing with the authorities.

The Sublime Porte honored its promise and jointly announced the reforms it had agreed to with Russia in a communiqué addressed to the great powers. The great powers, in turn, immediately proposed to the Sublime Porte the names of the two persons that the European Powers had for months been seeking and had agreed on. These were Westenenk from the Netherlands and Hoff from Norway. Westenenk was a person with administrative experience gained in the Dutch colonies, but Hoff was a plain military man, quite inexperienced in administrative matters.

The Armenian Question had, therefore, reached a new stage. The long and arduous negotiations aimed at convincing the Ottoman government to implement reforms under European controls had come to an end. New horizons were now opening up before the Nation, which had the right to expect a bright future. The signing of the agreement, although an important success in itself, was not everything. Now its dispositions had to be put into practice, a task that was no less difficult given the Turkish government's a priori lack of goodwill and the different positions regarding the Armenian Question between the two camps of European states—the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente⁷⁰—an antagonism that seemed certain to continue.

The Turkish government was clearly going to use all possible manipulations to win over the Inspectors General, to leave the Armenians in the minority, and to cause the Reforms to fail. Indeed, the Turkish government started its usual manipulations from the first day. The elections for deputies [to the Ottoman Parliament] coincided with the period when the Armenian Reforms project was taking its final shape, and these elections constituted a perfect example as to the behavior that could be expected from the government. The Ittihad government wanted to reduce the number of Armenian members in the Ottoman Parliament in

order to pretend that the number of Armenians in Turkey was small. On the other hand, the Patriarchate, its Assemblies, and the [Armenian] political parties were collectively making every effort to have one more seat, so as to prove the importance of the Armenian Nation in the Ottoman Empire.

Given that the government had previously delimited the administrative boundaries of the Provinces in such a way that the Armenians were everywhere in the minority, and because it was not possible to correct the boundaries of the Provinces and the Prefectures, [we were reduced to hoping] that the government would include in the list of its party candidates deputies representing Armenians in proportion to their numbers.

The Political Assembly took some decisions with this in mind, and, to give those decisions a chance of success, it was also decided to negotiate with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ittihad Party Headquarters. The Patriarchate had decided to demand at least 18 Armenian deputies, who should be appointed by the [Armenian] Nation. With this purpose, the Patriarch, the Prime Minister, and the Chargé d'Affaires were knocking on their doors every day. [In response], the Interior Minister Talaat lulled us with promises, and Ittihad leaders Mithad Shukri and Kemal often visited the Patriarchate and made a show of intention to satisfy our demands.

After negotiations that lasted for several months, 13 seats were obtained for the Armenian deputies; more than half of these were given to men picked by the Ittihad. Thus, Zohrab and Halajian* were elected from Constantinople, Vartkes⁷¹ and H. Madatian* from Garin, Vramian and V. Papazian from Van, Onnig Ihsan* from Izmir, H. Boshgezenian* from Aleppo, Hampartsum Boyajian from Paghesh, Kegham Der Garabedian from Mush, Dikran Barsamian* from Sepasdia, Madteos Nalbandian* from Kozan, and Khêrlakian* from Marsh.⁷²

If the Turks played such a game in the elections for deputies, they could very well repeat it on other occasions. It was, therefore, necessary to watch things closely and not to allow them to create difficulties in the implementation of the Reforms through deceit and trickery.

B. After the Establishment of the Reforms Program

As soon as the agreement for the Armenian Reforms was signed, I sent, with the approval of the Administrative Assemblies, a telegram of thanks to the Russian Ambassador, Mr. Giers. Indeed, Mr. Giers had been very well disposed [toward the Reforms] and had worked very hard for the project to succeed. Having received my telegram, Mr. Giers, together with his Chargé d'Affaires, visited the Patriarchate on Sunday, the 23rd of February 1914. When he arrived, I was conducting Mass in the Mother Church for the ordination of priests and unfortunately could not personally receive the Ambassador. Three days later, accompanied by the Chairman of the Political Assembly Sdepan Karayan, I returned his visit and apologized for not having been able to leave the Mass during his visit.

Mr. Giers first thanked me for the telegram I had sent him on the occasion of the conclusion of the Reforms Question, then urged me to send people to Europe to meet with the new Inspectors General and to win them over to the Armenian cause. He also shared his opinion that, from here onward, serious work had to be done to reap the benefits of the Reforms and advised me to strengthen the population both through education and economically.

Following the Ambassador's recommendation and with the approval of the Commission on Security, Dr. Zavriev in St. Petersburg was immediately instructed to leave for Europe and,

joining up with Har[utyun] Mosdichian in London, to try to meet with the Inspectors. Zavriev and Mosdichian fulfilled the task assigned to them and met with the Inspectors General before their arrival in Constantinople.

On the 26th of April/the 8th of May [1914] I received a first visit from the Inspectors General, whose arrival in Constantinople had occasioned great joy in Armenian circles. The instructions for the Inspectors were drafted with the participation of the Inspectors themselves, the Embassies, and the Turkish government. On the 17th of May, the Dragoman of the Russian Embassy, Tukolka, informed the Patriarchate that the instructions had been finalized.

After that, we entered the phase of selecting the administrative, juridical, and financial officials who were to accompany the Inspectors. Naturally, the Turkish government was making every effort to select from among its officials such persons who were [well disposed] toward the State and whose Armenian national spirit was weak. Following the National Administration's decisions, I made protestations twice to Interior Minister Talaat, asking him to appoint people who were conscientious and who loved the people of the land.

On the 19th of June/2nd of July, Lieutenant Colonel Hoff came to the Patriarchate, accompanied by his secretaries, for a farewell visit. A few days later, he left for Van, passing through Garin. Westenenk stayed in Constantinople for another week or two and had not yet left for Armenia when the General War broke out. Turkey declared general mobilization, thus putting an end to Westenenk's duties and recalling Hoff, who had barely reached Van.⁷³

C. An Incident

While fully engaged in this life-and-death matter, fully supported by all the classes and political parties of the Nation, following the counsel of the Russian Ambassador, Mr. Giers, who was playing a leading role in this matter, and putting my best efforts forward to take utmost advantage of the Reforms being planned, I found myself faced with a surprise. Jacques Sayabalian,⁷⁴ a National Deputy who was a Tashnagsagan or a sympathizer, published an "open letter" addressed to me in the 13th May [1914] issue of *Azadamard*,⁷⁵ in which he discredited me by using disrespectful language.

Having spent my life mainly in the Provinces, I had never been addressed with this kind of language before—neither to my face nor indirectly. Facing this in the more courteous environment of Constantinople, I was naturally affected by it. I had thought that if someone did not approve of the way I carried out my duties or general activities, then he could address me directly or through a member of the Assembly; had the complainant been a member of the General Assembly, he would have been entitled to challenge and question me—using, of course, appropriate and formal language—during one of the Assembly's sessions.

I felt it was necessary to respect the prestige of the Nation's head. In our national structure, the Patriarch occupied the same place as the president of a state, because he was elected by the will of the Nation's representatives, and was the spiritual and political leader of the Nation.

The Patriarch is not the chairman of an assembly but its executive authority. The outside world sees only the Patriarch—not the assemblies in the background—because it is only the Patriarch who can speak in the name of the Nation, and the Patriarch has to have the Nation behind him with its vote, respect, and love. When strangers show respect toward the Patriarch, they respect his Nation. When strangers see that the Nation does not respect its

leader and even insults him publicly, then they, too, do not attribute any significance to him, and they leave the Patriarch's requests and pleadings unanswered. Consequently, it would be better to dethrone such a leader, because it is useless for him to remain in office. With these considerations in mind, I sent a short note of inquiry to the Chairman of the Representative Assembly, to see whether the General Assembly stood behind the writings of one of its members, as Jacques Sayabalian had signed his open letter with his title of National Deputy.

The Assembly could have simply stated that when a deputy does or says things outside the Representative Assembly, he does not act in his capacity as a deputy. Instead, after devoting an entire session to this matter, the Assembly practically appropriated the issue and sent it to the *Nakhaknnich Tivan* [Preliminary Investigations Committee]. Even though conservatives considered Sayabalian's act inappropriate, they could not condemn it, whereas his partisan supporters defended it by declaiming, "The Deputy is free!"

Feeling disoriented, I threatened to resign from my post. Venerable people of the Nation found my anger justified, but they begged me not to act upon my threat. His Eminence Ormanian, K. Noradungian, Dr. Tavitian, and others asked me in person not to act upon my threat of resigning, especially during such a sensitive period. Others, such as Hovhannes Shahnazar, Nēshan Jivanian (Horo), and—from more distant places—Catholicos Sahag,⁷⁶ Boghos Nubar Pasha, and Arshag Chobanian⁷⁷ sent me letters with the same plea.

Times were indeed sensitive. The two Inspectors General of the Armenian Provinces were in Constantinople and the very next day visited the Patriarchate. The way I saw things, it would have been inconsistent with my patriotic sentiments to cultivate a grudge and let the Inspectors General notice the dissension in our ranks, especially at a time when there was an enormous amount of work that needed to be carried out in Constantinople and the Provinces and when it was necessary for the Assemblies and the political parties to be fully involved in order to reap the greatest possible benefits from the Reforms. I was also convinced that no party, not even Sayabalian's own party, was in agreement with his action. Therefore, I brought the matter to a close through a letter I addressed to the Chairman of the General Assembly, Kap[riel] Noradungian⁷⁸ on the 21st of May [1914].

D. The Jerusalem Problem

This [Sayabalian matter] was an insignificant incident in the eyes of the General Assembly compared with the Jerusalem problem, which also exploded during those days and occupied several sessions of the Representative Assembly, causing passions to rise. I should mention here that the matter surrounding Maksudian in Jerusalem had never interested me much. I inherited this problem from my predecessors; it already had a long past, and it continued to provoke people's emotions during my term of duty.

The Nation had dealt with this problem for numerous years, and much ink had been spilled over it. In my opinion, the problem would not have lasted as long nor gained the dimensions it did had Ghevont Vartabed Maksudian [in Jerusalem] and his associate and protector in Constantinople, Bp. Kevork Yeretsian, not used tactics to win the support of National Deputies.

It would have been prudent if our former Patriarchs of Jerusalem had demonstrated the foresight to adopt as a rule of their congregation an obligation for members [of the St. James Brotherhood] to give up personal property—much as it is the practice of Catholic congrega-

tions—and to obtain an edict from the Ottoman State embodying this. Had this been the case, members of the St. James Brotherhood of Jerusalem⁷⁹ would not have been able to retain personal possessions or revenue, their fondness for worldly goods would not have been tempted, and they would not have longed to have personal fortunes, amass riches, and benefit their relatives. In such a case, the monastery would have been spared numerous internal disputes, the Nation many annoyances, and the monastery many losses. Unfortunately, I do not remember how this problem made its appearance on the agenda. I regret not having at hand the minutes of the General Assembly, which would surely show how the issue was introduced to the General Assembly. In my opinion, the issue was artificially rekindled, especially by the Central Faction, for the purpose of toppling the Karayan Administration.

In the Representative Assembly, the majority belonged to the Central Faction, whose leaders were Tavit Der Movsesian and Hayg Khojasarian. The other factions did not have many members. For instance, the Tashnagsutyun had only 6 or 7 deputies, the Azadagan [Liberal] Faction 10 to 12, and the Hēnchagians 2 or 3.

The Political Assembly was chaired by an Azadagan, Sdepan Karayan. Among its members were four Tashnagsagans (Har[utyun] Shahrigian, Vahan Papazian, Dr. G. Pashayan, and Kegham Der Garabedian), who were among its most active figures.

This was intolerable for the majority of the National Assembly, because the members of the Central Faction surmised that the Tashnagsagans, who were already well organized and influential in the countryside, now also controlled the Political Assembly and the Patriarchate, which was headed by a Patriarch thought to be sympathetic to the Tashnagsagans. All this might mean that the Tashnagsagans could establish exclusive control during these crucial times, when the Reforms were about to be implemented.

To prevent this, plans were made to force the Administration to resign, thereby expelling the Tashnagsutyun from the Patriarchate's circle and diminishing its influence. The Central Faction succeeded in implementing this project and forced both Assemblies of the Administration to resign on the 7th of February 1914.

The Religious Assembly was easily elected three weeks later, on the 28th of February [1914], and consisted of the following: Abp. Maghakia Ormanian, Abp. Yeghishé Turian, Abp. Hovhannes Arsharuni, Bp. Kapriel Jevahirjian, Bp. Mgērdich Aghavnuni, Sēmpad Vartabed Kazazian, Yeghishé Vartabed Kalfayan, and priests Krikor Yeretsian, Hagopos Delejegian, Vartan Tertsagian, Bedros Garabedian, Apel Yeretsian, Vahram Hagopian, Araham Ebeyan, and Sahag Bedrosian.

As for the Political Assembly, it became possible to form it after three sessions (the 7th and 14th of March and the 25th of April [1914]) and with the following members: Chairman Dr. Krikor Tavitian, Kevork Gyureghian, Levon Dēndesian, Nerses Zakarian, Hayg Andonian, Karnig Bezazian, Maksud Nargilejian, Aram Halajian, Hovhannes Gyulbengian, Mardig Ekserjian, Parsegh Avedisian, Kasbar Cheraz, Aghasi Aghasian, and Sarkis Suin.

All of these were people known in Constantinople to be honest and patriotic individuals and entirely unaffiliated with political parties, but none of them had any experience in the Nation's affairs. This Assembly, totally removed from partisan influences, was called to duty to conduct its work calmly and to help with the Armenian Reforms. Even the Chairman of the Assembly, Dr. Tavitian, whose name became associated with the Administration, did not have significant experience or activity in National matters. In fact, apart from having been a Trustee to the *Getronagan Varzharan* [Central School]⁸⁰ of Galatia [Galata], Dr. Tavitian had performed no other National service. Nevertheless, he proved himself to be an upright and

judicious person, revealing great talent and conducting his duties with personal devotion, and was perceived as the embodiment of the Assembly.

The Tavitian Administration functioned during two turbulent and tempestuous years—a truly sad period—and performed its duties honorably, having the agreement and collaboration of the Religious Assembly, which, after Abp. Ormanian's departure for Jerusalem, was led by Abp. Yeghishé Turian.

The new Administration was fortunate to see removed from its agenda the Jerusalem problem, which could otherwise have taken all its available time to the detriment of the Nation's other needs. The National General Assembly had voted on a Regulation for Jerusalem and had elected as the person to implement it Vahan Tekeyan, who was then the Headmaster of the Surp Garabed Monastery School in Gesaria [Kayseri]. On this occasion, to manage the [Jerusalem] monastery, to ease the way of the implementation of the Regulation, and to establish law and order there, the Administration appointed Abp. Maghakia Ormanian as an Administrative Delegate, inasmuch as he was experienced in monastic life and gifted with great administrative skills. His Eminence Ormanian was accompanied by Kevork Gyureghian, a member of the Political Assembly and a competent jurist.

Toward the end of April, I took these three delegates with me as a group and presented them to the Interior and Justice Ministers. The three of them set out for Jerusalem shortly after that. Once there, Abp. Ormanian, who was not in agreement with the intended Regulation, started behaving in an imposing manner, such that Kevork Gyureghian felt his presence unnecessary and soon returned to Constantinople. As for Tekeyan, finding himself in disagreement with Ormanian, left Jerusalem for Egypt, from where he intended to negotiate with the National Assembly and receive instructions.

The General War broke out soon thereafter and disrupted everything. Tekeyan was unable to communicate with the Central Administration. Ormanian remained [in Jerusalem], isolated from Constantinople; during the crisis days of war and exile he administered the monast[ic complex] with great skill and effectiveness, until 1916 when Catholicos Sahag was appointed as the spiritual leader of the Armenians of Turkey with the title of Catholicos-Patriarch. Just before the British Army occupied Jerusalem, Ormanian moved to Damascus and, from there, on the 15th of June 1918, returned to Constantinople with the Sublime Porte's permission. He died in Constantinople on the 17th of November, rendering the Nation a last service in Jerusalem [trying to settle the crisis].

The Central Administration, thus freed from a major annoyance [the Jerusalem crisis], was engaged in its peaceful work of contributing to the Reforms, guided by the image of a distant prosperity, when dark clouds started gathering in Europe and a thoughtless bullet fired by a young man⁸¹ in Sarajevo involved the world in the conflagration of armed conflict, which also engulfed our Fatherland, the agony of which only a handful of us, spared from the Turks' generalized carnage, became the surviving eyewitnesses.

E. Declaration of the General War and Its Consequences

1. Reports and News of Atrocities from the Provinces

On the 1st of August 1914, armed conflict had already started among the great powers of Europe. In this crisis situation, Turkey, who had just come out of the Balkan war with enormous losses, also declared a *seferberlik* [general mobilization], which was actually a prelimi-

nary to its joining the war. Thus, a very grave and unexpected situation developed, one that led the Nation into a great disillusionment. Although the issue of Reforms had been resolved in a manner fitting the preferences of the Nation, a strained situation was created between the Armenian and Turkish elements [of the Empire].

The Ittihadist government had not forgiven the Armenians for having asked for European controls. The government had wanted the Armenians to abandon this demand on their own initiative, putting their faith in the government's promises and believing that the government would put into place the requested reforms. Neither the Patriarchate nor the National Delegation had agreed to the government's proposition, and, because of this, the Ittihadists were filled with vengefulness toward the Armenians, perceiving them as an element that was inviting foreign interference and letting itself become the tool of foreign states.

The Sublime Porte considered the declaration of a European War a suitable opportunity for annulling the [Reform] agreement—to which it had given its accord with such reticence—and to use the war as a pretext for suspending the implementation of the Reforms and recalling the two Inspectors General, Westenenk and Hoff.

This situation caused the Nation general consternation. Having seen barely a glimmer of hope, it once again fell into despair and found itself faced with a crisis situation. The Ittihad Party might not be satisfied only with suspending the Reforms, it could also try to avenge itself on the Armenians. It was therefore necessary to behave prudently in order not to give the government an excuse.

At this time, any thoughtless act or anti-Turkish demonstration on the part of Armenians living abroad could have endangered the existence of the Turkish Armenians. Consequently, during the months of July and August 1914, Dr. N. DagHAVarian went to Tiflis with my instructions to meet with Armenian intellectuals and leaders to request that they act with great caution, because any thoughtless undertaking or excessive demonstrations on their part could threaten the lives of their Turkish-Armenian brothers. A month later, Dr. DagHAVarian returned completely disillusioned, because his exhortations had produced no results, and the thinking of the Russian-Armenians appeared to be completely different. Shortly thereafter, the recently ordained Prelate of Gesaria, Bp. Khosrov Behrigian, came back from Echmiadzin and told us about the joyful atmosphere in Tiflis, where [Armenian] volunteers were signing up “to fight against the Turks and liberate Turkish Armenia.”⁸²

These heartbreaking reports caused me much mental anguish, because such developments could serve as a pretext for the Turkish government, whose lack of goodwill toward the Armenians was evident from the beginning [of their rule], [to harm the Armenians]. The government was convinced that the Armenians' sympathies were with the Allies, whereas it was leaning toward the Triple Entente. In addition, the Armenians were openly expressing their sympathies in many places.

The German Consul, Holstein, who had traveled in the areas of Mush and Paghesh before the outbreak of the war, had reported to his government that the Armenians were an unreliable element, devoted to the Allied countries. Naturally, the German government did not fail to report these comments to the Turkish government, informing it, yet again, about an established fact and contributing to the Turkish government's lack of goodwill toward the Armenians. The suspension of the Reforms was the first step; others followed.

Until the Ottoman state entered the war, issues related to conscription and war taxes were among the Patriarchate's most prominent concerns. The repressive measures the Turkish government instituted in connection with mobilization were an expression of its spirit and an

indication that it was pursuing a specific purpose. The National Central Administration, having become informed about these events, decided to try to have at least schoolteachers exempted from military inscription. With this purpose in mind, I approached Talaat several times, who did not pay any attention to and did not satisfy our plea because—as it was revealed later—he had a special goal. So, all my efforts led to nothing and the schoolteachers were conscripted. We succeeded only in having the acolytes exempted from military service as deacons [*Sargavak*], and in this way we had the illusion of having saved many youths. But this was simply a temporary solution, because they, too, were later conscripted or mixed in with the deportation caravans.

The government had already used the assassination of a policeman in Adapazar during the festivities celebrating the invention of the Armenian alphabet to disarm the Armenians of Adapazar in October 1913. After the declaration of war, this measure was implemented more generally. A letter received from Sepasdia [Sivas] included the following:

In February and March 1915, the government ordered the public to turn in all their arms, big or small, announcing that there was a need for arms. Those who did not turn in their arms would be court-martialed. Many Armenians turned in their weapons, which were mostly permitted weapons. Turks, too, submitted their weapons, but what they submitted with one hand they received back with the other. The government collected the weapons obtained in front of the government building, it added to the pile some additional weapons belonging to the government, and had this pile exhibited and photographed, to provoke the Turks against the Armenians and to justify a report to Constantinople that the Armenians were preparing for fictitious assaults and uprisings.

The government thus used conscription and military confiscations to repress the Armenians and leave them powerless.

The Vasburagan region appeared to be the Turkish government's principal target. A report from the 27th of September 1914, prepared by the Prelacy of Van, demonstrated how the government implemented conscription and military confiscations. We read in this report:

The recruitment started on Sunday, the 27th of July [1914]. [The government forces] surrounded the square in front of the Ararots Church and took to the garrison all the Armenians coming out of the church, as well as Armenians and Turks engaged in commerce on the square, without regard to age or size. Several days passed before this large crowd of detainees could be registered and those found unfit for military service eliminated. During this time, the people were kept under very difficult conditions in the garrison courtyard, under the burning sun. It is natural that conscription under such conditions would scare many people, especially Armenians who are altogether unaccustomed to military life. It is also normal that many did not respond to the roll call immediately or deserted after being conscripted. The latter were severely pursued and, in the process, the following tragic events took place....

Here we were told about numerous events in which innocent Armenians and Assyrians were killed, tortured, or robbed as deserters or persons not responding to the roll call. Then the letter continued:

There are also innumerable instances of the *bastinado* [beating] and the confiscation of carts and oxen.

For the above reasons, and because of the general conscription, most of the agricultural workers have left the area, and agricultural activity has largely ceased. The grain crop, which was abundant this year, largely went to waste, because it was either not harvested or the part of it that was harvested stayed in the fields without being threshed. Very little has been planted for the coming year, and the price of bread, instead of falling as might have been expected in view of this year's abundant crop, has actually risen. A terrible famine is expected next year.

Under the present circumstances, the Prelacy, of course, did not remain indifferent. It entered into negotiations with the local government and undertook all possible efforts for the benefit of the population and resolved many problems, such as the granting of extra time for agricultural workers and schoolteachers. These efforts were successful to some extent.

At the same time, in circulars and announcements, we exhorted the people to respond promptly to the roll call, so as to avoid being subjected to the punishments foreseen in the law. Similarly, we exhorted the villagers to form mutual help groups consisting of men, women, boys, and girls left in the villages, to do the work of those who had left for the army and to help one another with food and money. Our Vicars have already started touring and supervising the regions, and in this way we hope that the hardship will be tempered at least partially.

However, a strict order received recently from His Eminence Izzet Pasha, the General in Chief of the [Ottoman] army in Garin, weakened all our hopes. His Eminence the General orders that this year, on top of the tithe tax, 2.5 percent of the harvest also be paid, and this supplement, together with the one-tenth—in other words, 3 to 8 percent of the entire harvest—be transported to Garin by means of the people's own means of conveyance. The implementation of this order will condemn our Province to famine immediately and make any kind of agricultural work impossible, because all the farmers' animals and carts will need to be assigned to the task of transportation.

In another letter, sent 24 days previously, we read:

Two weeks after the call to arms for [all men] up to 45 years of age, allowances were made in the province, first [men] up to 42 years of age, then those who were 36 years of age, were temporarily released. Orders even arrived for those up to 30 years of age to be released, but today a new and severe announcement came for all [men] up to 45 years of age to take up arms. Therefore, in addition to cities and villages being emptied and agricultural work stopping, the crops that have not been harvested in many places will be ruined, and there will be no seed planting for the coming year.

In addition to the tragic conditions mentioned, the villages will be emptied and left unprotected; because of this, we consider it very important for the villages to have guards to protect them. We have had talks with His Excellency the Governor about this.

The National Patriarchate, having received a telegram on the 2nd of December 1914 from the merchants at Van, submitted a report on the 14th of December to the Justice Ministry, appending to it a copy of the telegram. In the telegram, the merchants of Van expressed themselves as follows:

The local government has confiscated goods worth 20,000 pounds without paying anything. This is contrary to the law published by the government. Now the local government has started to confiscate goods belonging to the same merchants and still arriving in the city; it has also started to forcibly open warehouses belonging to the same merchants in Erzurum and Van and confiscate their contents. It is clear that, as a result of these actions, we will soon become bankrupt—we will be sitting on ashes, unable to pay our debts, etc.”

Prelate of Diarbekir Chēlghadian Vartabed wrote the following on the 27th of September 1914 to the Patriarchate:

The people here have been brought to such a point that it is almost impossible for them to continue living, and the situation is even worse in Slivan and Bsherig. With the utmost severity, and using threats, wheat, flour, barley, horses, mules, sheep, rye, oil, dairy products, shoemaking leather, and peasant women's head-wrap sheets are being collected from the people. Those who have these things are giving them without complaints. Those who do not have them are obliged to buy and deliver them, otherwise they can be brought in front of the Court-Martial. Unfortunately, evil does not stop here; for the last month, the Kurds have reverted to their old habits and started robbing the Armenians, partly to take the place of what has been confiscated from them and partly to quench their thirst for revenge on the Armenians.

Then the letter enumerates numerous incidents of killings, robbery, extortion, and violence and adds:

Our Vicar in Bsherig reports the foregoing incidents and adds: Because of the government's indifference, the country is starting to turn upside down, and the people are in a frightful state. There are worries about an imminent big massacre. The roads are filled with bandits. One must undertake great difficulty to travel to Pareshen; the tobacco fields lining the roads are entirely ruined by the Rashkoda [tribe], etc. We included all of the above in a *takrir* [report] and presented it to the attention of His Excellency the Governor. Now we are waiting for results.

It is now one month since *seferberlik* was declared. [Men] from 20 to 45 are called to arms. A state of siege has been declared and a Court-Martial formed. Whoever does not obey, whoever does not respond immediately to the call to arms is condemned to *idam* [death]. This terrifying threat goes from one end of our region to the other. How could one leave the fields without harvesting and the harvest without threshing? People from the plains and the hills, terrified and stunned, are coming to the Prelacy: ‘Oh, Father! Find us a solution, show us a way out! What kind of conscription is this?’ Everyone up to 45 years of age, and in this land the ‘45 year-olds’ are actually 50 or 55 years old, because their age has been incorrectly registered.

Isn't it true that those wanted for conscription have by and large not received any military training? Many among them are hump-backed. Isn't it true that the Christians have already paid the military tax? But all these objections amount to nothing. It is, of course, necessary to obey—the fatherland is in danger. We should hurry and join the Ottoman army and bear arms. This should be our most sacred duty. The gendarmes and the military units have gone up to the villages and are using sword and fire to recruit soldiers. Any kind of violence is permitted, and the poor villagers, in full obedience, have started to come down in groups.

People's disappointment has reached its peak. But this is not their only worry; more and more, everything that fighting forces need is being requisitioned from the people. With the same severity as the recruitment operations, now oxen and carts are being confiscated. If four or six oxen are needed from each village, the gendarmes are taking 30 or 40, so as to choose the best ones and send the useless ones back. The confusion and delay in the agricultural work that this causes! Couldn't the selection be done in the village? But who cares!

Sheep are needed for meat, wheat for making bread, barley, hay, and grass for the horses, oil, sugar, underwear, shoes, sandals, riding harnesses for the troops, etc. All of these are needed, and they have to be provided by the people. If it could only be done in an orderly manner! If only each village's and each person's ability to contribute could be taken into account and [the army's needs] communicated to the villagers through leaflets. Supposedly this was done, but the villagers have not seen any leaflets. Rusty old officials of the *istibdad* [absolutism] period⁸³ are back at work. The *Mutesarîf*⁸⁴ Servet Bey has given them broad authority, and they beat and torture the villagers, and in place of one they demand five or ten. The *Mutesarîf* personally beats and dishonors several men—Turks, Armenians—in the center [of the *sanjak* (military-administrative district)] every day. Officials and gendarmes sent by the *Mutesarîf*, as soon as they reach a village, start by administering beatings. They beat, and they take deep pleasure from it, as they have been deprived of this pleasure for several years. They have to beat the villagers, so that the villagers, terrified, will give them whatever they demand, and it is also true that the expressions, *idare-i eorfiye* [martial law] and *divan-i harb* [court-martial] constitute the core of their threats. They succeed in doing whatever they want. Official follows official: one demands wheat, another barley, another oil, and yet another sheep. Then new ones come, and they, too, demand wheat, barley, etc., and there is no end to the demands. And the saddest thing is that often the officials refuse to give receipts for what they have taken, and they speak ill of other officials, saying 'Do not recognize [the authority of] any official other than myself!' But each one has the title of an official and, without showing any papers, makes demands and takes what he wants.

From the Vartoyé Gundé village, [officials] took 500 *meri god*⁸⁵ of wheat, 30 *god* of barley, 7,000 *hokka* [*okka?*] of hay, 30 *god* of bulghur.⁸⁶ 180 *god* of flour, 7 *par*⁸⁷ of grass, 12 oxen, 2 carts, 2 horses, 6 liters of oil, 3 felt cloaks, rugs, 1 saddle, and 2 *palan*.⁸⁸ In return for all these things taken, the g[overnment] officials refused to supply a receipt immediately; they put forward conditions and started bargaining. We are told that the military policemen then headed for the fields, threw themselves upon the workers, captured them, and brought them to the village and started bargaining with them; they let the villagers go only after taking half a pound from each

of them. Several days later, other officials came, and the same ceremony was repeated.

About a month later (the 18th of September), in a more heart-rending letter, we read the following:

Under the heading of “military goods,” so much was taken from the people that we will not be mistaken if we say that half of the people will not even have enough for their daily nourishment in winter. Apart from what was taken earlier from each village—oxen, horses, carts, wheat, barley, sheep, oil, etc.—now they have started to demand a second tithe. It is generally known that, during the last few years, the tithe taken has actually been one-eighth of the crops, and now the government will be taking an equal amount under the heading of military supplies; this will, in reality, be one-seventh of the goods. One-tenth of the sheep are being taken, and for each head of sheep—without distinction being made as to male or female, having milk or not—50 *direm*⁸⁹ of fat, 3-4 pairs of socks per household, thousands of liters⁹⁰ of hay and grass. The heaviest impact on the people is the doubling of the tithes. About this, it is said that the Ministry of Finance has ordered that, instead of collecting the tithe from the tenants, as was decided by the local *idare-i mejlis* [i.e., *mejlis-i idare*, Administrative Council], it is to be collected from the people, without touching the *multezims* [tax farmers], so that the latter will still be able to pay their debts to the Treasury.

Another report penned three weeks later (the 6th of October), in an equally pained manner, writes the following:

The military taxes upon the people of the countryside have become heavier by the day, and now there are yet others imposed, which will be intolerable. The stores of our city’s merchants and tradesmen are now being visited for the fifth or sixth time by the Military Needs Supply Commission and the police. The storekeeper’s consent or presence is not necessary; they take whatever their gaze touches upon and whatever they think might be useful, and later they compile lists and assess values, as they see fit. In addition, every household is obliged to furnish one set of bedding filled with wool (cotton is rare in these parts), several sets of clothes, socks, sandals, *so/* [local shoes], spades, hoes, tin, and sacks; it is now being said that 500 additional sets of bedding will be collected.

As for the villagers, their condition is even worse. After having already periodically supplied wheat, barley, oil, sheep, oxen, horses, tools, onions, beans, felt cloaks, rugs, socks, grass, hay, etc., orders have been issued for another tithe to be exacted.

As stated, for years, one-eighth was being taken from the farmer instead of the tithe. Consequently, under the name of a second tithe, one-seventh was taken, and now there are orders for a third tithe, which in fact means that one-sixth of the crop is to be taken. Adding it all up, almost four-eighths will have been taken, and the people will be left with one-half of the crop, and now 8 percent of our people are planting at half capacity. Of the crop received, half is planted as *marantsan* [seed grain]. A lot of farmers have taken out interest-bearing loans to pay their taxes or for

other necessities, to be repaid with their wheat or barley crop. These loans are known as *salaf* [advanced money]. All these types of creditors come to the threshing floor to settle their debts with the villagers. Of course, some additional shares are to be given to cowherds, tillers, etc. After all this, the poor farmer comes back empty handed from the threshing floor, so there is nothing to pay a third tithe with. We have spoken to the Prefect about this, but he tells us that elsewhere—for instance at Van, Garin, etc.—two-thirds has been taken and, in other places, 40 percent. Mush is known as an agricultural province, and more had initially been assessed, but he [claims] he succeeded—with great difficulty—in lowering it to the present rate.

[As though] it were not enough that the people are being robbed and deprived of what they have, now they are also being used as beasts of burden. In this regard, a letter by Bp. Nerses [Kharakhanian] is worthy of note:

Our people in these parts have been engaged, night and day, in the task of transporting goods and military supplies for the armed forces. A portion of the carts became stuck in the mud, and a portion of the animals died. Then they attempted to move things by oxen, horses, and donkeys. Considering the difficulties faced due to bad weather, the government decided to oblige the villagers such that from now on every village would undertake to transport a certain amount of goods and military supplies over the course of three months to Garin and Khnus, by sleighs or on people's backs. Winter is arriving in these parts, it is only a matter of days. The peaks of the mountains are already covered with snow. What will be the condition of the poor, half-naked villagers? What kinds of torments and deaths will they go through until they finish transporting these 4 million kilograms of supplies?

The people gave what they had, and still more is being demanded. Many among them had to borrow to satisfy the demands.

Prelate of Garin Bp. Sēmpad Saadetian reported on the 1st of August 1914:

On Tuesday, the 29th of July [1914], the authorities started to collect from the people carts, oxen, horses, and foodstuffs, without paying anything in return. Also, from the Armenian and Turkish merchants of the city, all goods at hand—flour, grains, rice, sugar, and cotton worth hundreds of pounds—were taken without their value being paid. There is no doubt that these military preparations are being made in anticipation of a war with Russia. This war appears inevitable. The Armenians and the Turks who were able to pay the *bede*⁹¹ are paying it with a thousand difficulties, and the remaining 20- to 45-year-olds are being called to military service. We are already receiving news of difficulties from Khnus, Terjan, and the villages on the Plain [of Garin].

The letter continued with premonitions of a terrible tragedy, and it asked urgently for the Patriarchate and the Armenian [General] Benevolent Union⁹² to provide financial assistance.

A month later, the tragedy had begun, and in his August 30 [sic]⁹³ report, Bishop Sēmpad stated:

The general mobilization is continuing, and our government is reinforcing the entire length of the Russian border with military forces and supplies. [The authorities] already confiscated all the stocks in the city and also started to confiscate from the villages oil, cheese, manure, *gorgod* [cracked wheat], *tsavar* [cleansed and cracked wheat], hay, and other wartime necessities. As a result, widespread misery is starting to show its claws.

Around these parts, the Armenians are now finding themselves in a delicate situation, and we are expending great efforts to avoid any political suspicions, so that, in the event of a probable war, our people will not be the victims of vengeful savagery. We noted with sadness recently that the government watched with disapproval the Tashnagsagan leaders and delegates who had come to our city for the biennial General Assembly and conducted proceedings against several among them, because of which proceedings several persons left and went back to their home regions. As for Mr. Agnuni, who had intended to stay here, he received a notice last week to leave our city within 24 hours and to return to Constantinople. Mr. Agnuni and several friends were forced to comply with the warning and leave, taking the sensitivity of the times into consideration. The attitude of the government is worthy of note, in that the members of an Armenian political party are considered suspicious in its eyes, without a real or serious cause; this is, naturally, an expression of the general lack of confidence on the part of the government toward the Armenian people and, in particular, Armenian political parties. Let us hope that this lack of confidence will not spread and that it will not have sad consequences in the future.

In another important report dated the 17th of September [1]914, we read:

Today, thirty thousand soldiers are spread in the villages of Pasen. In the city of Garin and on its Plain there are at least forty thousand soldiers, and the army of Kharpert (at least 30,000 soldiers) will also reach our area today or tomorrow. In the single village of Mudurga there are stationed more than two thousand soldiers, and the other villages, too, contain similar numbers. Church buildings are requisitioned and taken, our petitions are of no use.

In a letter dated the 28th of September [1914], he [Bp. Saadetian] writes:

As can be seen, in Garin and the surrounding areas, the vulnerability of the Armenians' situation has reached its ultimate point. The men from Pasen and the city who had been jailed remain in jail. There is another sad situation, which is equally worthy of note: the government, disregarding the laws and justice, has taken under arms Armenians from 21 to 45 years of age. Those in the 43-45 age group were eventually let go on a temporary basis, but the soldiers who are 31 [21?] to 42 years of age, who have never held a gun nor received military training, nor served in a military capacity, are putting up with this life with much difficulty.

Bayazid is part of the same Prefecture, and, on the 19th of August 1914, the Prelacy Vicar from there wrote the following to the Patriarchate:

I am living the crisis of unexpected developments. In Pakrevant, the 20- to 45-year-olds—teachers, acolytes, everyone—are being taken away to the army with much severity and under stern threats. The Prelacy is under siege by women. Homes and hearths are shut down; commerce is at a standstill; fields, threshing floors, and the harvest are all abandoned. In the agony of waiting, these cruelties and worries are [still] partially bearable.

What is more sinister and worse is [the conditions of] the city and the towns. Villages are targeted by robbers, and the military authorities brutally take away the horses with no compensation paid.

Your merciful Eminence, one thousand Hamidieh cavalry troops have been raised here, and concentrated in the town centers of Bayazid, Karakilisé, Tokharis, Alashgerd, Padnots, Tutaz. Ever since a state of war was declared, all the needs of the cavalymen and their horses—feed, grass, barley, medication, sleepwear, fuel, meat and furnishings, bread, rice, bulghur, and tea—are being met entirely by the local population. Allow me to give you the example of a village near the city, the village of Ardzap.... From the date when martial law was declared until now, this village (where no young men remain) has given 1200 *kileh*⁹⁴ of wheat, 200 *okha* of oil, 100 sheep, 700 loads of fuel, 50 cartloads of dry grass, 7 horses. It is simply amazing! I cannot give more details here, my time does not allow. If, woe to us, this situation continues for some more time, the villagers will go into exile, holding on to their naked urchins. As I was concluding my letter, I received news from the caretaker at Surp Hovhannes that soldiers used brute force to take away to Karakilisé the two horses of the Prelate and the single horse of the monastery.

Khnus is another district of the same diocese, the Prelacy of Erzurum, and from there the Prelacy Vicar, Apkar Vartabed, reported on the 10th of October [1914]:

The Armenian population living near the line of fire needs superhuman patience to put up with this unbearable suffering. The specific incident at Sasun had repercussions here, too, and various exaggerated rumors caused deterioration of harmonious relations between the different groups. Today, it was decided to send 50 Kurdish cavalry to conduct a search in the village of Gopal in our diocese. I sent someone during the night to warn them, but I feel that, even without any tangible proof, an atmosphere of fear will be created for the poor villagers. I consider it unnecessary to write about the deteriorated economic condition, about which I have written at length and with proof to the Garin Prelacy. We are, after all, living through a time of horrifying crisis, and we no longer know how to console the Armenian people, who are living through the tribulations of uncertainty. May the Lord see and protect them!

Every day we received similar reports from Shabin-Karahisar, Kharpert, Perri, and other places. We give here several examples from these. Prelate of Shabin-Karahisar, Vaghinag Supreme Vartabed wrote to us on the 20th of September 1914:

We exhorted our people to fulfill their duty toward the fatherland, and the people hurried to respond to the call that they were hearing. But when they met an

unfriendly and unsympathetic reception, many among them considered it preferable to flee. This unfriendly attitude toward the Armenians is demonstrated every day in our city and the surrounding Armenian-inhabited villages, where confiscations and forced labor are being implemented with the utmost severity. Among many, we mention here several incidents:

1. From Veri [Upper] Adzbder village, 65 *kileh* of wheat and barley, 90 *okha* of oil, 50 cows, 150 sheep, 500 *okha* of bulghur, 30,000 *okha* of hay, and 100 beams (for bridge construction) were taken; then the villagers were compelled to carry their tithe to the city without remuneration.

2. From Vari [Lower] Adzbder, 50 *kileh* of wheat and barley, 50 *okha* of oil, 250 *okha* of bulghur, 30 cows, 50 sheep, 4 yokes [pairs] of oxen (and 10 yokes from Veri Adzbder), 10,000 *okha* of hay, [and] 50 beams.

3. From Aghravis, 35 *kileh* of wheat and barley, 500 *okha* of bulghur, 30 cows, 50 sheep, 162 *okha* of oil, 6 yokes of oxen, 3 horses, 10,000 *okha* of hay, [and] 50 beams.

It would take very long, Holy Father, to enumerate all the demands made on the Armenian-inhabited villages and all the cruelty inflicted upon them in connection with the demands. The government, having confiscated horses and carts, and possessing every means of transportation, still made the villagers carry, without remuneration, their own tithes and provisions [demanded from them]. From lack of food, many of the villagers' animals died on the way, thus depriving the poor villagers of their animals. Also, the entire village community was thrown into a crisis, because they had to abandon their work in the fields and on the threshing floor and spend their time in endless transportation tasks. The Armenian is bearing the largest part of this burden, with the Turkish villages being assigned a few, insignificant tasks. The *Mudirs* and *Kaimakams* [District Heads] are robbing the people with intolerable methods, receiving support from the martial law conditions. People robbed like this dare not raise their voice, fearing that the court-martial will sentence them to execution. Our protests and pleas to the *Mutesarif* and the *Vali* [governor] are not answered, whereas the officials sent to the villages function with full authority. As stated, even though the army has sufficient means of transportation, they still took 45 yokes [pairs] of oxen from [the village of?] Turk, 40 from Mshagnots, 10 from Gtanots, 20 from Sis, and 40 from Antreas; these were sent to Girason, and today the skins of many of these animals were delivered here.

In the city, too, the Armenians suffered the larger part of the damage, with the confiscated goods—sugar, horseshoes, cloth, *shayak*,⁹⁵ gasoline, candles, rice, etc.—taken from Armenian shops. The Turkish storekeepers, having been forewarned, hid their goods or locked up their stores and went into hiding. [The authorities] opened by force those Armenian stores that were closed and took whatever they wanted.

Many stores receive confiscation visits almost on a daily basis. Business is at a standstill. The poor people feel terrorized. With the winter almost upon us, they do not know how to meet the needs of their own families or those of the unfortunate and wretched families whose men are under arms.

The Prelate of Pert (Charsanjak) also released a pathetic cry in those frightful days. In his report dated the 5th of October 1914 and bearing the number 331 he informed, among other things, about the following:

Numerous and contradictory orders are being announced almost daily regarding recruitment of men for the army. The [government] representative found in this an opportunity and a way to glorify himself, and he has started a comprehensive recruitment in all the districts and collection of supplies in an aggressive and highly discriminatory manner.

The population of Pert and the surrounding villages is Armenian, the few Muslims among them are *aghas* and *bey*s, and these have few Muslim [tenant farmers] under their protection. The Kizilbash⁹⁶ Kurds are farther away; they are unruly and they do not heed [government orders]. Consequently, the Turkish officials have come down with their entire force upon the shoulders of the already deprived, unfortunate Armenians.

The Armenian is the bastard child of this land. He is not a landowner, instead he is the detested serf of the *agha* and the *bey*s. For the latter, now an opportunity has presented itself to repress "these always subordinate Armenians," to make a show of their influence, to give a lesson to the Armenians and to repress [them]. Around here, one-tenth of the possessions of the *agha* and the *bey*s and their Muslim protégés is being taken for the reserves, but the Armenian widow is being deprived of her last remaining possessions by force and torture and being reduced to begging for alms from the *bey*s and their protégés.

For instance, [the authorities] have so far not succeeded in taking anything from Ahmed Bey of Geoktepe, who has a fortune of thousands of pounds. It was decided that he was to [contribute] 100 sheep, but he only gave 10 sheep, and these he collected from the Armenian and Turkish villagers. In addition, for 10 additional sheep, he collected 20 *mejidiel*⁹⁷ [each] from the villagers, but he did not remit this to the government.

Osman Bey has been assessed 150 sheep, but he has paid only 50. Sherif Bey of Pashaghag has been assessed 150 sheep but has paid only 50. The 24 households of *bey*s in Charsanjak have been assessed only 60 *kharkha*,⁹⁸ of which 33 are still owed. In the center of Pert, the Armenians paid immediately for 100 *kharkha*, and the government officials also paid for 100 *kharkha*.

The village of Tsorag was asked to turn over its donkeys. The *agh*as then used force to send the animals to perform their personal work. The village headman's substitute, who found this out, remains silent. There are many other examples that are not communicated to us or others out of fear. The case I have written about is known to everyone.

The *bey*s have dozens of mules and pack animals; one or two of these were taken. But even the lame donkeys are being taken from the Armenians and the poor Turks. The *multezims* had stored the tithe wheat, and the government had this moved to Erznga [Erzinjan] on the backs of the Armenians' donkeys, instead of the *bey*s' mules and pack animals. One convoy went already and another is preparing to leave. A donkey can carry barely one-half *colchek*⁹⁹ of wheat, which has a value of at most 30 piasters; and the donkey will die en route, and its owner will be engaged in this task for 20-25 days. From the villages, 21- to 35-year-olds have already left to join the armed forces in Eriza¹⁰⁰ or Garin; now the 36- to 45-year-olds have left for wheat transportation, and the remaining ones will be leaving, too. The Armenian homes are being deserted, and now the government intends to have 10 to 15 thousand *colchek*

more of wheat transported; it has issued an order: “If it proves impossible to find animals to carry it, people have to carry it on their backs!”

At the homes of the *bey*s, there are numerous armed and unarmed daredevils; the Kizilbash Kurds are living free in the mountains, with their extended families, animals, and foodstuffs. The Lieutenant Governor does not dare to go after them, or he purposely pretends not to see them.

The types of incidents described in the above official communications took place in the city of Kharpert [Harput], too. We will only present here a small excerpt from a long report dated the 18th of October 1914.

The late Bsag Vartabed, stating that he participates personally in all the fundraising committees that are set up to rob the population, lists these committees:

1. *Mefrushat-i askeriyeh* [Military Furnishings],
2. *Tekealif-i harbiyeh* [War Taxes],
3. *Khaneh-i askeriyeh* [Military Buildings],
5. *Khrka-i askeriyeh* [Military Attire],
7. *Eoshirin eoshiri* [Tithe of the tithe].

The Armenian people have been subjected to all the exactions and confiscations to the highest degree. The villages have generally participated at the highest levels.

After describing these, the report continues:

There is no longer any way out. Everybody is engaged in the task of transporting [goods] and arms for the kol-ordu¹⁰¹ at Pasen. We have also exhorted and advised the Armenian villages to do everything within their ability to facilitate and assist the passage of soldiers through their areas.

These reports, filled with material evidence, perturbed me and the Administration, and our anxiety reached even higher levels when we started receiving other disturbing news, which was the early expression of a conspiracy surrounding the Armenians, and which showed that a catastrophe was about to befall the Armenians. Persons belonging to the Ittihadist gangs and German officials made intentional public accusations every day, to create disturbances and to prepare the Turkish mobs.

Thus, the following was reported from Sepasdia:

The American missionary Holbrook was assassinated on the 3rd of August 1913 near Endres by Turks following the orders of the local *Kaimakam*. During the court process, the government attempted to accuse the Armenians, but, when it could not convince anyone, it wanted to close the matter by saying that the culprits were unknown.

When Bp. Torkom was still the Prelate of Sepasdia in the spring of 1914, the Turkish government wanted—entirely illegally—to give to Turks pastures belonging to some Armenian villages of Sepasdia (Khanjarh and Khorsana). Protests went unanswered. Likewise, on lands belonging to Holy Nēshan Monastery, they started to build Turkish garrisons and buildings.

The government also wanted to oppress the Armenian mentally. In schools, National [i.e., Armenian] History lessons were removed, and Turkish language lessons were put in their place. This was done even in girls' elementary schools, where the pupils are now going to learn Turkish even before they start studying Armenian. As teachers for the Turkish language courses, [the authorities] appointed people of their choosing.

Toward the end of January 1915, the Turks accused the Armenians of *having poisoned the Turkish army's bread*¹⁰² to avenge Sahag Vartabed's murder! All the Armenian bakers and some soldiers were put in jail. Muammer wanted to slander the Armenians and to deliver them to the murderous passions of the mob. Supposedly the bread was tested on dogs, and several dogs died as a result. An investigation was conducted on these Armenians, and the falsity of the accusations was revealed. Then the matter was buried, with a public announcement to the effect that the municipality had poisoned the dogs to get rid of them.

A high-ranking Armenian official wrote in a report:

On the 15th of June (1914), I was traveling from Beirut to Bitlis. In Aleppo, several deputies of Dikranagerd [Diarbekir], Feyzi, Zulfi, and Kyamil Beys joined my carriage. In conversation, Feyzi Bey indicated that the Armenians had behaved very badly with them: "After the Balkan War and during our most vulnerable period, Patriarch Zaven, the Catholicos at Echmiadzin and Boghos Pasha jointly invited the interference of foreign states in our affairs. For this, *you will suffer greatly, your future is rife with danger!*"

He repeated these words several times. It proved impossible to persuade him [by arguing] that the Reforms were for the benefit of the Turks, the Kurds, and the Armenians equally, that the Armenians had not done anything disloyal, that the Reforms were for the peace and prosperity of the country, and that it should be expected that he, too, as a *mebus* [deputy] be satisfied with all this. When we arrived in Urfa, Huseyin Jelal Bey, the recently removed Governor of Dikranagerd, announced the recall of [the Inspector General] Hoff. Feyzi Bey expressed great joy when he heard this and said to me, "Now we will see what will happen to you [Armenians]!"

Prelate of Garin, Bp. Sëmpad Saadetian, wrote the following on the 17th of September 1914:

The Armenians have been and will be upright. Everybody has responded to the call to military duty, in person or by paying the exemption fee. They are taking every precaution not to invite even the slightest suspicion upon themselves. These things are well known to the Turks and the Ittihad and government circles, but it seems to me that *they wish to create pretexts to show the Armenians as untrustworthy*. What these imaginary pretexts may lead to it is impossible to foresee, but certainly they do not promise a prosperous future. When we approach government circles, we receive reassuring responses to the effect that no Turk can commit an assault on Armenians or Christians and that, if it ever happens, those doing such things will be promptly

subjected to the severest punishment. How is it possible, then, to explain the following, which the Prelate of Kēghi has reported to us : *In Kēghi, an Ittihadist named Midhad Effendi, having just returned from Garin, is conducting meetings attended only by Turks and making arrangements to form militias; he has received two boxes of arms from Garin, which he is distributing only to Muslims, while advising them to keep their deliberations secret from the Armenians?*

Incidents that were the preliminary signs of a gathering storm were happening everywhere. Thus, on the 6th of August 1914, the Armenian market in Diarbekir and, on the 13th of August [1914], the Armenian quarter in Adrianople [Edirne] were intentionally reduced to ashes.¹⁰³

The Armenians were also accused of being troublemakers, bandits, and rebels, as can be seen in the following excerpts from letters received by the Patriarchate. The Prelate of Garin wrote on the 4th of October 1914:

Among the papers belonging to one of the men jailed, Hovhannes Ghugasian of Velibaba, a list of Tashnagsutyun's corporal divisions was found, and the people named in this list were arrested. It is clear that Tashnagsutyun, as an official entity recognized by the government, is allowed to organize its members according to its Constitution and its wishes. But the government does not wish to understand or comprehend this reality, and *it wishes to interpret [these papers] as though these were chetehs [gangs], organized by a secret Armenian society* that, in the event of a war, would join its forces with Armenian volunteer bands that already exist on enemy territory, and then they would together attack Turkish villages and inflict all kinds of mischief upon the Muslim population. [The authorities] even insisted that these *chetehs* on the two sides of the border had already been in correspondence and that the government had proofs in this regard. It is in vain that we insist that all these are tragic suppositions, that such a plan could not exist among the Armenians, that all these things being said are impossible for us to believe, that the government is sacrificing the sincerity and the patriotism of the Armenian population to hostile fabrications. But this matter has already been turned over, in its entirety, to the court-martial at Garin, which will start examining everything. As can be seen, in these parts, a new period of political persecution has started for us Armenians. Once again the jails are filled with Armenians; signs of beatings and torture administered in jail are evident, and we hear about them.

The report continues by enumerating the searches and the incidents of torture, persecution, and imprisonment, and it adds:

To justify these searches and arrests, we are presented with claims to the effect that, *in the region of Paghesh, chetehs have been formed and have attacked Muslim villages*. We listen to these claims with doubt and disbelief, and we have written to the Prelacy of Paghesh to verify what we have been told and asked them to send us information. Likewise, it is reported that 200 to 300 Armenian soldiers from Van have crossed the Russian border and joined up with the volunteer forces on enemy territory, that there have been clashes between Armenian and Turkish soldiers, leading to

undesirable consequences. We requested information about these from the Prelacy of Van.

The Paghesh Prelacy's 13th of October 1914 letter, bearing the number 126, tells more about the same problem.

On the 8th of this month, we received from the Prelacy of Garin a letter that informed us of rumors coming from government circles in Garin, to the effect that Armenian armed groups had formed *chetehs* that were attacking Muslim villages.

These rumors caused the local authorities to treat the Armenians with mistrust, and, as a result, as Bishop Sēmpad has mentioned in the same letter, more than 100 Armenians have recently been arrested in Garin and Pasen. These rumors surprised us very much, because, in our Diocese, until now there have been no *chetehs* formed and no attacks, quite the opposite, because Armenians everywhere, those in our Diocese as well, are entirely loyal subjects; they think of nothing but sacrificing their lives and goods in the service of the government.

We explained, in the necessary manner and supplying evidence, that these rumors were totally false and that the Armenians were loyal, and we requested that Bishop Sēmpad translate our letter literally and speak to the appropriate people.

His Eminence also mentioned in his letter the more than 250 Armenian soldiers from Van who had gone to Russia, taking with them their weapons. Our Prelacy, especially under the present circumstances, is in constant communication with the Prelacies in areas close to the frontier—such as Van—and we have no information about such an incident either officially or unofficially. Therefore, we communicated to His Eminence that [reports on] this incident, too, were incorrect.

It appears that the rumors circulating in the official circles in Garin were based on individual incidents that took place in the Alijan village of the Mush Diocese and the Géli-Guzan village of Sasun. For the purpose of correcting once and for all the misunderstandings that had occurred, we considered it necessary to write and inform Bishop Sēmpad about these insignificant events that were committed by some individuals.

The Prelate of Paghesh wrote more about the same issue in a second letter carrying the same date.

It has been approximately a month since strange rumors started circulating around the region of Mush. Based on information received from the Prelate of Mush, we were communicating the significant kinds of information and explanations to the local officials, who have all along made efforts to show the Armenians as disloyal. At one point, the idle talk about the Armenians was, indeed, at a standstill. Regrettably, in connection with the recent incidents at Mush, the rumors started again—and we have, naturally, informed Your Beatitude about these.

The incident involving Dikran from the village of Alijan is a foolish act by an individual. As for the killing of the three gendarmes in Géli-Guzan, the killers are four Armenians of Géli-Guzan, as Bishop Kharakhanian wrote yesterday. Especially during these sensitive and confused times, this incident will have a very unfavorable

effect on all the Turks. The Governor, having heard of the incident, left for Mush by night. Knowing him to be an Armenophobe, we were very concerned that he could complicate things in Mush by acting with extreme severity. We are relieved that our worries did not materialize: our shallow Governor gave strict orders for the killers to be arrested, and then, like a noctambulist, he returned two days later, again by night.

After his return from Mush, with his invitation, I went to see him, and we talked at length about the incidents at Mush. Despite our insistence that the crimes committed were the work of individuals, and that there was no need to impart to them a communal character, and despite all the evidence we provided that the Armenians have all along been loyal subjects of the state, we are sorry to say that the Governor, who has come to occupy that post purely by chance and not through any valor, cynically wanted to point at the entire Armenian people as disloyal.

The Prelate of Mush, Bp. Nerses Kharakhanian, at about the same time (the 8th of November 1914) wrote the following lines to the Patriarchate.

The times are rife with danger. People are willing to be deprived of everything, provided they can live in safety. But who is going to give them this much-desired safety? *The government that is itself the source of all kinds of irregularity and mischief!* The circumstances confirm that people's doubts are not baseless.

The government reveals through its behavior that it no longer has any confidence in the Armenians and that *it is provoking and arming the dark forces against the Armenians*.

The German Consul at Mosul, Mr. Holstein, came to the Prelacy yesterday and stated without reservation that the government has suspicions about the Armenians. We provided him with lengthy explanations and stated that the government is greatly mistaken in thinking the Turkish-Armenians in agreement with the Russian-Armenians.

To arm volunteers, or under this pretext, there isn't a thief, bandit, or rascal left that has not been armed by the government. Lately numerous groups of Kurdish volunteers were brought from Sasun, Khuyt, and various other places, who are provoked against the Armenians. They caused considerable damage to Armenian villages on their way.

There are solid signs that the government is looking for a pretext to subject the Armenians of our district to catastrophes. Faced with this crisis situation, we are at a loss, and we do not see any way out other than heavenly protection.

As can be seen, the rumors spread about Armenian *chetehs* in the Van, Erzurum, and Bitlis Provinces were slanders and intentional fabrications by the government. We can understand how these fabrications were invented from the following lines excerpted from the eyewitness report of a high-ranking official.

On the 12th of April 1914, when I came to Sghert via Bitlis, in the company of the Armenocidal gendarmerie brigade commander, Nazëm Nazmi of Erzurum, who was an Ittihad-Terakki committee member, I saw this person conduct hours of secret

consultations with the Governor of Bitlis for two or three days. Immediately after this, the news was spread that the Armenians were revolting against government authority in the mountains of Khizan [Hizan], four or five hours away. Hundreds of gendarmes on horseback were gathered from all around and sent to the Armenian villages. In addition, the Kurdish *bey*s in the region were informed that the Armenians had rebelled and that they should go with their *ashirets* [tribes] to kill them and pillage their property. Thousands of Kurds gathered and went to Khizan. To their dismay, they found no Armenian rebels, but only about 20 Kurds. Thus, the Kurds saw that they had been deceived, and, considering war and pillage against fellow Kurds unbecoming, they went back. But the gendarmes inflicted extreme cruelties upon the Armenian villagers.

The exaggerated report of this fictional uprising attributed to the Armenians, having been drafted beforehand, was cabled to Constantinople, and great significance was attributed to it. The incident constituted [the basis for] one of the main articles Talaat Bey prepared and officially distributed numerous times on the uprisings he ascribed to the Armenians, and there were 17 other false articles based on [similar] fabrications.

These complementary reports, taken together, showed that Turkish government circles were preparing a conspiracy against the Armenians. The Patriarch and the Administration had a premonition that a disaster was threatening the Nation. To limit the extent of the malice, they did all they could, and, considering their insufficient resources, they invited to some of their meetings members of the *Mayr Tivan* [Main Chancery] of the National Assembly and several wise prominent people, to seek their opinion and benefit from their advice. Thus, on the 8th of October 1914 the Administration invited and had consultations with the following Armenian deputies: Krikor Zohrab, Arisdages Kasbarian, Hampartsum Boyajian, Mihrtad Haygazn, Tavit Der Movsesian, Nerses Ohanian, Rupen Zartarian, Hagop Avedisian, Kevork Simkeshian, Aram Andonian, Sarkis Minasian, M[argos] Natanian, and Bp. Hëmayag Timaksian.

The Patriarch and the Administration, having glimpsed the sad future, were preparing to confront the disaster that was about to occur. Indeed, this transition period, which led to the disaster, did not last long.

On Friday, the 17th/30th of October 1914, I had gone, together with Chargé d’Affaires Kamer Shirinian, to the Palace to congratulate the *bayram* [Muslim canonical feast]. A few minutes after I sat down in the waiting room, the Chargé d’Affaires, having conversed, in other waiting rooms and hallways, with other persons on congratulations visits, came to inform me that, during the previous night, there had been a skirmish between Ottoman and Russian warships in the Black Sea.

After having our audience with the Sultan and expressing our congratulations to him, we visited the Crown Prince, but neither there nor at the Ministry of Finance could we find out anything more. The other ministers were all absent during our visits. Only Jemal Pasha,¹⁰⁴ the Minister of the Navy, was in. From him, we heard that Russian warships had approached the Bosphorus during the night, and Ottoman warships¹⁰⁵ had attacked and fired upon them, causing them great damage. “It will be a difficult thing for the Russians to ignore this slap,” he said, “otherwise we should receive an announcement of war either today or tomorrow.”

After learning about this unfortunate incident, I hurried to the Galatia Church, where the Joint Assembly had [just] concluded its weekly session.

I communicated to the Assembly the news I had received in the Imperial Palace and the information that I had obtained from the Minister of the Navy. After consultation, the Assembly decided to convene another session the following day, to which the following were invited: Abp. Vahram Manguni, Abp. Hëmayag Timaksian, Bedros Halajian, Krikor Zohrab, Dr. Seghposian, Manug Azarian, Pyuzant Kechian, Tavit Der Movsesian, Hayg Khojasarian, Vartkes Serengyulian, Hampartsum Boyajian, Diran Kelegian, Hagop Hagopof, Mgërdich Manugian, Harutyun Shahrigian, and Mihran Muradian.

On the following day (the 18th/31st of October [1918]), an announcement of war was received, as predicted by Jemal Pasha, and the National Administration convened a meeting in the presence of all those invited to the session, with the exception of the last three.

The main topic discussed at the meeting was the present situation, which had become more complicated because of the Black Sea incident and the subsequent declaration of war.

All those present at the meeting held the general conviction that the Nation was finding itself in a difficult situation. They recommended, therefore, that the Patriarchate and the Administration take things very seriously, cultivate good relations, and maintain regular contacts with the government.

2. Petitions to Dignitaries and the Porte

To be helpful to the extent it could under the unfortunate circumstances, the Joint Assembly decided henceforth to convene frequently. Thus, on the 20th of October, a new session took place, and, after some elaboration, the following were unanimously agreed upon.

- a. The Patriarch should cultivate good relations with the Ittihad Party and the government, informing them about the condition and disposition of the Armenian Nation and working to improve the situation in the Provinces.
- b. Through the initiative of the Arm[enian] Bank's Administration, a mobile hospital should be established in the name of the Armenian merchants and the well-to-do classes and under the supervision of the Patriarchate.
- c. An instruction circular should immediately be sent to all the regions, inviting the [Armenian] population to fulfill its duty.

These decisions were implemented, as follows.

On the 25th of October [1914], I visited the Interior and the Justice Ministers and expressed the Armenian Nation's devotion to the Ottoman fatherland.

Particularly during my visit to the Minister of the Interior [Talaat], I wished the State success in its efforts in the present war and that it be crowned with a victory, while simultaneously expressing my concern about the Armenian population in the region of Garin, because whispers had already started reaching the Patriarchate indirectly.

For the purpose of strengthening our relationship with the Ittihad [Party], the most suitable person was determined to be Bedros Halajian, who was a member of the Ittihad and had attained a ministerial post through his affiliation. On the 20th of October [1914], I invited him to the Patriarchate and asked him to speak to the chiefs of the Ittihad and reassure them

that the Patriarchate, in the name of the Armenian people, was declaring that it would not fail in any way to fulfill its duty and that it was pleading that the sympathy of the government and the Turkish people never weaken toward the Armenians. On the 26th of October, Halajian came to see me and said that he had accomplished his mission. The chiefs of the Ittihad had promised to demonstrate perfect goodwill toward the Armenian people and asked Halajian to reassure me about it.

The establishment of a mobile hospital was entrusted to the Administration of the Armenian Bank. The Bank invited the Armenian merchants for consultations, but the project was not brought to a conclusion because of the strict measures implemented by the government. Nevertheless, the Nation did undertake an effort in this area, by opening the Surp Prgich [Holy Savior] Nat[ional] Hospital¹⁰⁶ to the wounded soldiers brought from the Dardanelles front. The Hospital rendered this service with great sacrifices, because the institution had fallen into severe financial straits due to the war.

The Administration saw to it that the third decision was implemented as soon as the Turkish government declared war. Telegrams were sent to all Prelacies [exhorting them] to fulfill their obligations generously. The telegrams were complemented with a circular, which said the following.

Unfortunately, our country did not remain unaffected by the War that erupted three months ago among the European states, and the Imperial Government has now called the army under arms by means of a general conscription. Telegrams and letters that have reached us from all corners of the Provinces during the last three months have demonstrated that our people—obeying the orders for the conscription of unsupported people and those from 32 to 45 years of age, for military confiscations, and for other governmental regulations—have participated willingly in these and other collections proposed to meet the various needs of the army and the government; therefore, our people's behavior until now shows that the Armenian nation is an inseparable part of the Ottoman fatherland, and, when needed, it is ready to express its loyalty and patriotism at the cost of making all sacrifices.

The circular expressed its conviction that these feelings were shared by the people and the officials entities and recommended the following:

- a. [Our] people should be exhorted, from the church pulpit and on other occasions, in writing and orally, to fulfill their obligations toward the Ottoman fatherland with complete sincerity, just like they have done for centuries.
- b. [Our people] should willingly respond to the call of the government in the name of the fatherland. In addition to material contributions, they should be exhorted to participate in military life—despite their lack of familiarity with it—and even to give their lives when the fatherland needs it.
- c. For alleviating the misery inseparably connected with wartime conditions, it is necessary to form Charitable Societies or to strengthen existing ones to care for the unsupported families of recruited soldiers and to alleviate the misery of poor people and orphans.

[The circular] recommended placing the [Nation's] official institutions at the disposal of

wounded or sick soldiers and even housing and nursing these soldiers in private homes. Then it advised all Prelates and official bodies:

... to cultivate friendly relations with local government officials, help them in their efforts, and present to the appropriate officials—in a friendly and empathetic manner—their comments regarding the lawbreaking behavior of certain individuals. Likewise, exhort the people to exhibit friendly behavior toward their neighbors and countrymen, to help them selflessly and through sacrifices, to respect their feelings, to be circumspect and far-sighted more than ever, not to permit misunderstandings, and, as always, to be careful with their words and actions, because it is evident that, at a time like this, people become irritable and sensitive.

This circular made a good impression in government circles. In the newspaper *Jeune turc*, which was published by Dikran Zaven, Ahmed Sëdki Bey praised it highly, in particular saying of the Patriarch, “the venerable Pastor’s words constitute the rules of true Ottomanism.”

The circular also had a comforting effect on the Armenian people, who had become very anxious upon seeing Turkey enter the war. Because of the crisis situation on the Dardanelles front (January 1915) the government had started making preparations to move the administrative center and the Sultan to Konia. As a way of showing our attachment to the Ottoman land, we made the issue of moving the Patriarchate a topic of discussion in the Joint Assembly, most of our people were living in the interior, and, if Constantinople were occupied, they would still remain under the Turkish government’s rule. The Joint Assembly took the issue to the General Assembly, and the latter accepted without any debate my proposal to move from Constantinople together with the government, if the need arose.

I informed the Minister of Justice of the General Assembly’s decision, and I requested that the government, if it agreed, kindly inform me of the date and time of departure. The Minister of Justice transmitted my request to the Council of Ministers, and the latter accepted it gladly. The following day, the Council of Ministers sent the Superintendent of Religions, Beha Bey, to the Patriarchate to express their thanks for our love toward the fatherland and loyalty toward the State, letting me know that I was the only one among the Patriarchs who had brought them such a proposal.

The following day, I was asked—through the Chargé d’Affaires of the Patriarchate—for the list of the persons that I would take with me to Konia. As I was [later] informed, a furnished house had been set aside for me in Konia, and it was still unoccupied in August 1916, when I was going through the city on my way to exile in Baghdad, although the Allies had long abandoned the Dardanelles front.

Alongside these official undertakings, the purpose of which was to supplicate the government and to show our devotion, some other projects were undertaken—separate from the Patriarchate but in harmony with the steps it was taking. Thus, the Constantinople Armenian Physicians’ Union organized a nursing course at Péra, Kum-Kapu, etc., of which the principal instructors were Dr. [Vahram] Torkomian and Dr. Rupen Chilingirian (Sevag). The goal of this course was to care for wounded Ottoman soldiers, and it was attended by a large number of people.

I presided at the opening of this course on the 16th of November 1914 at the Péra School of Trades and attended several of the subsequent lectures to give encouragement to the project. This left a good impression on ordinary Turks and the government.

We were receiving reports that similar efforts were being undertaken in the countryside and that our people were making sacrifices for the State that were clearly beyond their means. They were preparing garments and knitting socks for the soldiers and setting up hospitals for them. In particular, Prelate of Garin, Bp. Sëmpad Saadetian; Prelacy Vicar of Sepasdia, Bp. Knel Kalemkyarian; and Prelate of Kharpert, Bp. Vartabed Der Khorenian were encouraging the people within their respective Dioceses to engage in such efforts.

It is sad to say that, even though the Turks pretended that they appreciated the steps we were taking, they did not display any real, positive proof of sincerity and kind treatment. Quite the opposite, the Turkish government's behavior toward us became more and more tense, the restrictions were becoming increasingly tangible, and the Armenian people were in a confused and terrified state.

The recruitment was being conducted with increasing severity, and new age groups were taken under arms. Very quickly, everyone up to 45 years of age was under arms; the amount of the exemption payment *bedel* was quickly raised, and then exemption payments were completely abolished. Men who were the sole support of their families were not given exemption from service either, and, therefore, many families fell into need. Misery reached such levels that Armenian women and children started begging door to door for bread, and Charitable Societies started to function in the neighborhoods of Constantinople.

The information I was receiving from the countryside in my capacity as Patriarch was also far from encouraging. Whispers and gloomy reports about the uprooting of the Armenians of Garin had started reaching us. On the 2nd of March 1915 Catholicos Sahag sent me a verbal message through someone regarding rumors about deportations, but I was unable to verify these.

The German Ambassador and the Turkish government, determined to pacify us, denied that the information reaching us could be true, but it was increasingly being confirmed that there was an unusual situation in the countryside and that things were happening there. There was confirmation from various sources that Garin had been emptied. Not only did the Patriarchate's relationships with the regions become impossible, even individuals' correspondence was gradually becoming scarce; censorship became more severe with every passing day. Considering that [my correspondents in the regions] might have had difficulty writing in Turkish, I requested that permission be granted for correspondence to be carried on in Armenian, but this request was denied; no language other than Turkish was allowed. In any event, a short while later all correspondence ceased.

The situation was becoming palpably more difficult, and I felt that all our efforts were incapable of limiting the extent of the disaster. Because of the lack of goodwill, my requests remained unheard. It was clear that no favors could be expected from the government. Still, even without any hope, I continued my appeals, although my appeals continued to remain unheard.

It was necessary to encourage the population. Every Sunday I toured the neighborhood [churches] of Constantinople: I preached on the crisis of our times and heartened the parishioners. At the same time—hoping to supplicate the authorities—I continued exhorting the people to fulfill their obligations toward the government fully and generously. As part of this series of appearances, I made an address to the married priests at their lecture hall and expounded upon the conduct expected of them. While these efforts were being made in the capital city, we did not overlook the regions, where conditions were even worse. Letters reaching the Patriarchate informed us that pillage and murder was taking place in the Provinces of

Garin, Van, and Paghesh. I petitioned the Minister of Interior Affairs so that he would prevent these incidents, but my petitions were fruitless.

Under these difficult conditions, it was unconscionable to leave the people without leadership. A major problem was that several important Dioceses did not even have Prelates. Immediately after my ascension to the Patriarchal throne, the issue of the vacant Prelacies had taken up a lot of my time. I wanted to have worthy clergymen appointed to the important Prelacy positions in the regions; once the Reforms program was accepted, the need for the interior regions to have Prelates with philological¹⁰⁷ and diplomatic skills gained even greater significance. The Central Administration was preparing to take some steps in this direction when war broke out, and the obligation not to leave the people without leadership became an immediate imperative, especially in several important Prelacies that did not have Prelates.

Sepasdia was one of these places. Bp. Knel Kalemkyarian gladly accepted the post of Prelacy Vicar and went to fill it. The deportation of the Armenians of Sepasdia had not yet begun when Bp. Knel's brother came to me and said that Bp. Knel wanted to return to Constantinople. I did not allow it and said that the Prelate was the people's father and that, no matter what happened to his children, he should stay with them. Bp. Knel did not petition me again. He remained at his post through the deportations of the Armenians from Sepasdia and then was held in confinement for quite some time by the Governor Muammer, a notorious mass murderer.

Another Diocese that did not have a Prelate was Erznga. Considering its significance, through a decision of the Joint Assembly, we offered it to Krikoris Vartabed Balakian—who had just returned from theological studies in Germany—but he refused it. I offered the same post to Sahag Vartabed Odabashian, who was Prelacy Vicar in Brusa and who enjoyed a reputation as an eloquent and energetic clergyman. Sahag Vartabed answered my letter with the letter below. This letter had by chance remained among my personal papers—and fortunately so—because it provides evidence to counter Balakian Vartabed's writings in *Koghkoto* [Golgotha]¹⁰⁸ to the effect that pressure had been exerted upon him to leave for Erznga.

Brusa, 25 Dec. [1]913

Your Beatitude,

I have received Your personal letter of the 21st of December. In order to give a definite response to your very honorable offer, which I find entirely close to my heart, please allow me to come to Constantinople, after I conclude some work here at the beginning of the year, to discuss certain conditions that could allow me to leave here. Already I can tell you that this Diocese is entirely in ruins and has not seen any serious work since the time of Kevork IV Medzakordz.¹⁰⁹ Our 30,000 people here need devoted and selfless solicitude.

I am grateful for Your sympathy toward my person.

Please accept, Your Eminence, my sincere and complete devotion toward You.

Submissively Yours,

Sahag Vartabed Odabashian

Sahag Vartabed Odabashian came to Constantinople and gave me his agreement for the post of Prelacy Vicar for Erznga. Having received a Patriarch's decree [*gontag*] and a *berat* [certificate] from the government, he set out [from Constantinople] toward the end of 1914. After spending several days at his native Sepasdia with this family, he left for Erznga.

As we learned later, a day or two after Sahag Vartabed had left Sepasdia, he reached Enderes (near Su Shehir), where the adjutant of the monstrous Governor Muammer of Sepasdia, a certain Jelal the Circassian, fell upon the unfortunate Vartabed with his friends and murdered him. News reached Shabin-Karahisar, from where the Prelacy Vicar Vaghinag Vartabed Torigian hurried to the scene of the crime; he took and buried the body with pomp and glory at the nearby Adzbëder Monastery and then sent a comprehensive and detailed report to the Patriarchate.

I do not know how this report evaded censorship, but it did reach my hands.¹¹⁰ The sad news of this first martyrdom moved me deeply, and I submitted a *takrir* [protest note] to the government, dated the 23rd of December 1914. The government did not even respond. I was compelled to write again, on the 22nd of January 1915, and again I did not receive a response. In the second *takrir* I included the following lines.

Odabashian Supreme Vartabed, the Prelacy Vicar for Erznga, left for his Diocese from Shabin-Karahisar on the 18th of December and was killed tragically on the road that goes through Chobanly, Kanly Tash, Tyumker, and Gayi villages, in the *kaza* [district] of Su Shehir. Money and objects on his person were untouched. Only the inside pocket of his coat was cut and his diary taken. The medical report confirms that the crime was committed with Mauser and Martin rifles. The criminals, six in number, pursued the Vartabed starting in Zara; they were seen by villagers of Todurag in the Hafik district, and they went through Zara again on the following day. It is clear, therefore, that the crime was committed with premeditation. The fact that only his diary was taken from his body and that money and objects were untouched proves that this crime is not the work of bandits but has an entirely political nature.

I offered mass in the Mother Church and made an emotional obituary speech in the presence of specially invited [Armenian] National deputies, members of the [National] Administration, and [representatives of] other official entities and afterward accepted their condolences in the Patriarchate's Council Room.

Afterward it was understood that Muammer Bey or the central government suspected that Sahag Vartabed was going to Erznga—an area near the Russian frontier—with special [written] instructions. By obtaining these instructions, they hoped to use them as a weapon against the Patriarchate or the Nation. It was for this purpose that they had Sahag Vartabed murdered, and they took from his pocket his diary and some other papers, without touching his personal goods or money. The murder of Sahag Vartabed Odabashian was a warning, that Ittihad was going to satisfy its craving for vengeance through any means. The formation of [Armenian] volunteer regiments was an excellent pretext for the government, and it took full advantage of this.

After the war was announced, Turkey had two principal fronts: the Russian-Turkish front and the Dardanelles. First, the Russians advanced along the Russian-Turkish front in the direction of Pasen. They defeated the Turkish army, which was scattered and fled all the way to Garin and Mush, but then the Germans regrouped the dispersed troops, restructured them, and, by going on a counterattack, repulsed the Russians, who had come as far as the village of Keopryu Keoy [Köprü Köy].

As the Russian army was withdrawing to the Caucasus, all the Armenian inhabitants of the region of Vari Pasen [i.e., Lower Pasen] and of Deli Baba, Alijekrek, Dodi, Yughveren,

Komatsor, Dzandzagh and surroundings, Khosroveren, Tortan, Yaghan, Keopryu Keoy, etc. went with it. Only the Armenian inhabitants of Ékebad, Hertiu, Hasan Kale, and Badijavan remained where they were.

The German Consul at Garin reported to his government in Berlin on the Armenians' migration with the Russian Army and the Armenian volunteers' participation in this first assault and the reputed savagery they committed upon the Muslims of Pasen. These events provided the Turkish government with an excellent pretext for implementing its plan to put an end to the Armenian Question by exterminating the Armenian element. Our efforts to render this terrifying project impractical proved to be completely ineffectual because these efforts were neutralized, especially by information that was being received about the volunteer movement. In addition, there was no power that could exert an influence on the Turks. It was said that, after receiving the above-mentioned reports by the German Consuls at Garin and Mosul, Kaiser Wilhelm no longer wished to hear a favorable word about the Armenians, and all our attempts at bringing his influence into play were rendered useless.

After the declaration of war, the Allied ambassadors had left Constantinople, leaving only their military envoys. Not much hope could be placed on them, because the government behind the most influential of these, the German envoy, looked upon the Armenians with hostility. Nevertheless, we continued knocking on every door and never abandoned our petitions.

On the occasion of New Year 1915, I instructed the Patriarchate's Vicar, Yervant Supreme Vartabed Perdahjian, in the course of his visit of congratulations to the German Embassy, to present himself to Ambassador Wangenheim and—in my name—request the Ambassador's goodwill toward the Armenian people. Yervant Vartabed did as I had instructed.

In response to Yervant Vartabed's petition, Wangenheim declared: "*As long as Germany is Turkey's ally, no Christian should have any reason to fear. Be completely assured, that not one Armenian's nose will bleed—neither here nor in the countryside.*" Naturally, these words were not sincere but were uttered with the intent of deceiving us.

Even though the German Embassy was not a friend to the Armenians, in its own self-interest, it maintained an Armenian issues section, headed by Dr. Mortmann (former Consul in Izmir), having as his assistant the Armenian Hayg Taykesenian. Mortmann visited me occasionally, and we conversed about the unfortunate condition of our people.

One day [Mortmann] asked me, "Why are the Armenians more friendly toward the Allied states than toward us?" I responded:

[This is] because the ordinary Armenians do not know the Germans sufficiently. Many Armenians from Garin, Van, and Paghesh go to Russia to work and earn money. While there, they see that that country is freer than Turkey. Because of this, it is natural that they develop an attachment toward [Russia]. As for France, the Armenians have sympathies toward her because the French language is taught as an international language in Turkey, especially in our schools.

Catholic missionaries have expended great efforts to spread this language. The American missionaries are doing the same thing with regard to the English language. Thus, many among the Armenians study French and English literature from childhood, and they become friends of those nations.

In addition, England and France have consulates in the interior regions, which the Armenian people think are for their own protection. The Germans have done

nothing until now to encourage the Armenian people to know and like them. In the interior regions of Anatolia, the Armenians often confuse Germans and Austrians with Jews. [The Armenians] know them through their wares, which are brought to the area and sold as rotten and inferior Jewish goods. Certainly what I am saying does not apply to the privileged classes of Armenians. The latter have some knowledge about Germany and have sympathy toward her in their hearts.

Then I added:

I hope that the Germans will demonstrate toward the Armenians such an attitude during this war that they will start occupying a higher place in the Armenians' hearts than the other countries.

It appears that Dr. Mortmann communicated my words to the Ambassador in a report, and the latter in turn forwarded the report to Berlin, because Dr. Lepsius¹¹¹ found this report in the archives of the German Foreign Affairs Ministry and included it verbatim in one of his publications.

On another occasion, Dr. Mortmann came to me with a proposal, asking me to issue a *gontag* [encyclical] exhorting the Armenian soldiers on the Russian-Turkish front in the Caucasus not to fight against the Turks, assuring me that the Germans and the Turks would be very pleased with such an decree. I responded that I was the Patriarch of only those Armenians who lived inside the borders of Turkey. The Catholicos sitting in Echmiadzin is my superior in a religious sense, and I am considered his Vicar. I cannot interfere with the affairs of those Armenians who live outside Turkey. Such a thing would be beyond my jurisdiction.

In my diary, on the 26th of April 1915, I wrote the following:

Dr. Mortmann came to see me at the Chamber of Deputies in Galatia and asked what my thoughts were about sending Armenian-Turkish and German commissions to the countryside to conduct propaganda work, to strengthen the friendship between the Armenian and the Turkish elements. This proposal was made also to Zohrab, who told me about it on the telephone today, and I responded that we would gladly accept such a proposal, but it is necessary for the government to approve of it. For this reason, the [Armenian] deputies will test the mood of the Ministers in the coming days, and if the latter approve [of the proposal], then we can think about it at that point.

That very same day the Armenian intellectuals were arrested. During the Joint Assembly of the 13th/26th of April [1915] Zohrab's "Memorandum" was read, which, after relating the arrests in the capital city, expressed principally the following:

The Nation is very sad to see such a level of mistrust demonstrated by the Ottoman government. It is a mistake to impute political intent to soldiers taking flight. The Nation is not pursuing political aims, but rather it fears that such severe measures may be followed by a general massacre. The government's suspicion and the Nation's anxiety are incongruous with one another; to find a solution to this situation, it is more beneficial to follow mild and forgiving policies, rather than severe and

repressive ones; this is how we ask the government to treat the Nation, at least out of respect for the memory of the thousands of Armenian soldiers who spilled their blood for the defense of the Ottoman fatherland.

During this time, when the German Embassy's attitude toward the Armenian nation was as outlined, the Austrian Ambassador was not even interested in the Armenians, nor did he want to hear any appeals. This left only the U.S. Ambassador, Morgenthau, who behaved with caution and did not want to invite suspicion by getting into direct relations [with the Patriarchate], but the legal counsel of the Embassy, Arshag Shmavonian, was a valuable intermediary between us.

The Bulgarian Ambassador did not hesitate to say that he was not able to help in any way. The Italian Ambassador was undecided, and, once his government sided with the Allies, he quickly left the country.

The Turks had found an opportunity and were acting in an unrestrained manner, heeding neither friendly advice nor warnings, both of which had been tried. Indeed, certain of the European Ambassadors in Constantinople, and especially the U.S. Ambassador, Morgenthau—who later published his memoirs¹¹²—had tried to soften the Turks through friendly suasion, but were unsuccessful.

The Allied countries, despite having declared ceremoniously and transmitted to the Sublime Porte through the representatives of neutral countries that the heads and executives of the government would be held responsible for massacres and savagery conducted during the time of war, the Turks paid no attention to these warnings.¹¹³

It is a tragedy that, after the Armistice, most of the persons responsible for the massacres and the horrifying crimes were arrested and taken to Malta, presumably to be tried, but were then released without trial or punishment. Thus, all the beasts that had feasted on Armenians were going to be exempt from punishment, were it not for Armenian revolutionary avengers' bullets, which downed several of the major figures in their European lands of refuge.¹¹⁴

It was evident that the government had prepared a project of vengeance against the Armenians, the purpose of which was the extermination of the Armenian race. The government sought opportunities and—very regrettably—these opportunities presented themselves, because of imprudent acts or blind enthusiasms.

As explained above, the reassurances of our devotion and loyalty we were expressing to the government were contradicted and neutralized by [certain individuals'] ostentatious actions and boastfulness. It would seem that the latter acts were committed purposefully to complicate our situation further and to make it even more difficult. In particular, it was not possible to reconcile the interests of the Turkish-Armenians with the formation of Armenian volunteer troops on the Caucasus front and Armen Karo assuming their leadership, all the more so because Armen Karo was a *mebus* and a member of the Tashnagtsutyun. With his actions, he was exposing his own party and Turkish-Armenians in general to accusations.

We should not forget that the General Assembly of the Tashnagtsutyun in Garin [1914] had not acted very prudently in giving the Ittihad's delegates an absolute refusal, which the Ittihad did not take well. The proposal put to the vote, that the Russian-Armenians and the Turkish-Armenians should fulfill their citizenship obligations, was lawful and just, but it was far from satisfying the Turks, possibly because of its extreme candor.¹¹⁵

The Hēnchagians, too, engaged in an undertaking that was imprudent and harmful to the Nation, the consequences of which the Nation suffered. Early in 1914, the Hēnchagians

convened a meeting in Constantza, Rumania, during which they declared their party “underground.” They also decided to assassinate Turkey’s Interior Minister Talaat. Unfortunately, one of those present at the meeting (I believe it was Yesayan¹¹⁶) delivered the meeting minutes in their entirety to the Turkish government, at the same time informing on the party members who had arrived in Constantinople to assassinate Talaat. The government arrested the terrorists, together with those residents of Constantinople who had attended the Constantza meeting and those who had assisted in the assassination attempt.

Before all the arrests had been made, Hampartsum Boyajian (Murad), a refined and prudent man, came to me and told me with great emotion that four persons had arrived in Constantinople to assassinate Talaat and that he had made efforts to persuade them to leave at once, without attempting to implement their plan. Unfortunately, Dr. Benne, Achëkbashian, and others caused his efforts to fail, even though Nerses Zakarian, the Headmaster of the Gedig-Pasha National School, who was a prudent and refined [Hënehagian] party member, had helped him. (Zakarian was later exiled together with the Constantinople intellectuals and killed.)

The Government, which was aware of everything, finally arrested the 21 Hënehagians. As mentioned, I personally intervened with Talaat several times on their behalf, proposing to have them banished from the country, but my petitions produced no results. The suspects were held in jail for a long time and then were court-martialed, convicted, and sentenced to death. Twenty of them were hanged very early in the morning of the 2nd/15th of June 1915, on Sultan Bayazid Square. Without my knowledge, during the night the police took Priest Kalusd of Kum-Kapu from his house to the gallows on Bayazid Square, so that he would hear the last will of the condemned and give them religious consolation.

Priest Kalusd fulfilled his duty. Then he waited until the death penalty was carried out and accompanied the corpses to the Edirne-Kapu cemetery, where he had them buried. From there, Priest Kalusd came directly to the Patriarchate to inform me of what had happened, about which I heard from him for the first time. He reported to me how all of them had met death fearlessly and how Dr. Benne had even uttered disrespectful words addressed to the Turkish government. Priest Kalusd had also brought some of their minor personal effects (watches, rings, etc.) to be delivered to their families.

The twenty-first person arrested was Hëmayag Aramians, who had been set free several months previously because of his rendering of services to the court-martial through which his comrades were convicted. Subsequently, Aramians succeeded Nerses Zakarian as the Headmaster of the Gedig-Pasha School and tried to obtain an official permit for the school. In the course of his efforts, he came to the Patriarchate several times and proudly showed me the certificate the President of the court-martial had given him, stating that [the bearer] had rendered services to the State and that all government offices and officials were requested to extend to him every assistance.

In parallel with the imprudent acts of partisans, the people, too, were taking some ill-considered steps that were contrary to the Nation’s overall interests. Ordinary people and persons in responsible positions made uncircumspect utterances. I consider it my duty to record here—without being able to ascertain its accuracy—a thoughtless comment by Vartkes, which Interior Minister Talaat reported to me during one of my visits to him before the arrests of the 11th/24th of April [1915].

On that day, I had already waited a long time in the waiting room, when Talaat came out of his office to see me (someone was still present in his office) and his first comment was,

"Today Vartkes came to see me and said, 'If the Turkish army returns from the Caucasus front, we will shoot it in the back!'" This insane sentence caught me completely unprepared. After regaining my faculties, I could say nothing other than, "Vartkes is not our Nation's representative."¹¹⁷ If Vartkes really said such a thing, it was very thoughtless of him, because he endangered the Nation and justified the government's suspicions.

The Turkish government was already convinced that the Armenians, in short, were sincerely wishing for Turkey to be defeated and the Allies to win, and Dr. Mortmann's question [mentioned earlier] to me was not without a reason.

Among the acts provoking the government and the Ittihad, it is necessary to mention the case of Zeytun. When the Ottoman government started recruiting soldiers, about one hundred youths refused to be conscripted; they ran away to the hills and started preying on the Muslim villages in the area and robbing travelers on the highways. The Governor of Aleppo, Jelal Bey, and Catholicos Sahag together tried to bring these rebels back in line, but to no avail.

When Turkey entered the war, the government took advantage of this opportune moment to destroy this region that had kept the state occupied with its constant uprisings. Soldiers were sent to the hills and captured some of the rebels. These, together with the notables of Zeytun, were hanged in Marash. Then the Armenians of Zeytun and the surrounding villages were deported. A portion of them were brought to the swampy area near Konia known as Sultaniyeh, and others were sent to Der Zor. This was the first of the Armenian deportations.

The Turks profited from the various incidents, utterances, and demonstrations taking place here and there for implementing their hellish and terrifying plan. There was an exceptionally favorable occasion at hand: the Armenian people were left in their hands completely without protection, because the Ambassadors of the Allied countries had left Constantinople, and even the Armenian Reforms project had been buried. The Inspectors General Westenenk and Hoff were sent back to their countries, the former directly from Constantinople, the latter recalled from Van.

The government had started to harass and torture the people, totally unrestrained. News had started to reach us from Mush that, after the young men were recruited, women and old people had been sent to forced labor. These unfortunates were being compelled to carry grain on their backs to Garin through the winter snow. Regarding the cruelties being committed in Daron, the *mebus* from Van, Vahan Papazian, had sent a harsh protest telegram to the central government in Constantinople, containing expressions of just indignation.

During this time, in the important Armenian-inhabited Province of Van, other things were happening. Present on the scene and eyewitnesses to all that was happening in Daron in those days were Vramian (real name: Onnig Tertsagian), Aram, and Ishkhan, the well-known Russian-Armenian revolutionaries. It should be noted that, in Vasburagan [Van], Kurdish bandits were committing all sorts of savagery in the near and distant Armenian villages with the government's complicity.

On this occasion, Vramian presented a long memorandum to Governor Jevdet on the 14th of February 1914 [1915]. Among a series of demands presented in this document, the principal one was for Armenian soldiers to fulfill their military service obligation locally. Vramian, Aram, and Ishkhan were engaged in negotiations on this series of demands, and they insisted on this one. In early April, an incident occurred in Shadakh between the local Armenians and the government, and Ishkhan set out to the region together with government officials to help settle the matter. Jevdet wished to eliminate the revolutionary leaders, so that

on the issue of recruitment he would be able to do whatever he wanted with a leaderless population. He found this a suitable opportunity: with his orders, policemen killed Ishkhan one night during his stay in a village and immediately reported the news to the Governor. The Governor, before the news spread, sent word for Vramian and Aram to urgently go and see him. Vramian went alone, was detained, sent out in the direction of Paghesh under heavy guard, and murdered upon his arrival there.¹¹⁸

News of Ishkhan's murder and Vramian's arrest and removal spread quickly. The Armenians, feeling that a plot was being hatched against them, raised a flag of revolt on the 7th of April 1915 and resisted for a long time.¹¹⁹

Despite the protest notes of these *mebuses*, the *takrirs* constantly sent by the Patriarchate, and my personal petitions and other requests, the government increased the severity of its measures. Searches were conducted everywhere to find arms and revolutionary writings. Arrests increased and the jails filled with innocent people. Armenian functionaries of the state were dismissed, Armenian military policemen discharged, and the soldiers disarmed and made to join *amele tabur/larji* [laborers' brigades].

These measures of harassment inevitably led to some minor eruptions in Gesaria, Deort-Yol [Dört Yol], Paghesh, Mush, Van, and Zeytun. These events were exaggerated [by local authorities], and hundreds of Armenians were arrested, some of them even sent to the gallows.

On the 19th of March 1915, I had Bedros Halajian summoned. I asked him, as an Ittihadist, to go to the leaders of the party and to ask that they spare our people and behave with goodwill. Bedros Halajian was a trusted man in the party, and he did as I asked him: he went once again to Talaat and requested that the government temper its extraordinary severity. On the 27th of March, Bedros Halajian came to me and transmitted Talaat's response. "[Talaat] wishes to take part in the Supreme Council with clean hands. He will speak with Enver Pasha¹²⁰ and then give his answer. He, too, is of the opinion that they need to decide on a policy toward the Armenians, that the hanging of the Hënehagians and of Priest Yeghishé was not right, etc. He will comment on Zeytun, Deort-Yol, etc. after having consulted with Enver." [Talaat] further assured [Halajian] that they were all well disposed toward our Nation. Several days later, on the 31st of March 1915, Halajian came once more to see me and said that, when he visited Talaat again to hear the outcome of the latter's consultation with Enver, Talaat said with perfect cynicism, "No massacres can happen in the countryside, because the government will not give its consent." Nevertheless, the events and the news we continued to receive despite the censorship told entirely different things.

News [about events] reached us through various channels and very late and constituted the permanent agenda of the National Administration. Information received from the countryside indicated that, despite the fact that our people were making sacrifices for the state beyond their ability—furnishing clothing and socks for the soldiers, organizing hospitals for wounded soldiers—the persecution, harassment, extortion, and robbery continued under the name of military confiscation. The National Administration, in despair, decided to invite Armenian senators and deputies, and other notable persons of the Nation for consultations.

Meanwhile, on the 8th of April 1915, I went to Talaat to inquire about the contradiction between the news [about events] we received and the government's denials of them. Once more he assured me that *they did not have any particular policy regarding the Armenians*, that there were no new incidents, that the old incidents have been taken care of, that the disarming of Armenian soldiers was a decision taken in haste, that just a moment ago he had

spoken with Enver Pasha, etc. He added, “We have few weapons, and many [soldiers] are running away with their weapons. We sent instructions to the commanders, so that from now on they will not take weapons away from trained soldiers, who are trusted not to run away. The severe measures we are implementing are general; we have sent instructions for problems not to be exaggerated, but to be settled locally. We have no information about killings in the region of Garin.”

After these evasive and altogether unenlightening responses—which betrayed the government’s direction covertly—were received, the planned consultation session of the Joint Assembly was held on the 10th/23rd of April.

The Administration’s convocation had been answered by Senator Zareh Dilber and Deputies Krikor Zohrab, Vartkes Serengyulian, Harutyun Boshgezenian, and Hovsep Madatian. Here are the important parts of the session’s minutes.

His Eminence the Patriarch, having presented the Nation’s situation, communicated information about the tragic events that had recently taken place in Gesaria, Mush, Paghesh, Van, Deort-Yol, and Zeytun, which events show that the government has started cultivating a lack of trust toward all Armenians; he added that the Assembly felt the need to invite them in order to think about ways to erase these mistaken ideas from the government’s mind and requested that those present express their opinions and views and also requested them not to deny the Nation whatever influence they might have with government circles in order to clear their baseless suspicions toward the Nation.

Vartkes Effendi stated that the malice was great and could attain great proportions, that, even though the Patriarchate had done what was necessary, it would not be useless for them, too, to work in the same manner and to give the same assurances that the Patriarch had given. He said that it was evident that the sole reason for this malice was mistrust. When the government gives orders for Armenian soldiers to be disarmed, it is simple to see that such an order will give occasion to tragic interpretations. It is, therefore, necessary that the senators and deputies jointly make the government understand that these attitudes and the lack of confidence are inappropriate because, even though there are groups of Armenian deserters, they are fleeing to protect themselves from persecution and not to help the enemies. If the Armenians are armed, that is purely to protect themselves from massacres. Therefore, he reiterated, it could be helpful to petition the government to present this reality.

Zohrab Ef[fendi] expressed regret that the other invited senators and deputies were absent and added that he was in agreement with Vartkes Ef[fendi]’s views. What we should do, he said, is change the government’s unfavorable mentality toward us and not argue with it. We can establish forcefully our loyalty toward the Ottoman fatherland; it is necessary to convince the government. He proposed preparing a sincere memorandum containing all the facts and the evidence and to have it signed by the Armenian senators and deputies and present it to the Grand Vizier, the Sheikh-ul Islam, and the War, Interior, and Just[ice] Ministries. He also thought it would be very helpful if Armenian Ittihadist *mebus* would petition the Ittihad party and rectify the thinking of this important and powerful party.

Boshgezenian and Madatian Effendis were in agreement with this proposal. Zareh Effendi Dilber also expressed his agreement, but he added that, under the

present wartime conditions, he did not find it appropriate to go from one office to the other to present complaints; instead, he suggested that His Eminence the Patriarch visit the Minister of Internal Affairs, and other Ministers he deems appropriate, and present the situation, and that some results were likely to be obtained.

The consultations continued along these lines, and various opinions were expressed. In the end, everyone present accepted Zohrab Effendi's proposal, and it was decided that Zohrab Effendi, with the support of Dilber Effendi, would prepare said memorandum and a delegation appointed by them would take it to the Ministers, presenting in person and in a sincere manner the Nation's opinion, and that His Eminence the Patriarch would continue his appeals in the same direction.

It was clear that the Turkish government, through the mouth of its Interior Minister, wanted to lull the Armenian Nation and its responsible leaders until it had accomplished the execution of its plan. Also engaged in this juggling act was the War Minister, Enver, who, upon the retreat of the Allies from the Dardanelles front in late 1915 [1914], was rushing to the Pasen front to conduct the military operations personally and to repulse to the last man all the enemies from the lands of the Ottoman Empire. In passing, he stopped to see the Prelates of Konia and Erznga and gave them letters commending the Armenians for their loyalty. When he came back to Constantinople without any results, I paid him a welcome visit, during which I obtained his permission to have these letters printed, so as to encourage the Armenian people. Upon receiving Enver Pasha's permission, I had the letters printed in the newspapers. On the day I had gone to see him, Enver Pasha related to me that, had it not been for an unauthorized maneuver executed by a certain Sergeant Major Hovhannes, he would have been taken captive. For his valiant act, Enver told me that he promoted Hovhannes to the rank of Captain on the spot. Did the poor man Hovhannes know that he had just saved his Nation's executioner, and perhaps his own? Subsequently, with Enver's orders, all Armenian soldiers under arms were disarmed, given to unarmed tasks, and many of them massacred.

These lies of officialdom were finally unmasked after the uprising at Van (the 7th of April 1915), when the Turkish government threw away all caution with the collective arrests of the Constantinople intellectuals on the 11th/24th of April [1915], which stunned the Armenian nation. Constantinople Armenians had not heard anything about the uprising at Van until then. News about it reached us very late. I had only heard from *Vanetsi* merchants in Constantinople that they had not received any letters from Van since the 6th of April [1915], and because of this they suspected something [was taking place]. We, too, were unable to interpret, because the city could have been occupied by the Russians, or [its population] deported.¹²¹

Indeed, several days after the uprising at Van, on the 11th and 12th of April [1915], mass arrests took place in Constantinople, throwing the Armenians of the capital into a state of terror. Approximately 500 people were arrested, mostly of the intellectual classes—clergymen, physicians, editors, lawyers, teachers, party members, etc. Those arrested were immediately sent in the direction of Angora [Ankara]; upon arriving there, they were divided into two groups. One group was sent to Changêrê and the other to Ayash. Those sent to Changêrê were set free, with the condition that they remain under supervision, whereas those sent to Ayash were kept jailed in a garrison.¹²² Faced with this terrifying situation, I convoked a session of the Joint Assembly for the 13th/26th of April [1915]. The memorandum prepared by

Zohrab was read at this session in accordance with the decision taken at the session of the 10th of April [1915], which, after referring to the arrests made in Constantinople, principally stated:

The Nation is very sad to see such a level of mistrust demonstrated by the Ottoman government. It is a mistake to impute political intent to soldiers taking flight. The Nation is not pursuing political aims, but rather it fears that such severe measures may be followed by a general massacre. The government's suspicion and the Nation's anxiety are incongruous with one another; to find a solution to this situation, it is more beneficial to follow mild and forgiving policies, rather than severe and repressive ones; this is how we ask the government to treat the Nation, at least out of respect for the memory of the thousands of Armenian soldiers who spilled their blood for the defense of the Ottoman fatherland.

The Joint Assembly decided that this memorandum should be presented to Grand Vizier Sayid Halim Pasha by a delegation composed of Political Assembly Chairman Dr. Tavitian, Religious Assembly Chairman His Eminence Abp. Turian, and Krikor Zohrab. Indeed, the same day, at 2:00 p.m., we went to see the Grand Vizier with a special appointment. We informed him of the Nation's anxiety and stated that the Armenian people were very discouraged by the recent arrests.

The delegation's report describes the meeting as follows.

The Grand Vizier firmly rejected the notion of mistrust toward the Armenians, and in the name of the government he announced that their confidence toward the Armenian Nation was unwavering. The arrests in Constantinople had been conducted with the purpose of driving the partisans away from the city and neutralizing them. This measure—suggested by the military authorities for months—had been decided purely for the security of the country. Indeed, stores of arms and other kinds of preparations had been discovered at various places, especially in Van; there was no proof that these supplies and preparations had been intended for use against the government, but, after all, no self-respecting government could be inattentive to circumstances like these, and the government, for the security of the Empire, was obliged not to remain indifferent and to take precautionary measures.

His Eminence the Patriarch Father pointed out that the arrests made did not remain within the limits corresponding to the government point of view expressed and that the manner and severity of the arrests, more than being a precautionary measure, had a terrifying effect on the Armenian people. On the other hand, he was not familiar with the issue of weapons discovered in certain of the regions. Nevertheless, one thing about which he is absolutely certain is that the Armenian people—including their official organizations and political structure—have not had the slightest intention of starting a movement against the government or of hindering it in doing its work and that they were ready to give every assurance in this regard.

The Grand Vizier expressed regret that the scope of the arrests had been expanded and promised to take this point into consideration.

Kr[ikor] Zohrab Effendi explained at length and with great skill that it would not be just at this time to attribute to the Armenian people these kinds of intentions

when the attitude they have adopted from the beginning of the mobilization proves the opposite. As soldier, as civilian, the Armenian is fulfilling his obligations fully and, aware of the busy and sensitive situation of the government, under the present circumstances he often refrained from annoying the Ottoman government by protesting against the injustices committed against him. The measures being implemented against the Armenians, both in the regions and in Constantinople, do not correspond at all to the notions of justice of a constitutional government. If Armenians in certain regions have demonstrated reproachable conduct, then everybody will be satisfied to see justice done against such individuals, but incidents in which innocent people were tormented and robbed under the pretext of confiscating harmless and permitted weapons and of searching for and pursuing deserters from the army could in no way have merited the government's approval, and these are doubtless the result of the zeal demonstrated by inexperienced local officials and abuses committed by them.

During such times as these, when harmonious cooperation among the different elements of the Empire has become ever more necessary to combat the enemy, it is sad that, based purely on doubts, dishonorable and injurious measures are being implemented against the Armenians, such as the disarming of Armenian soldiers [or] the mass arrests in Constantinople and the regions. All these could only be the result of misunderstanding and the inability to understand one another, or the lack of mutual trust.

The delegation then went to see Interior Minister Talaat Bey, [in whose office] they also found Rifat Bey, the President of the Senate. When we presented to him the repressed condition of the Armenian people and our inability to find a reason for the anger the government was manifesting toward the Nation, Talaat said, "All those Armenians who either through the pen, their words, or their work have endeavored or may endeavor in the future to build an Armenia, are considered the enemies of the state, and, in times such as these, they have to be dispersed."¹²³

When the objection was raised that there were men loyal to the state and men who had never been involved in the affairs of the Nation among those exiled, he said, "I know that errors have been committed, for instance Apraham Pasha's cook, who is a poor man, was exiled, but such cases will gradually be studied, and those who are harmless will be returned." Talaat Bey also said, "*The government's confidence toward the Armenians has not been shaken, and the measures implemented are only against party members. It is certain that we do not have evidence of any serious movement against the state*, but for the tranquility and the safety of the country, we have decided to disperse all party members and to dissolve all political parties. As for your objection that among those exiled there are many non-party members, I agree that the names of such people slipped into the list, and I promise that we will subject such cases to an investigation and we will send back non-party members."

We responded that, because it is being said that the party members have not been engaged in work against the government, then an investigation becomes unnecessary, and, consequently, we were requesting the return of all of them. Talaat Bey, in the presence of the delegation, telephoned the bey who was the police chief, and was informed that the arrests had already come to an end.

We came back disillusioned and informed the Joint Assembly of the outcome of our

appeal. The Patriarchate having been unable to achieve anything, various individuals set to work. They succeeded in securing the return of Gomidas Vartabed¹²⁴ (from what I heard, this was through the mediation of the U.S. Ambassador Morgenthau); the physicians Torkomian, Jevahirjian, Allahverdi, and Nakashian; and Hayg Khojasarian, Pyuzant Kechian, and others. Drs. Allahverdi and Jevahirjian, who had never taken a significant interest in the Nation's life, withdrew completely into their shells. Gomidas Vartabed suffered a mental breakdown shortly after his return—doubtless due to his deportation experiences. After his return, Hayg Khojasarian would occasionally visit the Patriarchate, to brief us on the condition of several schoolteachers who had gone into hiding (for example, Sarkis Srents and Hagop Kyufejian, [also known as] Oshagan) and to deliver financial assistance to them. As for Dr. Torkomian, he kept his relations with me as a physician until the end and offered services to the Nation, as will be seen below.

Pyuzant Kechian returned to Constantinople on the 1st of May 1915 and found a chance to go to Bulgaria a short time later. He stayed in Filibeh [Plovdiv] until the end of the War. Upon his return from Changërë, Kechian immediately declared that the [Echmiadzin] Catholicos's name should no longer be mentioned in our churches. He defended this thesis also in the weekly *Dajar*, which was published after my deportation by Hrand Vartabed Hovasapian and Harutyun Mgërdichian.¹²⁵

When Kamer Shirinian went to see his children in Filibeh in January 1916, Kechian told him, "Everybody other than the Patriarch can accept Islam in order to save themselves." I do not know how Kechian succeeded in coming back from exile and how he received permission to leave for Bulgaria. I found it quite amazing.

Subsequently, the Prelate of Kastemuni [Kastamonu], Bp. Dajad Basmajian, came to Constantinople in 1921 to give testimony in favor of a person dear to Mustafa Kemal¹²⁶ who had been jailed; he told me that the Security Chief of Angora had especially come to Kastemuni to ask him to do this. One night, when they were alone, the Chief related to the Prelate that Pyuzant Kechian had received permission to go to Filibeh after his return from Changërë, that he was registered in the government's list of spies, and, after arriving in Filibeh, he had always sent his reports to the Constantinople police, signing them as "Kadri." The Security Chief of Angora also said during this time, "Der Nersesian, too, is in our service."¹²⁷

In an article published in issue 5-6 (1937) of the monthly *Hayeli ashkharhi* [Mirror to the world], published in Bulgaria, Dr. Avedis Nakashian relates that, when he went to Filibeh [Plovdiv] in 1917, Armenian friends residing in that city paid him a visit and cautioned him to be careful if Pyuzant Kechian—who resided there at the time—came to visit him. They said, "because he is a spy." Nakashian says that he did not believe his friends' words of caution.

We have given here various people's testimonies, without assuming any responsibility. The truth is that the Patriarchate was unable to save any of the exiled persons. Those who succeeded in regaining their freedom did this through the intercession of influential persons who they found through their own means.

Although aware of our impotence, we did not stop making appeals. Thus, on the 27th of May 1915, I drafted another *takrir*, emphasizing the torture, extortion, deportation, and murder from which the Armenian churches, clergy, and faithful were suffering and requested a remedy. The Minister of Justice, instead of answering my *takrir* in any manner, made the following verbal statement to the Patriarchate's Chargé d'Affaires, Kamer Shirinian.

I received a *takrir* from His Eminence the Patriarch Father. [Upon this], I became interested and I researched; neither in the Patriarchate's Regulation nor in the *fermans* [decrees] did I find a clause that gives the Patriarchate the right to submit such political *takrirs*. If I did not have particular respect toward the person of His Eminence the Patriarch, I would have returned the *takrir*. On account of my particular respect, I shall not return it, but I shall keep it without taking any action on it. On this occasion, I repeat that the government does not have any unfavorable intentions toward the Armenian nation; it is only taking measures against certain persons who are the enemies of the Armenians. Please tell His Eminence not to make appeals that in these times are beyond his rights, as stated in the privileges.

On the following day, the 28th of May/10th of June 1915, Dr. Mortmann of the German Embassy came to see me. He informed me that, since the 1st of May, the people of Garin had begun being uprooted and driven toward Terjan-Mamakhatun; merchants had been given a deadline of several days for putting their affairs in order; 170 men had been exiled in a group; the government had made arrangements for the protection of their belongings; the [German] Consul had visited and distributed aid to them; their removal from the frontier in this manner was a good thing, because they were often trampled on and assaulted by the Kurds; they would be more comfortable going South; a commission from here had gone to Zeytun to assess people's immovables; the government would make payments to them; etc.

The meeting lasted long. I stated that the [German] Ambassador had told me that there would be no massacres, whereas this project was more terrifying than massacres and was the same project that had been presented by the German Rohrbach to the Geographical Society,¹²⁸ etc. During our conversation, it was revealed that Bp. Sēmpad had requested that the [German] Consul [of Garin] have his Embassy inform me of these events.

Dr. Mortmann assured me that—according to information received by the Embassy—the population was not going to be taken very far: only as far as Erznga. The [German] Consul of Garin had accompanied the first group to Terjan, and they had arrived there very comfortably.

This news was communicated in such a manner that it did not cause me anxiety, because I thought that this was a limited deportation, to which the entire population would not be subjected, but telegrams received subsequently from Bp. Sēmpad, in which he requested monetary assistance, showed that the deportation was total.

After Garin, news started arriving from other places as well—through travelers or other means—and thus it was revealed that the deportation was not limited to Garin but was general. The areas near Constantinople having been spared for now, and our communication with the interior regions having become sporadic, details of the tragedy were reaching us with difficulty. It was clear, though, that terrible things were happening in the regions, and these were receiving coverage in Europe. Europeans were better informed than we were. I received proof of this when a friend brought me the 6th of June 1916 issue of *Neue freie Presse* (no. 18242, p. 10-11), in which the Sublime Porte was responding to an announcement issued by the governments of France, Great Britain, and Russia.

We supply below a complete translation of this article.¹²⁹

Fictitious Judgment of the Triple Alliance :
A Trustworthy Turkish Description of the Conspiracy Prepared by
the Triple Alliance Regarding the Armenian Massacres

Constantinople, the 3rd of June (1915)

The “Havas” Agency released the following on the 24th of May.

France, Great Britain, and Russia have agreed to make the following announcement: “For almost one month, *the Kurdish and Turkish populations in Armenia have been massacring the Armenians*, encouraged by the permissive attitude of Ottoman officials and even their protection. Such massacres have taken place since the middle of May in Erzurum, Terjan, Agn, Bitlis, Mush, Sasun, and Zeytun, and in all of Cilicia. The inhabitants of approximately 100 villages of the region of Van were massacred and the Armenian section of the city occupied by Kurds. At the same time, the Ottoman government is enraged by the innocent Armenian population of Constantinople. This recent crime by Turkey is directed against humanity and civilization, and the Allied countries publicly announce to the Sublime Porte that *they will hold personally responsible for this crime all members of the Ottoman government*, as well as other officials who are guilty in these and other massacres.”

The Ottoman Imperial Government publicly refutes the arguments and information included in the above-mentioned announcement: “*it is entirely incorrect that massacres against the Armenians have taken place in the territory of the Turkish state*. The following explanations are supplied to establish the truth based on facts. Armenians in Erzurum, Terjan, Agn, Sasun, Bitlis, and Mush, and the Armenians of Cilicia have never been the subject of special measures by the Imperial Government, because they do not engage in behavior that could disrupt public order and peace. This truth is already well known to the consuls of neutral states. Therefore, *the accusations raised by the Allied states are purely lies, invented by the agents of the Triple Alliance*, especially Russia and England, which take advantage of every opportunity to provoke the Armenian population to revolt against the Imperial government.

These unending conspiracies became intensified after hostilities started between the mentioned countries and the Ottoman Empire. Thus, their Consuls and agents in Bulgaria *sent to the Caucasus groups of Ottoman Armenian youths* by way of Varna, Sulina, and Constantza; the Russian government accepted these young men into its armed forces, or it sent them—armed with weapons and bombs—to the parts of the Ottoman empire with a concentrated Armenian population, also supplying them with [pamphlets] and platforms calling for a revolution. These young men intend[ed] to create secret revolutionary societies in those centers, and they succeeded, in particular, in provoking the Armenians of Van, Shadakh, Hayots-Tsor, Kavash [Gevash], and Timar to revolt against the Imperial Government. They also provoked and organized massacres against Turks and Kurds.

In this regard, it is important to cite the following example. When hostilities started between the Ottoman state and Russia, erstwhile Ottoman deputy *Karekin Pastërmajian*, also known as *Karo*, joined the *chetehs* organized by the leaders of the Armenian *komitehs* [revolutionary committees], Dro¹³⁰ and Khecho. He, together with the two mentioned leaders, assumed the leadership of the Armenian volunteers

armed by Russia, and these crossed the Ottoman frontier. During the time the Russians occupied Bayazid, [Karo] destroyed all the Muslim villages on his way and massacred their inhabitants. When the Russians were expelled from that region, he was wounded, and the Tashnagtsagan delegate of Erzurum, Suren, was killed by his side. Pastërmajian is now active on the Caucasus front. The Tashnagtsagan *organ* [official publication] in the United States, *Asbarez*, published a picture in which he, Khecho, and Dro are seen participating in a religious oath-taking ceremony before an expedition.

This separatist movement was soon revealed more clearly through the activities of other Armenians, among whom was Toros Oghlu Agop. Papers found on him established indisputably their criminal purpose. These Armenians were brought on shore near Alexandretta by British officials from Cyprus. The provocation planned in this manner led, among other things, to the derailing of a train. On the other hand, high-level officials of the Anglo-French naval forces entered into relations with the Armenians of the areas of Adana, Deort-Yol, Yumurtalëk, Alexandretta, and other coastal villages and incited them to revolt. As for what pertains to Zeytun, it should be said that, with the propaganda of the English and French governments, the revolutionary organization in Zeytun set to work directly. Already in February, the inhabitants of that town raised arms against the Imperial Government's officials and surrounded the government building. Faced with such developments, the Imper[ial] Government was compelled to suppress the revolt to maintain public peace and order.

The Imperial Government's authority to take all measures to suppress such a revolutionary and separatist movement follows directly from its incontestable sovereign right. In addition, it is all the more important and necessary to take such measures during times of war, such as the present. Because of this, the Imperial Government found it necessary, on the one hand to send troops to subdue these movements, and, on the other hand, to arrest the Armenian agitators, who were in communication with the [revolutionary] committees abroad and the agents of the Triple Alliance. Contrary to the arguments of the three above-mentioned states, the subjugation operation was accomplished without the slightest participation of the local Muslim population. In searches conducted in the Armenian revolutionaries' homes, revolutionary flags and important writings pertaining to revolt were found, and the separatist intent of this movement is evident from these objects. Furthermore, these writings confirmed that the revolutionary committees, presently having their centers in Paris, London, and Tiflis, are enjoying the real protection of the English, Russian, and French governments. During searches conducted in the countryside, *thousands of bombs and Russian arms were found in the hands of Armenians*. Understandably, these people were arrested and delivered to the appropriate courts, just like others who deserted from military service under the provocation of English and French agents and committed assaults on the military police in favor of these foreign countries.

Today, the Imperial Government has in its hands writings that *confirm that these movements were planned under the high-level protection of the Russian, English, and French governments* and that the latest revolutionary assembly of the Armenians, held in Constantza, had decided to resume its work at the most opportune moment,

much as outwardly they were giving the impression of having abandoned rebellious activities.

The Sublime Porte will publish, at the proper time, all these documents in detail, in order to inform the public opinion.

Thanks to the measures employed by the full force of the Imperial Government for the protection of the public order, *the Armenian revolutionary movement was suppressed without any massacres taking place*. The measures taken were necessary because of the circumstances, and they do not signify that there is a movement against Armenians. This is evident from the fact that there are 77,836 Armenians resident in Constantinople, of whom only 235 have been arrested, and these were people helping the revolutionary movement; all the other Armenians are continuing with their affairs comfortably and enjoying complete security. If it was necessary to remove a few Armenians from their native lands, it was because they were living in areas in the theater of war, and the presence of Armenians in these areas touches upon the Imper[ial] Government's legitimate concerns for the protection of its land.

In addition, the Sublime Porte considers it its duty to take whatever measures it considers necessary for the security of the land and sea frontiers, for which it is not accountable to any foreign government.

Is it not surprising that the English, French, and Russian governments are appealing to humane feelings, when the Anglo-French navy's command at Dardanelles bombs the stations and hospitals of the wounded, and the Russian government allows the Armenians to massacre thousands of peaceful Muslims in the region of Kars, or *it brings Turks captured on the Caucasus front and has them massacred by the hands of the same Armenians?*

Such unqualified savagery was not been seen even in ancient times, which are generally not lacking in merciless acts. The English, French, and Russian governments, which felt themselves obliged to suppress the revolts and uprisings in the Caucasus, Morocco, Egypt, India, and other places with brutal force and necessarily inhumane behavior, do not have the right to shove in the Ottoman government's face those measures of restraint that it was obliged to implement and that it implemented with great moderation and justice. In this instance, the Ottoman government has performed only the most fundamental actions connected with its authority. The announcement, according to which members of the Imper[ial] government and other officials are considered responsible for the measures employed for suppressing the revolt, is not worthy of any response. The entire responsibility for the majority of these incidents—about which the Triple Alliance think that they should protest—falls upon their shoulders, because it is these very states that organized and directed these revolutionary movements. Their announcement has no significance other than protecting and encouraging the instigators of the Armenian revolutionary movements.

Not in Turkey but in Russia were the consuls of the fighting states subjected to hardships and torments. English, French, and Russian statesmen were not satisfied with the preparations of the Armenian revolt, but they also attempted to *deceive the Muslim element into rebelling against the Sultan's government. The Sublime Porte has in its hands evidence that they even organized conspiracies against certain persons to attain their goals*.

These lines show that Europe was aware of what was happening and that Turkey wanted to lull the Europeans in the same manner as was being done to us.

In addition to the opinion of the Allied countries, German public opinion, too, appeared to have been moved, and there were men who attempted to prevent these barbarities. The most important among these was Dr. Lepsius, who even dared to come to Turkey, thinking that he could influence the Turkish leaders. The Director of the Central School, Prof. Asdvadzadur Khachadrian, who had not yet been exiled, communicated to me one day that the Armenophile Dr. Lepsius had arrived in Constantinople from Germany and that he wished to see me.

Dr. Lepsius arrived at the Patriarchate as appointed. Both of us were overwhelmed: I found myself helpless in the face of my people's tragedy, and Dr. Lepsius had failed in his mission. I related to him—to the extent that I had been able to determine—the disaster that had befallen the people in the countryside and my appeals to the Turkish ministers and the German Consul, who had promised me, “not one Armenian's nose will bleed,” while the entire population was being decimated in massacres. Dr. Lepsius also told me about his appeals to the Turkish Ministers and German Consul Wangenheim and his disillusioned return from these visits.¹³¹ The German humanitarian, with tears in his eyes, said to me, “May God help You!” and left. This showed that the German officers, as eyewitnesses, knew much more than we did; that they had written to Germany about what they had seen and that what we had heard was much less than what had happened.

I received the first accurate and detailed information from my brother's son Dikran, who, upon his graduation from the [Armenian] National School of Diarbekir in 1913, I had sent to Kharpert for the continuation of his studies at the American Euphrates College.¹³²

In 1911, with the orders of the Patriarchate, I had gone from Diarbekir to Kharpert to organize the local assemblies for the election of a Prelate.¹³³ During that time, I became acquainted with one of the Professors of the College, Nigoghos Tenekejian, who was also the Head of the Protestant Armenians at Kharpert.

Once Dikran arrived at Euphrates College, Prof. Tenekejian—knowing that Dikran was my nephew—showed special care and concern toward him in order not to have him feel lonely, often inviting him to his house and keeping him there for days. During the school vacation of 1915, Dikran again went to Prof. Tenekejian's house, taking his books and papers along. When the wave of the disaster reached Kharpert, Prof. Tenekejian was arrested and jailed and his house searched. During this search, my nephew Dikran's books and papers were taken away, among them a letter his friend the young Vartan Agheksandrian had sent from Baghdad. In this letter was found the phrase: “Germany started the war; I hope that she will soon be defeated.” Even though the letter had been written before Turkey entered the war as Germany's ally, the government immediately arrested and jailed Dikran, even though he was only a youth of 16 or 17. At the same time, orders were sent to Baghdad for the letter's author to be arrested and sent to Kharpert, so that the two youths would be subjected to judicial proceedings together. On my part, I wrote letters from Constantinople, which did not receive answers; to my telegram, the telegraph office in Kharpert replied, “[*The addressee*] has left town in an unknown direction.”

Feeling powerless but wishing to make one last attempt, I sent the Chargé d'Affaires Kamer Shirinian to the Interior Minister, requesting that the Governor of Kharpert be contacted to obtain information about Dikran. Three or four days later, Kamer Shirinian informed me that the Governor of Kharpert had responded, to the effect that Dikran was in

jail on account of harmful papers found on him and that his trial was awaiting the arrival of his friend from Baghdad.

Talaat immediately sent a telegram that the papers should be destroyed and the boy sent to Constantinople in a safe manner.¹³⁴ Dikran was taken from jail, issued identity papers as though he were a Turk, under the [fictitious] name of "Ismayil Shevket," and entrusted to the care of Mush deputy Haji Elias, who was preparing to make the journey to Constantinople by way of Kharpert, having also with him the family of Servet, the deceased governor of Mush. After savagely exterminating the Armenians of Mush, Servet had fallen ill and died several days later—whether from pangs of conscience or the curses of the innocent, I do not know. My nephew reported that Servet's wife was spouting poison against the Armenians, holding them responsible for his husband's death even though she knew that there was an Armenian among her fellow travelers.

My nephew reached Constantinople safely but in an emaciated state. His experiences had so terrified him that he was scared to look out of the window for fear that a policeman might see and arrest him.

Dikran, as a truthful eyewitness, related how, in Kharpert, demands had initially been made on the Armenians for arms, then the houses searched and even the knives confiscated—just as we later heard had been done everywhere. Thereafter, the notables had been gathered, kept in jail for a day or two, started on the road as though they were being sent to another area, and then all of them massacred at a distance of one or two hours from the city. He related how Bşag Vartabed, Prof. Tenekejian, numerous other well-known individuals, and local notables had been massacred, with their hands bound together.¹³⁵

Dikran had seen the caravans of Armenians from other places arriving in or passing through Kharpert and, on his way, the large numbers of unburied corpses spread out near Malatia; he had not met any live Armenians in the cities he passed through. Now I understood that the catastrophe was widespread and that the planned extermination of our people was being implemented mercilessly.

Gradually the circle widened and the wave of deportations reached the areas around Constantinople. The population of these towns and villages began to be put on the road. The Baghdad railroad was used to gather the deported population in Konia by the tens of thousands. The Armenian people demonstrated the supremely honorable qualities of heroic endurance, strong character, unwavering faith and courageous spirit, and they earned even our enemies' admiration for these. The deportees, living in tents along the railroad, hounded from one place to another, driven toward their death, and seeing death's outline practically in front of them, still did not lose their hope. Turkish passengers taking the train related with surprise and admiration how the masses lining the railroad, faced with uncertainty, caught between life and death, were still getting out in front of their shabby tents early in the morning, praying, singing, and praising God on their knees.

A military policeman accompanying a caravan of Armenian deportees from Aleppo to Mosul related how he had proposed to a pretty girl to marry him and free herself from torture and death. The girl responded to him: "If it is your prophet who ordered you to treat us so inhumanely, I cannot be the wife of a man who worships such a prophet. And if he did not order you to do this and still you are doing it, then I cannot be the wife of such a godless unbeliever, even if I were to die!" The illiterate military policeman related this story in Mosul, unreservedly expressing his admiration for the Armenians' solid character, irrepressible and invincible pride, and, especially, their heartwarming faith. Equally magnificent was what an

Armenian woman in a train said to a Turkish fellow passenger: "You massacred and are still massacring our men. But know you this, that even if not a single man is left in our nation, we the women will bear children from you, raise and educate them as Armenians, and avenge ourselves upon your nation!"

The more invincible the Armenians proved to be, the more merciless the Turks became, continuing their work with great severity from the frontiers of the Caucasus to Constantinople, purging Eastern and Western Anatolia of Armenians, with the exception of several localities such as Gudina [Kutahya], Izmir, and Constantinople.

The masses deported were for the most part massacred, and the survivors were pushed toward Syria and Mesopotamia, all the way to Baghdad. The Armash Seminary, where I had received my education and which had a special place in my heart, was not spared this widespread catastrophe. The Seminary staff, including Abbot-Director Bp. Mesrob Naroyan,¹³⁶ were sent to Konia. The students were brought to Constantinople and delivered to the Patriarchate. I immediately made arrangements for their lodgings at the Bezazian School of Makri-Kyugh. Bp. Yeghishé Turian, who was a visiting lecturer there, started organizing special courses for the newcomers, and Yervant Vartabed, the Patriarchal Vicar, was appointed a visiting lecturer. Some of these seminarians were of an advanced age, and the military conscription post at Makri-Kyugh wanted to recruit them, but I applied to Enver Pasha and obtained exemptions for them as theological students.

The Armenians of Western Anatolia who had been uprooted were able to stay for several months in Konia and its surroundings, thanks to Governor Jemal [Jelal¹³⁷] Bey, who behaved in a humanitarian manner toward the Armenian refugees.

I was told that, one day, Jemal [Jelal] Bey personally toured the areas where the deported people were staying. Seeing their misery, he was unable to hold back his tears and moved away quickly, cursing those who had caused this situation to come about. Witnessing Jemal [Jelal] Bey's humanitarian behavior, the Sublime Porte removed him from Konia and appointed in his place another, who would act according to its [the Porte's] position by persecuting the refugee Armenians and pushing them toward the desert. Indeed, Jemal [Jelal] Bey's successor committed a great cruelty by pushing the Armenians that were living in crowded but sheltered conditions in Konia toward the Arabian desert.

As the successive waves of sad news reached us, I made appeals to the government through *takrirs* or other means, without ever receiving a favorable or substantive response.

The Joint Assembly had frequent sessions during this time, but could find no means at its disposal to stop this terrifying disaster. Following all the unproductive efforts that had been made, it was decided that the Patriarch should make verbal appeals to the Grand Vizier and the Ministers of Justice, Religions, and the Interior.

The person bearing the principal responsibility for the evil acts perpetrated was [Talaat] the Minister of Internal Affairs, and at first I wanted an appointment with him. The Minister refused to see me, and sent the following message: "Let him say whatever he has to the Minister of Justice; that's the *merji'ah* [place or authority] where he should go." Therefore, on the 25th of June 1915, I went to see the Minister of Justice and Religious Affairs, Pirizade Ibrahim Bey.

After introducing myself and exchanging some polite words, I addressed the real purpose of my visit, and the following conversation took place between us.

Patriarch—Some weeks ago I had addressed myself to you regarding the exiles and requested that these innocent people be released.

Minister—Some of these people have returned already, haven't they?

Patriarch—Yes, a few of them have returned, but they were allowed to return after two and a half months and only because they had been sent away by mistake. But I am not here to discuss them. Such a situation has come about now that I feel compelled to draw your attention to it. Several of our Nation's Prelates are languishing in jail, and we have no news from the rest. Priests are suffering in jail and at their places of exile. Churches are demolished or locked up, and the people are being pushed toward the desert.

Minister—I have no information about the Prelates being jailed.

Patriarch—Yes, I know for a fact that the Prelates of Gesaria, Brusa, Trebizond, and Dikranagerd have been imprisoned. As for the other Prelates, I do not know what may have happened to them, because I have not received responses to my telegrams. This is the truth. Now that I do not have my Prelates, priests, or flock, whose spiritual leader am I?

Minister—As Minister of Justice, I accept the petition that you are submitting to me concerning religious matters, but the part in it that pertains to the common people does not fall under my jurisdiction.

Patriarch—A spiritual leader cannot exist without the common people, just like a shepherd cannot exist without his flock, nor an *imam* [Muslim priest] without his *jemaat* [believers]. It is only natural that I should come to inquire of you as to the whereabouts of my people, so that I might take care of their needs. When my people are uprooted and driven toward the mountains and the desert, how can I be their leader any more?

Minister—Do not say, "They are driven!" Yet, more as a friend than as an official, I assure you that the government has made and is making all the arrangements for their comfort.

Patriarch—You are talking to me about comfort! If you only knew about the places where they are being sent! I have been to those places. I was born in Mosul and I grew up in Baghdad. I have traveled over much of that land. The government already spent considerable sums of money to persuade the nomadic tribes that roam those deserts to adopt a settled life. When I was in Dikranagerd, we used to conduct these affairs through a *mejlis-i idare*. Despite all the committees we sent to them and officials we appointed to the task, it was not possible to attain any success!

Minister—If it was not possible to get the nomadic tribes to adopt a settled life, the reason is neither in the air nor in the soil, but in their nomadic habits.

Patriarch—It is certain that the soil is good, although I could not say the same for the air. If we did not succeed in getting these tribes to adopt a settled life, the reason is that one or more times during the year Arab *ashirets* like Anazah, Shammar, and others pass through these areas and wipe out like locusts everything on their way. So, if the native races of the area were unable to put up resistance against these races, is it for the Armenians to do it?

Minister—The State is now stronger than ever, and it is in charge of security matters. The State will allot lands to the Armenians, build homes for them, and offer them all kinds of help. Do not forget that the monthly expenditure budget foreseen

for these works by the State is now one million pounds.

Patriarch—Even if the State were to allot five or six million pounds per month for their needs, what good would this do to them? These people are taken away from their homes all naked, the military authorities confiscate their animals and their food, they do not have the means to transport their other belongings, and whatever they manage to take with them is stolen from them on the way.

Minister—They will travel in safety. The State has given all the necessary orders.

Patriarch—During the time of peace the river rafts traveling from Diarbekir to Mosul were robbed several times a year by the Kurdish *ashirets* living alongside the banks. Once these people reach their destination, what will they live on? The local Arabs do not have enough bread to sustain themselves. In any event, most the deportees will die on the way before reaching there. We are receiving reports that, all along the road from Aleppo to Baghdad, as well as in other parts, the roadsides are lined with corpses.

Minister—These are exaggerations!

Patriarch—What I am [saying] is not an exaggeration, but based on firm facts, and it is only natural, with people being made to walk barefoot from Samson to Mosul, Der Zor, Aleppo, etc. We have heard that babies in their cradles and even two- and three-year-old children are being abandoned along the way. Among those that have been brought to Sultaniyeh there have been 500 deaths until now—in a period of three or four months!

Minister—Good thing you reminded me: earlier you had submitted a petition to send chrism, etc. to those that are in Sultaniyeh. We inquired with the Governor of Konia, and he responded that those people have everything they need, and they lack nothing.

Patriarch—This is amazing! Those people in Sultaniyeh have written to me to say that they do not have Bibles or chrism. Even if baptisms are postponed, they do not have Bibles for the burials of their dead. Have you ever seen a *kitabşöz imam* [a Muslim clergyman without a book—i.e., the Koran]? So, if we are not to be allowed to send someone to take care of needs and to console them, what good are we? All these scrutinies show that the government does not have confidence in our Nation and that it wishes to exterminate the entire race.

Minister—No, I do not accept this! A State has to be out of its mind to exterminate one of the peoples on its land, and our State is not so *ahmak* [foolish] as that.

Patriarch—I accept what you say, but the events show otherwise. When a race is uprooted from its place and driven to wander in such places, where it is impossible for that race to live, this means that that race is condemned to death. Therefore, I request one thing from you: if, in the eyes of the government, my people are untrustworthy from the oldest to the youngest, then set them free so that they may leave the country.

Minister—The government does not wish to be deprived of its citizens, especially when they are useful ones. But, whoever wants to leave is free to go wherever he wants.

Patriarch—This is what I want, too. Please issue an order so that I can collect all of them and leave this country.

Minister—These words are not appropriate for you, or for me. As the Minister

of Religions, I do not have the right to respond to such words, and neither can you, as Patriarch, say, "Let me take the people and leave!" Even if the government were to take such a decision, it can announce it to the people directly, without needing your mediation.

Patriarch—I am obliged to say these words. I am a child of this land. I love my fatherland and my State, but, when [the State] does not have confidence in me, it is natural that I feel obliged to act in this way. I am unable to find the cause for such anger on the part of the government.

Minister—All these are the measures found appropriate by the military authorities, and neither I nor you can interfere. When the State is making such efforts and spilling so much blood for its very existence, it is necessary not to disturb it.

Patriarch—We, too, are spilling blood for the fatherland, but our women and children are being pushed to the deserts. The military authorities can implement the measures they feel appropriate in places that have become battlefields, but not everywhere. I understand such measures being taken at Alem-Daghi, or at the borders, but why elsewhere?

Minister—Alem-Daghi has become an Army Headquarters, and the removal of the population is temporary, but it is different for other places. The villages are being emptied, but not the merchant classes in the *kasabas* [towns].

Patriarch—It is the same everywhere. About one million people are being condemned to death and you, as the Minister of Justice—how do you find this consistent with justice?

Minister—The Armenians in the interior provinces did a lot against us. If it were all published, it could have led to massacres. The things that happened in Van and Marzēvan [Merzifon].... Now we are sending soldiers upon them and we shall punish them.

Patriarch—I have nothing to say about Van. Whoever is guilty, the government can punish them. Of course, women and children have done nothing against the state. Why are *they* being punished?

Minister—We cannot separate the men from their families. We are transferring everyone together to other locations.

Patriarch—The majority of men has already been conscripted. Now the families are wandering the deserts without their men. It is certain that death awaits them in those places.

Minister—It is not so. There are a lot of men among them.

Patriarch—I have a request to make of you. As I no longer have any officials left, and nor do I have a people, then remove me from office, or deliver me to the court-martial, because I consider it a shame to continue holding office. I am a Patriarch without people; in other words, I am the Patriarch of the Patriarchate only.

Minister—No, we have respect toward you and the Patriarchate. Presently our opinion is the same as it was before. In a short while, when everything calms down, you will learn about the assistance the government has given to settle the Armenians in those places. When the Hejaz railroad was being built, there was no population in the areas it was intended to pass through. Now, more and more people are living in those areas. It will be the same with the Armenians. Above all, they will finally be free from the attacks of the Kurds and the intrigues of Russia. I ask you: Are the

Armenians in the Caucasus happy with their condition?

Patriarch—No, they are not. And in addition, who says that we are becoming tools for the Russians and that we want their protection? If there are, indeed, such individuals, they could be punished severely.

Minister—Even this much I am not obliged to [discuss]. These are arrangements made by the Ministry of War, and neither I nor you have the right to interfere. [The Ministry of War] is saying, “When I am fighting against the enemy along the border, I do not want to also have an enemy at my back, and to find myself between two fires.”

Patriarch—Who can we appeal to, if not you? It is natural that I ask for the State’s justice and compassion through you.

Minister—Yes, but these are arrangements made by the Ministry of War, and we cannot interfere in them.

Patriarch—No, these are not arrangements made by the Ministry of War. Instead, they are the State’s policy.

Minister—If it is the State’s policy, then neither you, nor I, as the Minister of Religions, have the right to interfere. The Ottoman government behaves with humanitarian feeling even toward those who are not its subjects. For instance, the Albanians, who wanted independence, petition us again today and we—be they Muslims or Christians—accept and help them in every way. The Armenians did not betray us this time as much as [the Albanians] did. Therefore, the government will help them, too.

Patriarch—What I know is that even states that are parties to the war are not being harmed to the extent that we are.

Two days later (on the 27th of June 1915) I had an audience with the Grand Vizier Sayid Halim Pasha, with whom I had the following exchange:

Patriarch—When a child is in pain, naturally he goes to his father, and this is the reason why I am coming to you. The exceptional situation in which my Nation finds itself compels me to ask for the State’s mercy. My Prelates have been jailed, and several my priests are languishing in jail and the rest in their places of exile. My people are scattered in the mountains and the deserts and condemned to die through starvation. Only I am left, and there are many who are amazed that I am able to continue living. I do not know why the State is condemning the Armenian nation to such a heavy punishment. Why is a nation that has lived loyally for centuries under the protection of this State condemned to death?

Grand Vizier—Surely you must be referring to the migrations. I agree that the condition of the Armenian nation is tragic, but the reason for this is not u, but you and the states wishing to protect you. Last year, when I was engaged in the project of Reforms, I said to Mr. Giers, “The Armenian nation is ours, and we are quite capable of thinking about its prosperity.” I was sincerely engaged in that matter, but unfortunately your people did not allow us, thinking that a Dutchman can reform our country better than we can. I felt then that there was going to be a chill between the two [Armenian and Turkish] nations, which did indeed happen. This time the matter has taken on a different nature: we are finding ourselves face to face with a large,

structured organization, and a part of the population has taken up arms against us.

Patriarch—A general uprising is being attributed to us, which is completely wrong. Reports being sent to you are exaggerated and wrong. As for the matter of Reforms, it was not us who refused the government's arrangements.

Grand Vizier—You did not refuse, but others did.

Patriarch—But an entire nation should not be punished for the crimes and mistakes of a few persons!

Grand Vizier—If it were a matter involving only a few people, it would have been easy to take care of it. Unfortunately this is not the case. There are *taburs* [battalions] of 800, 1,000, or 1,200 persons, a regular army along the entire frontier that was preparing to fight us for a long time. For the past two years, our consuls have been writing to us that men and organizations in Europe have been providing arms to and arming the Armenian people. This thing had been organized for a long time. The wound was going to explode, and now it did. But there is a well-known saying, "Alongside the dry [wood], the green [wood] also burns." Unfortunately this is what is happening this time.

Patriarch—But compared to the dry, there is an excessive amount of the green! More than a million people are being exterminated—old people, women, and children. If the government thinks that the Armenian nation is rebellious, then let it massacre the men, like Sultan Hamid did. Is it [acceptable] to take revenge on women and children? An entire nation is being exterminated!

Grand Vizier—The government does not intend to exterminate the Armenian nation. It is only implementing a *tedbir* [precautionary measure] and is removing the Armenians from those Provinces. This arrangement will be beneficial both for you and for us, because until now the Russians and the English had been making you serve as their tools. Recently I told the U.S. Ambassador, "If the Armenians want to have peace and quiet, then they should forget about Russia and Britain." Just like I said, this is a simple *tedbir* and not a *jeza* [punishment].

Patriarch—It is a big *jeza*, and it is not even proportionate [to] the imputed crimes! These people will die from starvation in the places where they have gone [or] they will disappear on the way there.

I related the methods used by the local authorities to send the people on their way, the insecurity and hardships on the road, and the impossibility of earning a livelihood in the places assigned to them. Then I continued with a proposition.

If at least the people already living in the areas that have been assigned [to the deportees] could be moved elsewhere, so that once arrived [the deportees] would have someplace to live. Or, it should suffice to empty only the several Provinces along the frontier. Or, the government should do as Russia does for the Jews—set aside certain provinces for [the Armenians] to live in and let them choose where they want to live.

Grand Vizier—(After some reflection) I understand that, with transportation means not being available, the *muhajeret* [migration] will take place with difficulty. Even I, if I wanted to travel in those parts, would face more hardship than a grocer traveling somewhere in Europe.

Patriarch—Is the government's decision in this matter definite, then?

Grand Vizier—The government has taken its decision in an irreversible manner, and this decision is *zaruri* [necessary]. Nevertheless, helping the people and providing it with comforts is the government's duty. I am not aware of the details. I shall look into the matter, and, if possible, I shall have them sent to more suitable places. But they will have to leave.

Patriarch—I do not know whether it is befitting the reputation and honor of a state to condemn a people to death, to punish it with death.

Grand Vizier—No, this is not a punishment.

Patriarch—(Standing up agitated) My flock, made up of women and children, but lacking its men and without leaders, is being sent to the mountains and the deserts! What will happen to them? May God have pity on them!

(The Premier [Grand Vizier], too, was visibly moved.)

His last comment was, "*Talaata getmedin mi?*" [Did you not go to Talaat?] When I said that Talaat was not receiving me, he said, "*Bunlar olmamalē idi!*" [These should not have happened!]

I transcribed this meeting in detail and presented it to the Joint Assembly. The Assemblymen expressed their satisfaction, especially regarding the words I had addressed to the Minister of Justice, and they said, "You spoke bravely." My reports on the meetings were recorded verbatim in the minutes of the Joint Assembly.

For a long time, it had not been possible to make an appointment with Talaat. Therefore, on the 18th of September 1915, I went to see, with an appointment, the President of the Representative Assembly [Parliament], Khalil Bey, who had just returned to Constantinople from Berlin. We had the following exchange.

Patriarch—The deputies are the representatives of the nation, and when the Assembly [Parliament] is on vacation, its President represents the nation. I am approaching you today in this capacity of yours. Thus, when a part of the nation is subjected to massacres and misery, are you not under obligation to come forward as its protector and raise your voice?

Khalil Bey—When we entered the war, I called Zohrab, Vartkes, and Halajian Effendis and told them, "Think carefully about it. The states that are the protectors of your Nation are now in war against us and thus are our enemies. Therefore, you are now without a protector. Advise your people [to behave prudently], otherwise a tiny match could cause disasters." Unfortunately, for several months I was not here, and, now that I am back, the matter has gone so far that it is impossible to stop it. Zohrab and Vartkes, too, have been arrested and sent in the direction of Diarbekir. For two days I have been trying to keep them in Aleppo. Let us see if I will succeed?¹³⁸ [Then he added] "But why is it that you do not talk with Talaat?"

I told him that I had requested an appointment with Talaat several times, but had been refused. He immediately took the telephone and spoke with [Talaat] and obtained an appointment for me on the following day. Then he turned to me and said, "I will do whatever I am able to do." The following day (the 19th of September), I went to Talaat at the appointed time, and I had the following conversation with him:

Minister—How are you?

Patriarch—Thank you. Knowing the multiplicity of your occupations, I did not want to annoy you. But everyone is criticizing me for not having addressed myself to you, because the things that are happening to the Armenians are in your hands, and you can prevent them.

Minister—It is not so! [People] are mistaken about this. If it were true, things would have not reached this point. The Armenians themselves caused this situation. I am the one who knows best their internal affairs. We knew about everything! We knew about the decisions they had taken, that for as long as the Ottoman Army was not defeated, they would assume a waiting stance, and, in the event of [the army's] defeat, they would stage a revolution. They also decided to help Russia. Every day they were piling weapons, bombs, etc., everywhere, but we kept silent and did not undertake searches, so as not to cause internal disturbances, as happened in Rumelia.¹³⁹ But when they started actively collaborating with the enemy, causing a part of the country to fall in their hands, we could no longer remain silent.

Patriarch—Perhaps these things are true, but....

Minister—Not perhaps, this is certainly the case.

Patriarch—I am willing to accept that what you are saying is true, but the government is a father, and it should punish like a father.

Minister—It is not so! [The government] is sometimes a father and sometimes it is not. If a nation does not accept the government as its father and it makes the Russians its father, then the government does not behave as a father. There is not a people anywhere in the world that travels from one capital to another, requesting that others interfere in the affairs of its own government. All these things happened and the whole nation did nothing; it acquiesced through its silence.

Patriarch—But, after all, these things are the work of a few men!

Minister—It is not the work of a few men, nor a few thousand, nor a few hundreds of thousand! Today it is one political party, and tomorrow there may be another. The non-partisan may become partisan. This problem has a widespread nature. For this reason, it became necessary to remove the population from its native land and to neutralize it by settling it elsewhere.

Patriarch—But what offense did the women and the children commit?

Minister—They should stay with their families.

Patriarch—But punishment should be proportionate to the offense. A man can be convicted and his property seized, but no law allows for a man's children to be taken and given to others.

Minister—There is no such thing!

Patriarch—There is, indeed! All the children of the Armenians of Samson, Amasia, and Marzëvan passing through the town of Sharkëshla in Sepasdia have been taken from them. Some have been given to various people who happened to come by, and a portion of them have been brought to Constantinople.

Minister—We shall look into this and punish the abusers. By exposing them, we punish them!

Patriarch—Not much mischief has occurred along the railroad, but a lot of mischief has happened in other districts.

Minister—Such things have unfortunately happened.

Patriarch—The Armenians are very shaken with this blow inflicted on them by a person they loved most.

Minister—I used to love the Armenians, because I considered them an element useful to the country. But the opposite turned out to be the case. Naturally, I love the fatherland more than I love the Armenians.

Patriarch—The Armenians still are and will continue to be a useful element. Whatever happened, happened, and the population has already been uprooted. If it could at least stop at this!

Minister—Nothing more will be happening.

Patriarch—But the people of Rodosto have now started arriving [in Constantinople].

Minister—The people being uprooted now are the ones who committed savagery against the Muslim population during the Bulgarian occupation in Rodosto.

Patriarch—I have heard that there are such families among the uprooted, who monetarily helped the Muslims who migrated to Constantinople and other places during that period.

Minister—I do not think so.

Patriarch—If the government would at least concede to provide assistance and places to live for all these people up in the mountains.

Minister—Certainly the population could not immediately start living in the plains. For the time being, they will be settled in the towns.

Patriarch—Soldiers' families are being scattered in the villages. How will young women defend their honor? What will they live on? If they were at least in central [places], in cities, then they could at least receive the pension the state has allotted them.

Minister—We'll see about this.

Patriarch—We do not have money to send to them. If only some assistance could be provided from the State Treasury.

Minister—The government is thinking about it. There is no need for the Patriarchate to spend its time on these matters.

Patriarch—I no longer have churches or clergymen to spend my time on.

Minister—It was established that many of the Prelates were *khayin* [treacherous].

Patriarch—One of the people condemned to death is the Prelate of Gesaria, for [allegedly] having presided at the Hënehagian Meeting in Constantza. This man does not even exchange greetings with the members of the political parties! During the old régime, he was the Prelate of Mush; the Tashnagtsagans were going to assassinate him, too, and he fled.

Minister—That's because he was a Hënehagian!

Patriarch—He was a school classmate of mine. From the very beginning, he was opposed to the political parties. When I see what happened [to him], I am unable to accept all of the condemnations as just.

After these words, [Talaat] fell silent, which I took to mean, “[This is enough.] It is time for you to leave.” I felt compelled to get up; once again, I asked for his compassion, and I left.

To make sense of Talaat's word about the Prelate of Gesaria, I should say that Bp. Khosrov Behrigian was, as mentioned, my classmate at the Armash Seminary. Shortly after the

declaration of war, he went to Echmiadzin to be [ordained] a Bishop, returned to Constantinople for several days only and left quickly for Gesaria, saying, "I feel the weight of the times upon me; I have to be with my people." As soon as he reached Gesaria, he offered a newly-ordained Bishop's customary inaugural mass, and transmitted his pontifical blessings to the people.

Hardly a year had gone by when the arrests started. First arrested were several notable Armenians of Gesaria—Jamjian and others. Bp. Khosrov heard about this but could not see a convincing reason for their arrest. He applied to the local Governor and demanded their release with quite strong words. In a matter of days, Bp. Khosrov was arrested and jailed. He was taken to court, where Armenian witnesses confirmed that Bp. Khosrov, upon his return from Russia, had related how there were thousands of armed volunteers in Russia and how this time they would liberate the Armenians, etc.

The court condemned Bp. Khosrov to death and sent the verdict to Constantinople for confirmation and for an *iradeh* [decree] to be issued. I had not known anything about these events, when the Chargé d'Affaires came to me one day and informed me about having heard from the Grand Vizier's Council that the orders for the death sentences of Bp. Khosrov and about ten others persons had arrived in Constantinople and the *iradeh* approving their execution sent out the previous day.

Immediately, I decided to do everything I could to save Bp. Khosrov. Because it was impossible to see Talaat, the following day I went to see the Grand Vizier at his mansion in Yeni-Keoy [Yeniköy]. I made the trip from Kum-Kapu to Yeni-Keoy with some difficulty, and, when I finally arrived, the Grand Vizier was preparing to leave for the Sublime Porte by steamboat.

I explained to him the reason for my visit, pleaded with him and requested that the State stay the execution of the verdict and grant me this favor, even if the verdict may have been based on evidence, because the sentenced man was my school friend. The Grand Vizier asked me, "Are you sure that such papers have arrived here?" I said, "Yes, I am certain." Then he said, "I shall go now, and, if it is true, I shall do whatever I can." I thanked him and left.

The following day the Chargé d'Affaires brought me news that the Grand Vizier had reached the Sublime Porte, searched for the papers in question, and, when he learned that they had been sent to Gesaria, he presented the matter to the Council of Ministers the very same day. The Council of Ministers decided to commute Bp. Khosrov's death penalty to life imprisonment as a favor to me. A telegram was sent to Gesaria so that the papers, when received, would be returned to Constantinople without being executed. As requested, the papers were sent to Constantinople, corrected and sent once again to Gesaria. I had hoped to have the life imprisonment sentence reviewed at a future date and win Bp. Khosrov's freedom. But Talaat brought his malice once again into play: he had Bp. Khosrov sent away, presumably to be transferred to Diarbekir, and had him murdered on the way. And to think that [Talaat] had made as though the prolongation of Bp. Khosrov's life by a few months had been a big favor to me!

After presenting this meeting to the Joint Assembly, when there was no more hope left, I proposed that all clergy come together and appeal to the Sultan, as our predecessors had done on important occasions, but His Eminence [Abp.] Turian said, "The Nation has its Patriarch, and it is [the Patriarch's] duty to make an appeal," and my proposal remained impracticable.

His Excellency Vosgan Bey Mardigian, the erstwhile Post and Telegraph Minister who, upon Turkey's entry into the war, resigned from office together with his associates and

remained in Constantinople, would occasionally come to the Patriarchate to console me. One day, having heard the appeals and petitions I had been presenting to stop this great national disaster, he related that one of the previous Sultans, a savage and fanatical person, had given orders for all Christians to be put to the sword. When the Sheikh-ul Islam of the time heard about this, he immediately presented himself to the Sultan and declared that the Sultan's order went against the religion of Islam, and he succeeded in persuading the Sultan to rescind that savage order. By relating this historical incident to me, Vosgan Bey was counseling me to apply to the Sheikh-ul Islam of our days, Musa Kyazim Effendi, and to appeal for his intervention. I readily followed this counsel and went to see the Sheikh-ul Islam.

Musa Kyazim was not an elderly person. He was hardly 45 or 50 years old and a fanatic Ittihadist. I presented to him the present condition of our people and pleaded for his intervention, to whatever extent he saw appropriate. The Sheikh-ul Islam declared his incompetence for such an intervention. I reminded him by saying, "In the past, one of your predecessors is reputed to have persuaded the Sultan to rescind an order for extermination." He responded mockingly: "Such things would happen in older times!"

I was disappointed in this undertaking, as well.¹⁴⁰ In another attempt, I considered it appropriate to apply for Apraham Pasha's intercession, seeing that the Sultan and the Ministers respected him and the Crown Prince went as far as calling him *baba* [father]. One day I went to his house and related to him with tears and emotion what was happening to the Nation and requested his intercession, if not with the Sultan then at least with Crown Prince Yusuf Izzeddin.

Apraham Pasha declared, "At the time, I let Boghos Pasha know that it was [dangerous] to get the beast upset, but he did not listen to me. What can I do now? Do you think that they listen to what I say when they visit me? The other day, Yusuf Izzeddin had come to see me, and he said, "*Baba, yazêk ki gyavur sên*" (Father, what a pity that you are an infidel!). What could be expected from such a man? With a thousand difficulties, I persuaded Yusuf Izzeddin to give up wandering aimlessly and to take a trip to the Dardanelles, so that the public would come to like him."

This appeal, too, led to nothing. We were nearing the end of 1915. With a new *takrir*, I requested that the Minister of Justice inform me as to the whereabouts of our Prelates, because I had not received letters from them for several months. A response arrived after much delay, in which [the Minister] made some vague remarks about a few of them; for the rest, he said, "When we have news, we shall let you know." We knew already what had happened to them!

After his return from exile, Dr. Torkomian used to visit Mejid Effendi (the Second Crown Prince) as his personal physician. When Yusuf Izzeddin committed suicide,¹⁴¹ I expressed my condolences to his brother by a letter. To thank me, Mejid Effendi sent to me Maksud Altunian, who was in his service. Encouraged by this, on the 9th of October 1915, I asked Dr. Torkomian to go and see Mejid Effendi personally and to request his intercession with the Sultan, so that the persecution would cease. Dr. V. Torkomian went and completed the mission I had entrusted to him. Prince Abdul Mejid,¹⁴² taking my request into consideration, had an audience with the Sultan on the 25th of September [1915], during which he said that if [the Sultan] did not have this savagery stopped, he would be responsible for it in the eyes of God, and this would remain a black page in the history of his reign. The Sultan promised to give the required orders, but at the same time added, "What can I do? I spoke to Talaat so many times, but he does not listen!"

Dr. V. Torkomian came the following day and related the incident to me. I prepared a letter of gratitude and had him present it to the Crown Prince.¹⁴³ It is unnecessary to say that I did not see any outcome from this attempt either: Sultan Reshad had become a toy in the hands of the Ittihad and had been unable to do anything.

3. Appeals to Foreign Embassies and Countries

As these efforts were being made within [the Empire], attempts to move European public opinion and to expose the Turks' savagery to the world were not overlooked, either, in the hope that, if the Turkish government were discredited abroad, this could oblige the Turks to act more prudently [toward us]. Until the Headmaster of the Central School, Prof. A[sdvadzadur] Khachadrian, was exiled, every time I went to Galatia for meetings, I met with him and we exchanged information. Apparently Khachadrian communicated the news I gave him to the local Committee of the Tashnagsutyun—which was in hiding—and the Committee sent these abroad. Likewise, I sent letters to the Prelate of Bulgaria, Bp. Ghevont Turian, with the expectation of help from abroad. In these letters, I presented the pathetic condition of our people and requested that [Bp. Turian] communicate the contents of my letters to the [Armenian] Nation[al] Delegation and His Holiness the Catholicos [in Echmiadzin].

In my first letter, dated the 25th of [May]/7th of June [1915], I wrote the following:

The Armenians of Turkey are living a crisis they have not seen in centuries. This is a period that leaves the [massacres during] the reign of [Abdul] Hamid in the shadows: imprisonment, robberies, destruction of villages, and murders in all the Armenian-inhabited regions, and, instead of the general massacres [of Abdul Hamid II's reign] now we have the general deportations. You must certainly have some notion about what has happened to our people lately. I wish to benefit from your position and perhaps find a remedy to this frightful situation. I do not wish to write anything directly to His Holiness the Catholicos, for fear that what I write might fall into the hands of the Russian government and be publicized, in which case our people's condition could become more difficult. For this reason, from now on I will occasionally write to you so that you may then communicate the content of my letters as from a reliable source to his Holiness the Catholicos and solicit his assistance.

An incident occurred in Van at the beginning of April that gave the government the opportunity to bombard the Armenian quarters of the city, reducing approximately 300 houses to ashes and killing 500 to 600 persons. A short time later, the Russian army occupied the city, and certain Muslims in the area were massacred by Armenians. Details of these incidents are not known to us, but certain [Ottoman] Ministers told us that such conduct on the part of Armenians in Van caused the government to change its policies after the 10th of April [1915] and to implement severe measures against the Armenians.

On that date, with orders issued by the center, numerous Armenian homes, and even Prelacies, churches, and the schools were searched in every part of Turkey and thousands of persons arrested for the possession of weapons, harmful books, pictures, etc. In addition, without a definite offense, almost thousands of prominent Armenians—clergymen, intellectuals, wealthy people, and party members, or other

persons having contacts with them—were exiled from almost every town and village to areas inhabited by Muslims. More than 250 persons were exiled from Constantinople to Changëre (Kastemuni Province) and Ayash (Galatia), but the numbers of exiles from the countryside is larger than those from Constantinople. This is the result of a certain plan: first to disarm the Armenians, then to terrify them by exiling the leaders, and then to exterminate the Nation completely. Men from 20 to 45 are already under arms; if the others are neutralized in this manner, it would be a lamentable trick played upon the women and children. This tragedy or hellish plan is the following: to end the Armenian Question once and for all, most of the Armenian population of the six Armenian-inhabited Provinces will be transported to the south, to the part of Mesopotamia that lies between Aleppo and Mosul, where time there are Arab and Kurdish *ashirets*. The Commission assigned to the implementation of this plan has already been selected and started on its way. If a [general] deportation of the population has not yet begun, it will begin in very few days, although populations from those areas in Van that are not under [Russian] occupation and from Paghesh have already been sent on the road. Imagine what their end will be, leaving behind them not only their property but also all their belongings and their fields. It is certain that in a matter of months they will be decimated through famine or exposure to this unfamiliar climate. We have an example of this in front of our eyes already: the Armenians from Zeytun and the surrounding areas are now completely transferred, some to the region of [Der] Zor beyond Aleppo and others (about 100 families) to the town of Sultaniyeh in Konia, where they remain today, naked, hungry, and unsheltered. The area being swampy, contagious diseases have already started to take their toll. All applications we have made for communicating with them or sending them aid have gone unanswered. In addition, a special commission has already started distributing their villages and properties to Muslims.

Try to imagine how heavily this Armenocidal policy will weigh upon us and to what extent it will endanger the existence of our Nation! Please try to apply quickly to the necessary places and to take preventive measures. Write to His Holiness the Catholicos and the Prelate of the United States. All our resources have been exhausted. Our appeals remain unanswered, and, of the Embassies in our capital city, only the U.S. and the Bulgarian Embassies take an interest in us and try to alleviate our difficult situation. Although their efforts deserve gratitude, they seem not to be enough to remove the danger itself as long as pressure is not brought to bear upon the Turkish government. The two most influential Embassies here, the German and the Austrian, are entirely indifferent to our suffering.

I am sending this letter to you through clandestine means. Please acknowledge only its arrival in your hands in one of your [future] letters.

Patriarch of the Armenians of Turkey
Abp. Zaven Der Yeghiayan

In my second letter, of the 30th of [June]/13th of July 1915, I explained the course of events in the following manner:

Events have followed precipitously one after another since the 25th of May, and the Nation's condition has now descended to the lowest and most bitter levels of

misery. Whereas on that day we knew about the forced deportations of people from several towns and villages in Cilicia, and only rumors about Garin had reached us, today we know with certainty that the Armenian population of all the towns and villages in Cilicia have been deported and pushed to the deserts south of Aleppo. The people of Garin were uprooted starting the 1st of May [1915], and the rest of the Province somewhat later. One after the other, populations from Samson and Gesaria all the way to and including Dikranagerd and Edessa [Urfa] have been put on the road. The Armenian populations of Trebizond, Sepasdia, Kharpert, Paghesh, Van, and Dikranagerd, from the oldest to the youngest and excepting not a single person, have been driven to the deserts of Mesopotamia—from areas south of Aleppo to Mosul and Baghdad.

The Ottoman government's plan is "Armenia without Armenians," and it has already started to settle Muslims on Armenians' lands and in their houses. It goes without saying that the government does not allow the deportees to take anything with them, and, in any event, no means of transportation remain in those regions, the military authorities having confiscated them all. The Armenian deportees are obliged to travel on foot for one to two months and even longer to reach the desert area that is destined to be their cemetery. Already reports are reaching us that the waters of the Euphrates are full of the corpses of those unfortunate refugees, whose surviving companions—not having shelter, work, or revenue—are condemned to die in the desert. This is a plan to completely exterminate the Armenians. It is a terrible carnage that is being committed quietly and without calling it a massacre. It should be known that after the conscription of [men] from 20 to 45 years old, those from 15 to 20 and 45 to 60 have also been taken for transporting military supplies. In addition, those who had paid the *bedel* have also been exiled to various places or jailed for various reasons. Therefore, the Armenian refugees are mainly women, children, and the elderly, and they are being made to walk through such areas through which, even in time of peace, it is not possible to pass without being robbed or killed. The Turkish *chetehs* and other bandits, and even the gendarmes and other government officials, freely rob the deportees and rape and kidnap the women and the girls. We are also receiving reports of Islamization from various places; it seems that people have no other way of saving their lives.

The courts-martial are everywhere and functioning mercilessly. You must have read about the 20 Hënchagians hanged in Constantinople. The verdict given to them was not based on any law of the state, and the same day 12 other people were sent to the gallows in Gesaria, "for having obeyed the instructions of the Bucharest secret meeting of the Hënchag and Tashnagtsutyun parties."

Apart from those hanged, 32 other people—mainly non-partisan, honorable merchants—were condemned to 10 to 15 years of hard labor. Twelve people were hanged in the region of Cilicia. Every day we hear about new verdicts; weapons, books, and pictures are considered sufficient proof for a prison sentence of several years. There are many instances of beating to death: 13 people in Dikranagerd, 6 in Gesaria, . . . Some people are not even delivered to the court-martial, but simply murdered on the roads, their hands tied in the back—such as the 13 people who were being transferred from Shabin-Karahisar to Sepasdia, or the priest of the village of Pyurk, together with his five friends. I no longer recall the other tortures that have

been inflicted everywhere during the searches for arms and partisans. Not a single house has been exempted from these searches: no Prelacies, no churches, and no schools. Hundreds of women, girls, and even children are languishing in jails today; churches and monasteries have been robbed, destroyed, and desecrated. Even Prelates have not been spared: Prelate of Brusa, Barkev Vartabed Tanielian; Prelate of Trebizond, Kevork Vartabed Turian; Prelate of Gesaria, Khosrov Vartabed Behrigian; Vaghinag Vartabed Torigian of S[habin] K[ara] Hisar; Kevork Vartabed Nalbandian of Charsanjak, etc. have been jailed and taken to the court-martial. Vicar of Dikranagerd, Mgërdich Vartabed, died from beatings in jail. There is no news from the other Prelates—quite likely most of them have been jailed. The entire Armenian community of Turkey is now under detention, and mail and telegraphic communication have entirely ceased.

The Armenian villages in the regions of Van and Paghesh have been massacred and robbed. At the beginning of this month, the people of Shabin-Karahisar were mercilessly massacred; only a few infants are said to have survived. Regrettably, details reach us very late and with great difficulty.

You see that the Armenians of Turkey are living the last days of their lives. We have no means for putting off the death. If Armenians abroad are unable to move the conscience of the neutral states, very few of the one and a half million Armenians will be left within a few months. It is inevitable that they will perish.

Mournful Patriarch of Martyred Turkish-Armenians,
Abp. Zaven Der Yeghiayan

In the third letter (dated the 2nd/15th of August 1915), I continued my report:

Since my last letter, which you acknowledged, more and clearer reports are being received. The information in the present letter was received from a woman from Papert who became a Muslim to save her life and later ended up in Constantinople; a girl aged 9 to 12 years from Zileh, who was snatched up by a Turkish officer and brought to Constantinople; a Muslim traveler who came to Constantinople from Kharpert; and foreign travelers who arrived from Erznga. The information that follows has, therefore, been related to us by eyewitnesses as well as by the victims of the atrocities.

Today it is confirmed that there are no Armenians left in the Provinces of Garin, Trebizond, Sepasdia, Kharpert, Paghesh, or Dikranagerd. About one million people have been uprooted from their homeland and pushed toward the south. Since the beginning of April, local authorities have implemented the deportations in a very systematic manner. First, the gendarmerie and *chetehs*, composed of criminals expressly released from prison for this purpose, disarmed the people everywhere—in villages and towns—administering the most horrifying tortures and committing numerous murders. Using various pretexts, such as the presence of arms, books, or party affiliation—and even in their absence—wealthy and notable Armenians were jailed in large numbers. After this, the deportations started: first, the males not yet jailed and the detainees for whom no accusation could be found were set out on the road, presumably to exile but then executed to the last man. The local government searched them before setting them out on the road officially and confiscated money and

valuable items found on their persons. In many places, the deportees were sent off in groups of 5 or 10, their hands tied behind them or to one another. The remaining people—the elderly, women, and children—were considered much like ownerless property and left to the whims of the Muslim population. Every man—from the highest official down to the common villager—took the woman or the girl he found appealing into concubinage and forcibly Islamized her. Whoever wanted took as many of the young children as they wanted, and the remaining ones were sent on the road—without supplies—to fall victim to famine or the swords of the *ashirets* in the area. There have been massacres in the Province of Diarbekir and particularly in Merdin [Mardin], the population being subjected to much the same cruelty. Government authorities in the Provinces of Garin, Paghesh, Sepasdia, and Trebizond made certain allowances in the execution of the deportation orders: the people were given 5 to 10 days to sell some of their property, and several families were allowed a cart each to carry their belongings; however, after a day or two, these people were forced to empty their belongings in the middle of the road and the carts were returned. The caravans were often met and robbed by *chetehs* or Muslim villagers a day or two after setting out. The *chetehs*—hand in hand with the gendarmes—murdered the few men and youths among the deportees, took the young women and girls away from the caravans, snatched the children, and left behind only a few old women, and these were forced to continue their way under the gendarmes' whips, until they died of hunger. An eyewitness reported that the caravan of women brought from the Province of Garin to the Kharpert Plain was left there for several days, and over the course of these days gradually all of them died (50 to 60 deaths every day); at the end, the government sent several men to bury the corpses, so as not to create a health hazard for the Muslim element in the area.

The little girl from Zileh told us that when the deportees from Marzévan [Merzifon], Amasia, and Tokat arrived at Sarë Këshla [Sari Kisla, Sarkisla]—halfway between Sepasdia and Gesaria—the caravan was stopped in front of the government building, all boys and girls were taken from their mothers and led into rooms; the caravan was forced to continue on its way. Announcements were made in the surrounding villages for everyone to come and choose from these children. The narrator and another girl (Névert of Amasia) were picked up by an officer and brought to Constantinople. In this way, as soon as the caravans of women and children arrived in a town or burg, they were exhibited in front of the government building so that local Muslims could make their selection.

The caravan from Papert was reduced in this manner, then the leftover women and children were abandoned at a place by the Euphrates river called Kemakh Boghazi, just outside Erznga. Miss Flora A. Wedel-Yarlsberg [Jarlsberg?], a Norwegian nurse of aristocratic origins who worked at the German Red Cross Hospital in Erznga was much grieved to see these abandoned deportees, and evidence of other acts of savagery. She resigned from her post together with a German fellow nurse; the two of them came to Constantinople and visited several Embassies to tell about the incidents of savagery that they had witnessed.

These barbaric acts were perpetrated everywhere, and now travelers see the corpses of thousands of Armenians alongside the roads of these Provinces. The Muslim voyager, on his way from Malatia to Sepasdia, walked for four hours straight

through corpses of men and women. All the men from Malatia had been brought and murdered there, and women and children were forcibly Islamized. No [non-Muslim] male can travel in those areas now, because all Muslims—especially *cheteh* members and gendarmes—consider it their duty to murder such a person on sight. Two Ottoman deputies, Zohrab and Vartkes, were recently sent from Constantinople to be tried by the court-martial in Dikranagerd, but they, too, were murdered en route, somewhere beyond Aleppo. In these Provinces, nowadays the only manner in which a [non-Muslim] man can travel is by disguising himself and concealing his identity under a Muslim name. The case of the women was mentioned above: I consider it pointless to talk about morals when human life is treated in such a manner.

Armenian soldiers were subjected to the same black fate. They had already been disarmed and assigned to road construction work. Now we have definite information that Armenian soldiers from the Province of Garin, who had been put to work on the Garin-Erznga road, have all been massacred. Armenian soldiers from Dikranagerd have all been decimated on the Diarbekir-Urfa and Diarbekir-Kharpert roads. In one military convoy from Kharpert, 1,800 Armenian youths were being taken to Dikranagerd for work, but they were all massacred in the region of Arghni [Ergani]. We do not yet have news from other areas, but doubtless they have all been subjected to the same fate.

In various places, men kept in the depths of jails are being taken to the gallows. During the past month, dozens of Armenians were taken to the gallows in Gesaria, Kharpert, Sepasdia, Garin, Adana, etc. In many places, Armenians were willing to convert to Islam to save their lives, but this time such requests were not accepted as readily as they were during the previous great massacre.¹⁴⁴ The following conditions were put to those applying to convert to Islam: that they deliver to the government all their children up to the age of 12 so that they could be placed in orphanages and that the adults leave their native areas and settle in other areas indicated to them by the government.

In the Province of Kharpert, men were not allowed to convert to Islam, and in cases where a woman applied to convert to Islam, it was required that a Muslim be available to take her as his wife. Numerous Armenian women with infant children have thrown themselves in the Euphrates or committed suicide in their own homes. The Euphrates and the Tigris have become cemeteries for thousands of Armenians.

Those [Armenians] converting to Islam in the coastal cities of the Black Sea—Trebizond, Samson, and Girason—have immediately been moved to purely Muslim-inhabited areas of the interior. Because the people of Shabin-Karahisar resisted orders to give up their arms and be deported, the city was bombarded with cannons and the entire population of the city and the surrounding plain—including their leaders—was mercilessly decimated.

There are no Armenians remaining in the area from Samson to Sghert and Dikranagerd. Most of them have been massacred, some kidnapped, and a small number converted to Islam.

History has never seen or recorded such carnage, so much so that we are now considering that the reign of Sultan Hamid was a happy time for our people!

As for our Prelates in the regions, within the past month we heard that the Prelate of Papert, Anania Supreme Vartabed Hazarabedian, was sent to the gallows by

a local decision that was not even approved by the Central Government. The Prelate of Kharpert, Bsg Supreme Vartabed Der Khorenian, was sent into exile in early May, and mercilessly murdered barely two to three hours outside the city.

We still have no news from the Prelates of Sghert, Paghesh, Mush, Këghi, Palu, Erznga, Kemakh, Tokat, Gyurin, Samson, or Trebizond, and it has been more than a month since we received news from the Prelates of Sepasdia and Garin.

At a time when the population has been completely emptied and the churches robbed and converted to mosques, barns, or other uses, it is pointless to talk about the martyred priests and vartabeds. Already vessels and other goods previously belonging to Armenian churches are being sold in the markets of Constantinople, and Turks are bringing the orphaned children of unfortunate Armenian mothers to Constantinople.

It appears that, during the present carnage, Cilicia has suffered relatively less than the other regions. In any event, we have so far not received news of massacres or mass killings. Nevertheless, people from Cilicia who have been dispersed to various parts of the Province of Aleppo, Der Zor, and Damascus will surely die from hunger.

We heard that the government did not even agree to keep in place the small communities of Aleppo and Urfa. Given that the Catholicos of Cilicia was still at his post and engaged in distributing the assistance we were sending, the Armenians in these cities—had they been left undisturbed—could have extended a helping hand to their unfortunate brothers, who were being pushed to the south.

We used to think that the government's plan was to put an end to the Armenian Question once and for all by emptying the Armenian Provinces of their Armenian population and to scatter the Armenians of Cilicia to prevent a future danger from arising there. Sadly, the project is broader and more radical [than we had thought]: to completely eradicate all the Armenians in Turkey.

Today not even 1 percent of native Armenians remain in the seven Provinces¹⁴⁵ where the Reforms were meant to be implemented, and no news has been received of any of the Armenian deportees reaching Mosul or the vicinity. The project is now being implemented even near Constantinople. Most Armenians living in the Provinces of Izmit and Brusa are now being forcibly taken to the deserts of Mesopotamia, leaving their homes, lands, and belongings. Already the people of Adapazar, Nicomedia [Izmit], the villages of Geyveh, Armash and vicinity, and the villages near Izmit—with the exception of Bardizag [Bahchejik], which has been given a deadline of several days—have been taken away. The Abbot of the Armash Seminary, the monks of the congregation, and the students have also all been dispersed with very short notice.

As the deportees mentioned above were passing through Konia, they entrusted six young children to the Armenians of Konia so that these children could stay behind and survive. The local government took these children from the Armenian families and gave them to the Muslims.

It is now Constantinople's turn. People here are apprehensively waiting for the death verdict against them to be executed at any moment. Arrests are happening everywhere [in the city]. Those arrested are immediately being taken out of the city, and surely a great many of them will perish. During the last few days, [Armenian] merchants from the countryside have been deported [from Constantinople]: Maruké

Ipranosian, Garabed Kherbegian of Garin, Karekin Atamian, Sēmpad Krkoian of Paghesh, etc.

Efforts are being made to save at least the Armenians of Constantinople from this disaster that is swallowing the Armenians, so that at least a foothold would be left for the Turkish-Armenians.

Do I need to add anything else to this report? All Armenians living in Turkey have been condemned to death, and this verdict is being executed with the utmost severity in every corner of the country, in front of the eyes of civilized European nations, and yet it has been impossible for Germany and Austria to convince their ally to remove the stain of these barbaric acts from its forehead. Every effort proved ineffectual here. We have placed our hopes on the Armenians abroad.

Please send an unsigned copy of this letter to Dr. Libarid Nazariants in Sofia.

Patriarch of the Armenians of Turkey,
Abp. Zaven Der Yeghiayan

P.S. Yesterday I sent to Bishop Torkom a second copy of the procuration letter for Kherian's testament¹⁴⁶ through the Italian Embassy. The first copy had been sent through the same channel.

Same.

In my fourth letter (dated the 25th of August/7th of September), I wrote the following:

Your Grace, My Brother,

You must have received my letter of the 2nd of August. If you answered me, I have not received it, as I am now receiving letters sent to me from abroad only if they are in Turkish.

Since my last letter, I do not have any consoling or reassuring news to report. To the contrary, the news received here confirms fully the contents of my earlier letter.

A reliable source in Aleppo wrote us the following on the 19th of July: "There is no news from the ones who went to Dikranagerd, it is as if they have gone to hell." (The reference is to Zohrab and Vartkes, whose death or murder en route was confirmed by government and Ittihad sources.) The deportations of Aintab and Kilis were announced and 51 families arrived tonight from Aintab. The Armenian residents of these two cities are being transported to the Hauran district of Damascus [Province]. (The district mentioned is inhabited by semi-savage Arabs and Druze.)

Eight hundred people—possibly natives of Dikranagerd—are expected soon from Urfa. Those arriving from Kēghi and Kharpert are immediately being sent to Der Zor by way of Ras ul-Ain. There are epidemic diseases and twice we sent medication (in a previous letter this was apparently mentioned, but it did not reach us), but it is a drop in the ocean. There are more than 20,000 refugees in that district, more than 15,000 are packed into Aleppo, and more are flooding in every day.

Hunger is taking as heavy a toll as disease. The government distributes an insignificant amount of *tayinat* [assistance] to all refugees, and this is given out regularly, but outside the city there are people crying out for bread. To feed the half million Cilicians in the deserts of Syria, and possibly a comparable number that are

expected from the Eastern regions, will take either the miracle-working power of Christ or the Imperial Treasury.

Let us leave aside American or European philanthropists. What are the Armenians in Egypt and the United States doing? It is time to organize a flood of assistance commensurate with the flood of refugees. The world has not seen and will not see again such horrors, such misery and need. The demolition of Jerusalem was almost a good fortune compared with the destruction suffered by the Armenian people. Massacres, imprisonment, innumerable kidnappings of boys and girls, the auctioning of women, brides, and virgins, sometimes for as little as three *mejidieh*. It is impossible to count or explain these incidents.

... Where are the [Red] Cross associations? If they will not extend a helping hand to a nation dying for the Cross, why do they bear the name of the Cross? Do they need wounded people to care for? The Armenian Nation has been wounded financially, morally, spiritually, and intellectually! Send some money! Nature, of course—rocks, hills, and the fields—is there, whether familiar or unfamiliar. But what about the houses of God, the monasteries, and the cloisters? What will happen to the Church's holdings? Do give me some advice! I am alone and at my wit's end. There are no tears left in my eyes and no feeling in my heart. All around me, day and night I see nakedness, humiliation, diminution, tears, and laments.

Yesterday we were informed by the *Vali* [Governor] that not a single Armenian is to remain—not even one on his death bed—in any town or city. What a limitless punishment! Adana, Darson [Tarsus], Mersin will all be emptied. Already, 40 households from Darson have reached Osmaniye. In Kilis, a good number of families have proposed to the government to embrace Islam.”

On the 28th of July, the same source wrote to me, “The entire Nation is about to be exterminated. No orphanages are left! The orphanage at Deort-Yol has been given over to the government's needs and the orphans dispersed. The orphanage at Hajen [Hacin] has been shut for quite a while and the one at Hasan Begli [Hasan Beyli] in part. Now it is announced that the orphanage at Marash—it has 100 orphan boys and girls—is to be closed, because the Armenians of Marash are to be dispersed, and they have already been given notice. Migrations from Aintab and Kilis have started. The first two caravans from Aintab were completely robbed; the attack of the second caravan resulted in one dead and 12 wounded. Thanks to appeals made to the local government, the necessary measures were taken, and the second [third] caravan reached Aleppo in comfort and safety, but, unlike with the caravans from Kilis, those who arrived were not allowed to leave the group, instead they were made to continue toward the Province of Damascus. The caravans that will arrive from Adana, Darson, and Mersin will not to be allowed to stay in Aleppo, either. Also the *sevkiyat* [dispatching] of refugees congregated in Aleppo started with great severity. It is said that strict orders have been received to have no refugees remaining in Aleppo within 15 days. [The Armenians of] Iskenderun and Beylan also were deported.

If the Cilicians were to arrive, this would make for more than 400,000 Armenians in dire conditions, but we are also expecting thousands of widows, boys, and girls from the Eastern Provinces. [Recently] more than 200 men arrived in Aleppo from Tomarza and 52 people from the Beshveren village of Yozghad [Province], together with their priest—and they said more were coming. They were

all robbed on the way and arrived hungry. The government considers these people to be harmful persons and does not give them *tayin* [rations]. The local National Commission distributes to them five to six large *khantars* of bread (each *khantar* holds 120 *okha*), but this can only alleviate the general hunger to a slight extent. I repeat here, as I did in my previous letters, that it is impossible to stop this disaster. Appeals, pleading, cries, and lamentations not only prove ineffectual but bring forth mockery and ridicule in response. The only thing that can be done is to try and save the survivors. There are thousands of naked and barefoot people. The widows arriving from the interiors have had even their shoes stolen; they all arrive with worn-out, wounded, and swollen feet. We took medication and remedies to them. There are also epidemics among those who were taken from Ras ul-Ain to Der Zor; more than 20 are dying daily. Financial resources are required for bread, clothes, medication, physicians, and visiting clergy. Whatever spare funds exist—under whatever name—should be given over for this purpose.

...Bloody news started arriving from Urfa, too. Initially 40 notables—including reverends and preachers and the Prelate—were martyred, there was word of 17 other people. The slaughterhouse region of Diarbekir is expanding and has reached the frontiers of Aleppo [Province]. We have exhausted all prayers, our hearts are worn out, our lips are sore. No one listens, and no one understands us, not on earth and not in heaven. Send some money! Hunger and disease are decimating tens of thousands of Armenians in Der Zor.

P.S. Just now we received news that all males from 15 to 45 from Marash are being sent in the direction of Aintab, to be transported to Der Zor. We fear that their lives may be in danger. Yesterday evening, about 2,000 widows and orphaned boys from the villages of Svaz [Sivas] and Garin reached here. None of the boys is over 11 years of age, and several girls and boys were abducted on the way. These people, in need of medical care even now, are to be sent to the deserts of Arabia, and there is no possibility or hope that they will survive.”

An Armenian traveler from Samson told us the following in person: “I am a native of Samson, and I was performing my military service in Charshamba. While I was there, we heard that Armenians were being uprooted everywhere and falling victim to the attacks of *chetehs* on the roads, that girls and women were abducted and raped. The Armenians of Charshamba decided to temporarily convert to Islam. The government at first accepted this, and official formalities were completed, but then—at the beginning of July—all Armenians were uprooted and sent toward Mosul. I fled to my family’s home in Samson. It was ordered that Armenians should be expelled from Samson. About 120 prominent Armenian families of the city applied to become Muslims, but their request was rejected. The Prelate, Hamazasb Vartabed, saw this inclination toward Islamization and announced, ‘All those who want to remain Christians, let them follow me.’ On the first occasion, the Prelate, two priests, and 400 families left toward Mosul, and the last caravan—of which I was a member—left on the 7th of July. The misery and suffering on the way were indescribable. From the very first days, overweight people and the elderly just could not keep up and they remained by the wayside, and mothers abandoned their infants. The policemen’s whips caused the death of many. After eight days we reached Amasia, where we did

not meet any Armenians. Islamized Armenian families had initially been allowed to stay in this town, but then they had been expelled, accused of having been the cause of a terrible fire. When we reached Evtogia [Tokat], the city's Armenians—who used to make up 30 percent of the population—were no longer there, and none were to be found in Sepasdia, either. I obtained a passport issued to a Muslim, and with this I traveled from Sepasdia to Constantinople, in the company of an officer and a *kadi* [Muslim judge] from the region of Erznga. The *kadi* told me the following. “Neither the Koran nor the Sharia accepts the acts that were committed against the Armenians in the region of Erznga. The Governor of Erznga, Memduh Bey, accumulated 50,000 liras through robbing the Armenians, and in reward for the savagery he committed he has now been appointed Governor of Kastemuni [Kastamonu].” With an anguished heart, the *kadi* related to me how more than 30,000 Armenians from Erznga and the surrounding areas were exterminated at a place half an hour outside the city, how women and infants were buried alive, and how hundreds of men and women were thrown into the Euphrates river. The *kadi* continued, “Thousands of men were murdered, women and girls were abducted and raped, and infants were distributed among Turks. Heaven will punish us for it, sooner or later.”

The Turkish officer told me, “Sharkëshla [Sharkishla] is the center through which all deportees coming from the Black Sea shores and the Province of Sepasdia pass. The deportees can arrive there safely, but in Sharkëshla horrible acts of savagery are taking place. Children up to the age of 10 or 11 are taken from the deportees and given to Muslims, and the same happens to beautiful women and teenage girls.” Then he added, “There was a bespectacled *Kaimakam* there; every evening he took home two or three pretty Armenian girls; he also invited the *Jandarma Komandani* [Commander of the Gendarmerie] and other government officials, and they all had fun ravaging the girls. On the following day he returned the dishonored girls to their parents. These officials had an argument over things they had stolen from the Armenians, the matter reached the governor, and the *Kaimakam* was transferred elsewhere.”

The coachman pointed out the places alongside the road where he said that hundreds of Armenians had been murdered, and he told us that, on the way from Kharpert to Sepasdia, he had driven for hours and days through areas where the stench of corpses had contaminated the air to such an extent that he was unable to give water to his horses.

A traveler from Gesaria told us the following about Gesaria. “The villages around Gesaria have all been emptied, with the exception of Talas. During the last days of July, the government made the following announcement to the Armenians in these two [sic] places. (a) All Armenians have to take to the road in groups of 1,000, men and women separately. (b) No Armenian may carry on his person more than 300 piasters, if more is found during a search, that person will be sent to the court-martial; whoever has more money should deliver it to the government. (c) No one is permitted to sell his property, etc. Many people pleaded for this rule to be changed, and it was modified in the following manner: ‘Those who do not have money may sell enough of their belongings to raise 300 piasters.’ So far, more than 80 people have been hanged in Gesaria, among them several physicians, notables, and Hampartsum Boyajian (Murad). The hanged persons’ families—their mothers, fathers, and

wives—have the duty to take the corpses down from the gallows. Requests to convert to Islam were accepted only from teenage girls and women. When the Prefect was petitioned to allow nursing babies to be handed over to Muslim families, so that these would not die on the road, he said, ‘I do not accept even the smell of Armenians to remain here; go and set up an Armenia in the Arabian deserts!’”

The deportations have reached the gates of Constantinople. All Armenians from Brusa, Izmit, Konia, and Angora have already been set out on the road. From 200,000 to 300,000 Armenians are concentrated in extreme misery along the Baghdad railway; they are gradually being moved toward Darson and then Aleppo, to be dispersed in the desert after that. Information reaching us indicates that disease and hunger are already causing deaths. Gendarmes and other officials accompanying and supervising the deportees are subjecting them to appalling tortures.

In response to our appeals, the seminarians at Armash were brought to Constantinople and delivered to us. The Abbot, two Vartabeds, three preachers, and all the teachers were included in the caravans of deportees. The monastery was seized, together with all its property. A government official even took the sum of nearly 400 pounds generated from the sale of Bp. Mesrob's sheep, other animals and personal property.

Single males [originally] from the countryside started to be deported from Constantinople two weeks ago. So far, 4,000 to 5,000 men have been deported with very short notice, forced to abandon everything. Some of them are heads of families. In addition, the families of men who had been deported to Ayash and Changëre were given notice to prepare to leave Constantinople, but we succeeded in preventing this. We consider these developments to be the beginning of the deportation of the Armenians of Constantinople. We find that the government—possibly concerned about the comments made by the various Ambassadors here—exercises some caution with respect to Constantinople. Today there are undeported Armenians only in Constantinople, the Province of Izmir, and the Thrace.

It appears that the government, as a concession to the Embassies' appeals, issued orders for Armenian Catholic and Armenian Protestant families, also those families whose only breadwinner is a soldier, not to be deported, but this order was quickly altered and now it is implemented [only] in few places. Families of soldiers, already brought to the railway line, were given a temporary reprieve, but recently we heard that they are once again being forced to continue on their way. Families in this group, who had congregated at Ereyli [Ereghli]—beyond Konia—petitioned to have their soldier sons and husbands returned to them. For the last two or three days, Armenian soldiers have been sent in that direction, probably to be reunited with their families.

A terrible massacre took place in Angora at the beginning of this month. First, approximately 500 Armenian men were taken on the road and massacred. Then, carnage started in the city and claimed the lives of more than 300 people—men, women, and children. Seventeen railway workers, 10 Armenian Catholic priests, the [Armenian Catholic] Bishop, our Prelacy Vicar, Teotoros Vartabed, priests, etc. were murdered in these incidents. There were even 23 Greek victims. It is known that there are only 400 to 500 households of Apostolic Armenians in that city, whereas Armenian Catholics number more than 2,000 households.

Almost all of the people who had been exiled from Constantinople to Ayash and

Changërë were brought to Angora. We have no news of them, nor of the few remaining in Ayash and Changërë. We fear that they have been the victims of massacres. A relative of the Director General of Security made the following comment. "Armenians are organizing demonstrations and protests in Sofia, Rusjuk [Ruse], and other places, but we gave them the necessary answer by finishing off the prisoners in Ayash."

These are the reports of the last three weeks, and I am communicating them so that you may use them and that Armenians abroad and the civilized world may know about our situation. It has to be accepted that our loss until now is not less than 500,000 persons, and this number will continue to increase for as long as the persecution continues. Our people are in extreme need, and thousands more will fall victim to hunger, poverty, disease, and savagery. Because the civilized nations are only able to take care of their own needs for now and can only remain spectators to our agony without alleviating our suffering, then do apply everywhere—to Armenians in foreign lands and foreign humanitarians—so that they might save lives with their material assistance. Do let them know that next winter thousands will fall victim. The accounting for our people's extermination and death remains to be done in the near future, now it is time to save whatever we can. It is imperative to send help. Our mothers and brothers are dying of hunger. Until now, the Patriarchate did what it could: we spent all the sums that were in our hands, but the need and the demand are so great that the sums in our hands are nowhere near enough. We have sent 8,000 pounds to the needy, of which hardly 2,000 we received from abroad. Tell our brothers abroad that even 10 *para*¹⁴⁷ are enough for an Armenian to subsist for one day. Accordingly, write to the United States, Egypt, Rumania, and everywhere there are Armenians, tell also the Armenians in Bulgaria, that this is the hour of sacrifice, and whoever loves God and the Nation should extend us a helping hand.

With brotherly love and taking refuge in your prayers,

Unfortunate Patriarch of the Armenians of Turkey
Bp. Zaven Der Yeghiayan

Bishop Ghevont Turian conscientiously sent copies of these letter to Paris and Echmiadzin. In response to the letters he received from Bp. Turian, Boghos Pasha Nubar sent him the following two letters.

London, the 21st of July 1915

Most Reverend Bp. Ghevont Turian
Prelate of the Armenians of Bulgaria
Filibeh [Plovdiv]

Most Reverend Holy Father,

I read with sadness and interest the news Your Grace sent me in a report dated the 11th/24th of July.

A few days before I left for Europe, His Holiness the Catholicos had informed me with a long telegram that extortion, bloody skirmishes, and massacres had taken place in Armenia and Cilicia and that His Holiness had applied to the King of Italy¹⁴⁸ and the President of the United States¹⁴⁹ to request their intervention.

Unable to do anything better, I followed the example of His Holiness, but the governments of these countries were unable to oblige the Sublime Porte to change its policies toward the Armenians. These policies, as Your Grace had very rightly observed in the report, are nothing other than the extermination of the Armenian element. Therefore, despite the appeals, extortion continued as before.

As Your Grace is probably aware, during the first phase of the extortion, France, England, and Russia jointly announced to the Sublime Porte that they would hold the officials of the Ottoman Empire personally responsible for any mischief done to the Armenians, but this warning, not based on decisive force, did not have the intended beneficial effect.

Several days before receiving your report, I received a telegram from Alexandria, which contained disquieting information about Zeytun, Deort-Yol, and Hasan Beyli; this telegram confirmed the sad news reported by Your Grace.

After receiving the telegram from Alexandria and the report from Your Grace, even though I knew that under the present circumstances my appeals could not produce any positive outcome, I hurried to meet with Sir Arthur Nicholson, Counselor of the British Foreign Office, and the French and Russian Ambassadors in London and presented to them in detail the hopeless condition of our compatriots.

All three expressed their genuine distress but also confessed that, under the present conditions, the Allied countries did not have any effective means at their disposal for helping the Armenians.

Nevertheless, in the report I submitted to the British Foreign Office, I documented all the extortion and massacres that are being perpetrated upon our compatriots, emphasizing that the Turkish government's intention is nothing other than the extermination of the Armenians.

Needless to say, our salvation depends on the decisive victory of the Allied states, for which we should hope with all our heart. Only then will our people be able to breathe freely.

I wrote these things to His Holiness the Catholicos, as well.

I shall be grateful if you could occasionally transmit to me news about Armenia emanating from the same reliable source.

Kissing the Right Hand of Your Grace,

I remain in Respectful Modesty,

Boghos Nubar

P.S. Just this minute His Holiness the Catholicos informed me of the summary of the report of Your Holiness, requesting that I lodge protests with [European] governments against the extermination of the Turkish-Armenians. I responded to His Holiness by informing him that, under the present conditions, my protests have, regretfully, not produced any practical results, but that if the matter consisted of making a formal protest, then it would be best for His Holiness to undertake to do it. B.N.

Paris, the 10th of August 1915

Most Reverend Bp. Ghevont Turian
Prelate of the Armenians of Bulgaria
Filibeh [Plovdiv]

Most Reverend Holy Father,

I confirm my letter of the 21st of July (New Calendar).

I received Your Grace's letter of the 2nd[9th]/22nd of July, to which was appended a second report on the conditions in Armenia and Cilicia, the contents of which deeply saddened me.

In the last part of the report mentioned, it is suggested that appeals should be made to the Neutral States. With a pained heart I have to inform you that the Neutral States are at present as incapable of intervening on behalf of the Armenians as are the Allied States.

In my previous letter, I informed Your Grace that His Holiness the Catholicos and myself had already applied to the two great Neutral States, namely Italy (which was and still is neutral toward Turkey) and the United States of America.

Our co-nationals in the United States, under the leadership of their Prelate, have already applied to Washington. I have heard from a reliable source that these two states—whose sympathies toward our people are not in doubt—have already made friendly comments to the Sublime Porte.

What were the results of the mentioned interventions, if not the worsening of our situation? I beg you to consider that the Turks, having foolishly jumped into this war, thereby endangering even the existence of their Empire, will no longer tolerate the interventions of foreigners—enemies or neutral states—in their internal affairs.

They are no longer able to consider the terrible consequences of their depravity and evil deeds.

Turks nurture a blind hatred toward foreigners. The recent intervention has enraged them, and an outcome diametrically opposite to what we had expected has been produced.

Your Grace is already aware that, apart from presenting the current situation of the Armenians in the last part of my memorandum to the British Foreign Office, I also made individual appeals to important British political personalities, among them Lord Bryce, Lord Cromer, and others.

As a result of these appeals, Lord Bryce recently submitted an inquiry on the Armenian exploitation to the government during a meeting of the House of Lords, which was supported by Lord Cromer and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In the name of the British government, Lord Crewe¹⁵⁰ answered that, regretfully, the information received by Lord Bryce is true, but that in the present situation the Allies do not have other means for helping the Armenians except by repeating even more forcefully the joint warning of the 24th of May to the Sublime Porte. "*However,*" added Lord Crewe, "*that warning, instead of helping the Armenians, worsened their situation; as from that date onwards, the Turks intensified their crimes and they are now acting even more ruthlessly.*"

The first Dragoman of the French Embassy in Constantinople, Mr. Le Doux, came to see me in July upon his return from Constantinople, and he, too, is of the

same opinion. According to Mr. Le Doux, the Allies' warning letter was like pouring oil on fire. Indeed, the day after the warning was delivered, Zohrab and Vartkes were arrested, and incidents of exploitation multiplied.

It was also suggested to me that I request Bulgaria's intervention. I assume that you, as the Prelate of the Armenians of Bulgaria, have already invited the benevolent attention of that country's government to our compatriot's present situation. I know that Armenians are well liked by the Bulgarian people and Bulgarian government personalities, but, precisely for the reasons mentioned, I assume that the Bulgarian government, despite its sympathy and benevolence, cannot effectively help us under the present circumstances.

If there is still a faint glimmer of hope for the Armenians, that would be a rapid advance of the Caucasian armies into Armenia and Cilicia.

Kissing the Right Hand of Your Grace,
I remain in Most Respectful Modesty,

Boghos Nubar

The reports we sent to Paris during the war in the manner explained [above] served as the source material from which James Bryce, commissioned by the British government, compiled the *Blue Book*.¹⁵¹

More important in this regard were the services of Mr. Arshag Shmavonian, the legal counsel of the U.S. Embassy. When I had something important to communicate, I used to send him my Vicar, and Mr. Shmavonian himself—despite being Protestant—often came to the Mother Church on Sundays and came up to the Patriarchate after the mass to meet with me. In this manner, the Ambassador was kept informed about everything and made appeals to the Sublime Porte, even though he could not secure many results. It was thanks to [Shmavonian's] intercession that Gomidas Vartabed was returned from exile to Constantinople.¹⁵² Similarly, it was through him that details of the [Armenian] tragedy reached the United States government, and the American Red Cross started sending aid at the beginning. After the Armistice, Near East [Relief] continued this work.

At first, the Americans naively thought of sending their aid to the needy through the Turkish Red Crescent. When Shmavonian gave me this news, I objected to this arrangement by exposing all its disadvantages, because the needy would not receive any aid at all if it were sent in this way. Shmavonian communicated my objection, and the decision was changed. A Commission was formed in Aleppo with the participation of American and German missionaries and the local U.S. and German Consulates. This Commission sent its staff also to the surrounding areas and distributed aid. In the mentioned effort, we applied to the Armenian community in the United States, and they were very helpful.

When the call to arms was announced, and the communication between the interior provinces and abroad became impossible, I wrote to the Prelacy in the United States, indicating that if immigrants [in the United States] wanted to send money to their relatives, they could send it to the Patriarchate through the Prelacy in the United States. The Prelacy announced this two or three times in the local newspapers, and forwarded to us the sums of money generated, which we in turn sent to the addresses they indicated. When the deportations started, it became impossible to continue this practice. After the Armistice, when Armenians from The United States came to visit the Patriarchate, they were able to verify these transactions in the Patriarchate's records and documents.

Likewise, I cultivated relations with the Prelacy of the United States through Shmavonian, through whose assistance I was able to send a letter to the Prelate of the United States, Arsen Vartabed Vehuni. In this letter, dated the 28th of December 1915/9th of January 1916, I described and presented the tragedy and then said the following:

My intention in writing these things to Your Grace is not only to make You aware of the unfortunate condition of the Turkish Armenians—this is probably more or less familiar through news You receive from various sources, articles in the press, or eyewitness testimonies—but also to request that You consult with competent persons and bodies in the United States to satisfy the following requests:

Armenians abroad should consider the situation of their brothers and relatives, restrain their feelings, and stay away from demonstrations, which could endanger the lives of the scattered remnants of the decimated Armenian Nation.

[Armenians abroad] should not give up knocking on the doors of humanitarian organizations of the Neutral States, or even those of Turkey's allies, so as to make it possible for the handful of survivors to be saved, fed, and sheltered until after the war, when their fate is to be decided.

[Armenians abroad] should contribute to relief funds to be distributed, not only through the U.S. government and the missionary organizations, but through the Patriarchate as well. Our suffering people, by receiving assistance through the Patriarchate, will be encouraged and filled with hope that the Nation does not intend to die and that, by going through this period of suffering, one day they will be able to see clear skies. The Patriarchate's revenue sources have dried up, its budget is depleted, and the monies at its disposal are all spent, and it can no longer satisfy screams for help that are addressed to it. The Armenians of Constantinople are in an economic crisis and terror stricken, and they are unable to extend us a helping hand.

I hope that this letter will be given serious consideration and that it will quickly lead to results. I consider it necessary to say that my letter should not be publicized or published.

Hayg Khojasarian, the Chairman of the General Assembly, read this letter and liked its contents.

[Ambassador] Morgenthau, thinking that this letter might arrive in the United States quite late, telegraphed a summary of it to the U.S. Department of State, with instructions for delivery to Arsen Vartabed Vehuni.

Following the request of the Embassy, on the 13th/26th of March 1916, I wrote a second letter to Arsen Vartabed, this time in English, and communicated to him at length the unbearable condition of our people. In this second letter, I explained in detail which of our Prelates had been murdered and which had miraculously survived.

After the war, when Arsen Vartabed Vehuni came to Constantinople, he confirmed having received both of these letters.

At about this time, Ambassador Morgenthau made an offer to Talaat:

Since you do not want the Armenians, and their presence annoys you, instead of subjecting them to these conditions and provoking the anger of the civilized world toward you, allow me to transport them to the United States in several ships. If you

agree to this, I will personally appeal to American philanthropists to have their support for this project, and I will make a ship available through my personal funds.

This proposal, if realized, would have been a truly great work of philanthropy, but also striking proof of Turkish brutality, and Talaat refused it.

For as long as Morgenthau was in Constantinople—until January 1916—he made every effort, as he explains in his memoirs, to soften the fury of the Ittihad, but he did not succeed. I did, however, make full use of Morgenthau's personal goodwill and the U.S. Embassy's general goodwill, in no small part thanks to Mr. Arshag Shmavonian's undeniable patriotism, which should never be forgotten.

I had full confidence that Mr. Shmavonian would always do whatever he could, and through his mediation I was able to present our condition to the U.S. Ambassador [Morgenthau]. On the 22nd of February [1916] I sent the Patriarchal Vicar to Mr. Shmavonian, to brief him on the day's events. In particular, I wanted to make him aware of several new phenomena that were being reported to us: refugees being forcibly Islamized, others being continually moved from one place to another, male deportees being sent to purely Muslim villages as forced field laborers, etc. The Vicar also requested that Mr. Shmavonian pay a visit to the Bulgarian Ambassador, to have the latter comment on these issues to the Turkish government. Shmavonian promised to do what we were requesting, and I am certain that he did what he could to limit the extent of the evil.

I also went to see the Bulgarian Ambassador in person whenever there was an occasion. After Bulgaria entered the war, I went to see him two or three more times, and he commented to the Ottoman Ministers that their attitude toward the Armenians was leaving a very bad impression in Bulgaria.

In December 1915, I wrote letters to the U.S. and Bulgarian Ambassadors, thanking them for their humanitarian [efforts] and goodwill toward us.

Another person with whom we had contacts was the Papal Nuncio, Monsignor Dolci. Our contacts with him were through Dr. Torkomian and Dikran Srabian, who I knew from his period in Garin as interpreter for the French Consulate.

Msgr. Dolci acted as though he was very well connected and in constant communication with all the ambassadors, especially with the Ambassador of Austria, but I received no help from him. In the beginning of 1916, he asked me to write a letter to the Pope, requesting the Pope's intervention on behalf of our Nation and thanking Dolci. I wrote the letter requested, so as to have tried knocking on this door, too. I did not have much hope of obtaining a result. Armenian Catholics, just like [Apostolic Armenians], were being decimated through deportations or massacres, Catholic priests and even bishops—such as those at Kharpert, Dikranagerd, and Mardin—were being decimated through merciless tortures, without having committed the slightest questionable act. If His Holiness the Pope in Rome did not come out of his neutrality and make the slightest objection to the government of Austria—which was a daughter of Rome and an ally of Turkey—what could he do for us, given that we were not even his people?

In his response, the Pope thanked me and promised to make every effort on behalf of the Christians in Turkey. Dr. Torkomian, in his memoirs published in *Vém* (no. 12, 1937) praised Msgr. Dolci highly as an exemplary, kind, and humanitarian person and testified that Msgr. Dolci made appeals to various Ambassadors—in particular the Austrian Ambassador—requested letters from the Pope that he personally carried to the Palace, and had large sums of

money sent that he distributed to needy Armenians, etc. Unfortunately I do not agree with Dr. Torkomian, even though at the time I followed his advice of approaching Msgr. Dolci and writing a letter to the Pope. I wrote the letter not because I had great hopes of receiving any concrete help in response, but because—as the saying goes—“The drowning man will wrap his arms even around the snake.” I sent all the reports Msgr. Dolci requested from me, and I am sure that Msgr. Dolci used these reports to raise his credit with the Vatican rather than obtaining any substantial help for the Armenians. In reality, Dolci did not concern himself with anything other than the interests of Catholics, and all the appeals he made to the Ottoman government were on behalf of Catholics.

The Turkish Ministers did not pay any attention to suggestions or entreaties on behalf of the Armenians, and they did not waver from their purpose. Not only Msgr. Dolci's comments, but even the comments of the Germans fell on deaf ears. “The Armenian problem is an internal problem of ours, and no one has the right to interfere,” they would say. In this situation, naturally, they were not going to listen to Dolci. In any case, Dolci could not have had contacts with the Palace, and the Pope's letters could not have been addressed to the Sultan.¹⁵³

Sultan Reshad was a puppet in any event. He was always drunk, just like Crown Prince Yusuf Izzeddin. Ittihad was able to do everything it wanted even without the Sultan, sometimes even applying the Sultan's signature. It was reported to me that whenever something was brought for the Sultan to sign, he asked, “Does Ittihad know about this?” When he was told that the text had been drafted with Ittihad's approval, he signed it without hesitation, often without even reading it.

As for the one million francs that, according to Dr. Torkomian, were sent from Rome and distributed by Dolci to all suffering Armenians, I can swear with a completely clear conscience that the only evidence I have of any money being distributed by Dolci comes from the Armenian Catholic pastor of Esgishehir [Eskishehir], Father Sdepan, who told me that he received a small sum (30 pounds) to be distributed to the needy. Apart from this, I have heard neither directly nor indirectly of Msgr. Dolci distributing or giving money to any needy Armenians. I would not discount the possibility, however, that money for assistance may have come from Rome, which Dolci distributed only to Armenian Catholics through clergymen affiliated with the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate.

I have not heard of anyone being freed from jail or exile through Dolci's intervention, except several jailed persons in Aleppo, whom Dolci claimed to have freed. Because there were members of the Armenian Catholic Khërhlakian family of Marash among these prisoners, I consider this claim plausible.

In any event, even after the Armistice, Dolci did not claim to have freed anybody else. The Aleppo natives mentioned had not actually been freed; they had been spared the harsh punishment and kept in jail until the Armistice.

As mentioned, I had made an appeal to the U.S. and Bulgarian Ambassadors on the 22nd of February 1916 through the intermediation of Arshag Shmavonian. This appeal had dealt with the Islamizations, incidents of forced labor, and the dispersion of the refugees in Muslim villages. I made the same appeal to Dolci, too, but did not get anything out of it.

Dolci was allowed to have contacts only with the Austrian Ambassador, because the latter—alone among Turkey's allies—was the designated protector of Catholics [in the Ottoman Empire]. It is unfortunate that, ever since the issue of the Reforms, Austrian Ambassador Pallavicini had not wanted to be involved with, or even hear about, the Armenian Question.

Despite all this, in the beginning of April 1915, I also applied to the Austrian Embassy. In addition, through Dr. Torkomian's intermediation, I invited Khoren Vartabed of the Mekhitarian Order to come to see me, and I asked him to apply to the Austrian Ambassador, giving clear explanations as to what message I wanted transmitted.

Father Khoren completed his mission conscientiously, but did not bring any kind of positive response.

I also sent Father Khoren to Msgr. Dolci, who wanted us to formulate our requests in a note. The very next day I presented our requests:

1. Orders should be given to provincial authorities to stop persecuting those Armenians who have not been deported and not to send them to the villages.
2. The deportees should not be moved from place to place; they should be left at peace so that they may earn their living.
3. The State's assistance (1 piaster daily) should not be stopped, but continued as before.
4. Those who have not been deported should be left where they are.
5. In places where massacres have gone to extremes, the surviving population should be allowed to establish communication with their relatives in Constantinople.
6. The mail and telegraph services should facilitate the petitioning for and the distribution of aid.
7. Those being deported from the Capital should not be taken on foot beyond Nicomedia.
8. Incidents of forced Islamization should stop.
9. Women and children being kept by Muslim families should be entrusted to their relatives' care.
10. The Armenian Patriarchate should be permitted to send clergymen to where the deportees are.
11. Given that people in certain areas are being allowed to have priests, why is permission withheld for the opening of churches?

Dolci answered that the Minister of Foreign Affairs was approached, and the latter immediately communicated the above concerns to the Minister of Internal Affairs, who immediately refuted everything that was being said.

In response to my appeals to the Austrian and German Ambassadors, they advised me to be patient just a little longer.

After the death of Wangenheim (on the 24th of October 1915), Prince Heinrich became provisional Chargé d'Affaires to the German Embassy. Two or three [weeks] later, at the beginning of November [1915], Count Wolf de Metternich arrived in Constantinople as the new Ambassador.

I decided to appeal to the new Ambassador's conscience also. In consultation with Dr. Tavitian, I wrote him a letter, dated the 10th of November 1915:

Confidential

the 10th of November 1915

To His Excellency the Ambassador of Germany,

For the last seven months, Armenians living in the larger part of the Ottoman Empire have been the victims of the most brutal persecution.

Almost all of them have been expelled and deported from their native regions. They or their homes and belongings have been stolen or confiscated, and hundreds among them have perished at the gallows, charged with insignificant violations and frequently under false accusations. Thousands—especially members of the intellectual classes—have been condemned to death without any trial.

In numerous regions, all males over the age of 10 years have been massacred, young women have been abducted by Muslims, and infants taken by force from their parents and entrusted to the care of Muslim families.

Finally, in other regions, the Armenian population has been entirely annihilated. Fields and major roads are filled with their corpses, rivers have taken away large numbers of them. No type of brutality or murder has been left untried, to such an extent that it is as though we were living in the pre-Christian era.

This unprecedented persecution has cost the Armenian nation between 800,000 and 1 million lives. The remaining part of the Nation is dispersed in the deserts of Mesopotamia and Syria and condemned—no doubt—to merciless extinction.

Apart from the abducted women and children, we should mention the thousands of cases of apostasy imposed by brute force or inexorable necessity. Churches and monasteries are largely ruined, the larger part of them desecrated and given over to disrespectful uses. Sacred devotional items have been dishonored and put out for sale. In numerous regions, members of the clergy have been massacred. Thousands of priests have been put to death. Numerous Bishops and Prelates have been killed as well. So far we have ascertained the violent deaths of 35 of them—18 Archbishops and 17 Prelates. What is left of the widows and the orphans has been sent in small groups to regions inhabited by Muslims, and in those places—without church or clergy—will take place the final death of a nation that has not ceased—since the fourth century of the Christian era—spreading resolutely the light and message of the New Testament, despite persecution.

During the centuries when Islam was at its mightiest, the Armenian nation succeeded in preserving its faith and its Church. Today, when the Christian world is at the peak of its might, our Nation is facing the danger of losing its faith and its Church, in front of the indifferent eyes of those Nations to whom faith in Christ has given strength and civilization.

Our Nation, known for its honesty and loyalty toward the Ottoman Empire throughout six centuries, undertook from the beginning of this war to fulfill its citizenship obligations with the greatest of sacrifices. Accusations were leveled against it to justify unheard-of savagery. These accusations have been shown to be absolute lies, and certainly their falsehood will be fully revealed in the future.

At a time, when a General War has erupted, we could obviously not expect the Powers to have time for us. The Armenian nation nevertheless gave itself the right to hope that, under the protective influence of Germany, the persecution—and occasional massacres—to which our Nation was targeted for centuries would stop, and we would finally enjoy some peace. Today, Armenians are wondering anxiously whether they will once again experience a cruel disenchantment, and whether German civilization will tolerate the victorious march of the German army toward the Orient being impeded by the corpses of hundreds of thousands of innocent victims. Will the compassion of German Christianity not be moved by lakes and rivers dyed red with

the blood of women and children, or by a boastful Jihad that has caused the very definite death of a Christian nation of Western Asia that had, for centuries, enthusiastically adopted European civilization?

At this moment, when thousands of Armenians are wandering the mountains and the deserts deprived of everything—even their most basic clothes—having as their enemy not only the various other groups surrounding them but even the State—which should have been protecting them—at this moment, when the unsupported remnants of this Nation declared an outlaw are subject to all kinds of deprivation and oppression, decimated in their nomadic existence through hunger and disease, and all this not very far for the railway that must pass through their corpses to take German civilization to Mesopotamia, I appeal to you, Mr. Ambassador, and I entreat your kind intervention. Your intervention can finally put an end to this indescribable persecution and allow the unfortunate remnants of a nation much worthy of attention to gather themselves and look for shelter to escape death.

Your noble assistance will establish in our hearts one more time the conviction that mighty Germany is fighting for civilization, justice, and the protection of the weak.

With the certainty that this appeal addressed to your humanitarian feelings will not remain without a response, and with this conviction, we ask Your Excellency to accept the expression of our deep gratitude.

Patriarch of the Armenians of Turkey
Abp. Zaven Der Yeghiayan

I gave the letter to Vicar Yervant Vartabed, instructing him to hand it personally to the Ambassador. I arranged it such that Bp. Kapriel [Jevahirjian] would accompany our Vicar. Bishop Jevahirjian did not know of the letter's existence. He thought that this was a simple courtesy visit to the new German Ambassador and that it was intentionally being made more pompous by having a Bishop accompany the Vicar.

Bp. Jevahirjian and Yervant Vartabed arrived together at the German Embassy just as the new Ambassador was receiving the German community of Constantinople. After our delegates had waited a while, First Dragoman Weber approached them and said that the Ambassador, still busy with their community, would be late to meet with them and that, if they had anything to say, he would convey it to the Ambassador.

Bp. Kapriel said that the Armenian Patriarch had sent them to wish a good welcome to the Ambassador. Yervant Vartabed produced my letter and entrusted Weber with its delivery to the Ambassador, and then they left. Bp. Kapriel, not knowing the contents of the letter, did not say anything [further]. About four to five days later, Dr. Mortmann came to see me at the [Armenian] Chamber of Deputies in Galatia and said:

The Ambassador received and read your letter, and he was very moved. He gave me the letter and requested a report on the condition of the Armenians. I prepared and submitted it in one or two days. The Ambassador read it, called me, and said, "Go and tell the Patriarch that I am very sorry for the unfortunate condition of his people. I shall send his letter to Berlin, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and let him be assured that I shall do all I can to stop this evil that is happening to his people, to the extent that our policy will permit it."

I expressed my thanks and good wishes and sent my respects to the Ambassador through Mortmann. However, the expression “to the extent that our policy will permit it,” which the Ambassador was conveying to me through Mortmann, was very frank, and it was clear that the Ambassador would remain reserved and would not be able to intervene effectively.

At least the Ambassador appeared well disposed on a personal level. Encouraged by this, I submitted another report to the German Ambassador with the title, “*L’Anéantissement de l’élément Arménien en Turquie*.” This report described the condition of the Armenian people, and I ended it with the following lines:

*L’anéantissement d’un peuple, sans précédent dans l’histoire du genre humain, eut lieu en Turquie dans ces derniers dix mois et continue encore. Le monde chrétien et civilisé restera-t-il indifférent?*¹⁵⁴

I received news that, during December, the German and the Bulgarian Ambassadors made appeals to the Ottoman government to stop persecuting the Armenians, making the departure point of their appeal the accusations in the enemy press, which was blaming them as accomplices of the Turks because they were allowing the extermination of a Christian nation in front of their very eyes. Indeed, as I learned indirectly, details appeared to have reached the outside world, and the German government was really being blamed.

Our Vicar went to see the new Vicar of the Bulgarian Exarchate on the 25th of December [1915], on the occasion of the feast of Christmas. The Vicar told Yervant Vartabed, “The Bulgarian Government made yet another request to the Ottoman government to stop persecuting the Armenians, which it can not tolerate.” This was proof that the German Ambassador had made a request. I wrote letters of thanks and gratitude to both Ambassadors for their humanitarian behavior.

Also during this time, as a result of the ado raised abroad, the German newspaper *Berliner Volkszeitung* reported in its 11th of January [1916] issue about the Social Democratic leader Liebknecht interrogating the government on the severe measures the Turkish government was implementing against the Armenians. Minister of Political Affairs Von de Turm responded that the disturbances caused by the Armenian revolutionaries had forced the Turkish government to move the Armenian population elsewhere. The Minister added that the German and Turkish governments were still exchanging opinions on this matter.

Indeed, a month later, at the beginning of February, I heard that a delegation from the Reichstag had arrived in Constantinople and advised the Turkish government to stop the Islamization and the persecution, to allow the Armenians of the region of Constantinople to return to their places, to settle the remaining Armenians along the railroad, etc.

It appeared that the Turkish government now found itself in a tight spot. The Interior Minister Talaat had the following interview published in the 24th of January [1916] issue of *İkdam*.

Interview with the Minister of the Interior

For some time now we have had in our city our special Berlin correspondent, Mehmed [Seydi?] Bey, who is also a correspondent with German and U.S. newspapers and who, in particular, fulfills the function of communicating the announcements of the venerable Ottoman Ministers to the local and the international press.

Today we are printing this correspondent's interview with the Minister of Internal Affairs, His Eminence Talaat Bey.

"... You will find here all the proof and evidence as to how baseless the enemy press's writings about the Armenians are.... American journalists present here can take an interest in these and calm their nations [*sic*]. I simply remind you of the following phrase by Armenians that appeared in the newspaper *Humanité*: 'We, half a million Armenians, are fighting against the Turks in Central Europe....'

After seeing this declaration, which unequivocally proves the hostility of the Armenians, should it not be considered our patriotic duty to remove the Armenians from the Provinces where they live to the region of Mesopotamia, so as to defend our fatherland?

Until now we respected the Armenian people, as we thought of them as our allies during the period of tyranny. It is truly painful to see now that they are on the side of our enemies."

During the same days, the government also published a French-language booklet bearing the title: "*Vérité sur les mouvements révolutionnaires Arméniens et les mesures gouvernementales*" [The Truth on the Armenian Revolutionary Movements and the Government's Measures].

With this booklet, the Turkish government was accusing the Armenians of letting themselves be provoked by the Allied governments and inciting rebellions; it presented the deportations as a necessary preventive measure against this evil. The book added that, if regrettable incidents took place during the deportations, these should be considered the result of the Muslim population's hatred toward the Armenians and that the government had sent special commissions to the regions to find and punish the culprits.

With this booklet, the Turkish government was announcing that it had done these things by itself, without being counseled by anyone. Also, the government said that a law had been promulgated to protect the property and belongings of the Armenians. Nevertheless, this justification did not appear to have the effect the Turkish government expected, and criticism continued unabated.

As a result, the Turkish government felt obliged to comply, and it was said that the following were agreed upon.

- a. The population of the Capital was to be left undisturbed.
- b. The Armenians in the areas where deportations had not occurred were to be left where they were.¹⁵⁵

Events soon proved that this was a very partial success, but it was something.

Evidence of this was the following incident, which is quite interesting. Archbishop Hovhannes Arsharuni was living in Péra at that time. He brought together, probably at somebody's suggestion, several Turkophiles—Hovhannes Ferid Boyajian, etc.—and these people decided, as sorrowful members of the Nation, that they would draft a public petition and submit it to the government urging that the persecution against the Armenians stop. They drafted a petition which contained—if my memory serves me right—expressions such as, "We agree that there are weeds among us, but we plead that the wheat not be burned in an attempt to eliminate the weeds." The petition was first taken to the Holy Trinity Church of Péra for the signature of Bp. Hëmayag Timaksian, but he refused by saying, "We have effendis

[masters?] and intelligent people; they should be the ones singing it first." Upon this they took it to [Senator] Zareh Dilber who became upset as soon as he saw the petition; he sent the delegation away, asking them, "Do you want to set us on fire?" The same evening, Dilber, who was a Senator, went to *Cercle d'Orient*, where he found Talaat, told him about the petition, and sought his opinion. Talaat said, "It's a very good [idea]. Let them do it." Upon this, Dilber sent someone to Ferid the following morning, had the petition brought over, and signed it.

Bp. Hëmayag and several others signed it, as well, and they sent the petitioners to the Goldsmiths' Covered Bazaar for the signatures of the Armenian storekeepers, but none of these honorable Armenians was willing to sign; they said, "We have a Patriarch and a National Administration. If such a thing is needed, let them propose it to us." The *aghas* shamelessly gave the petition to the sacristan of the church in Péra and had him carry it to me. The sacristan arrived at our house, handed me the petition, and said, "The *aghas* are saying, 'Let His Grace the Patriarch sign it!'" After reading the petition and asking as to the identity of the *aghas* who had sent it to me, I retorted, "Take this to your *aghas* and tell them that the Patriarch will not sign!" The *aghas*, faced with my message, asked Dr. Tavitian to find a way out.

At the Joint Assembly session on the 14th of November 1915, Dr. Tavitian put the matter on the table. After consultations, the Assembly decided that, the way the petition was written, it accepted that the entire Nation was guilty. The Assembly modified the text, damning all who had caused [the current situation]. The Assembly allowed its members to sign the petition as individuals and undertook to submit it to the government.

People started signing the petition, but, two or three days later, Police Chief Bedri Bey saw Zareh Dilber in the Senate halls and said to him, "When the petition is submitted to the government, I shall be obliged to arrest all the signatories—starting with the Senators—because those who sign this petition are cursing the government." Upon this, another text was produced with the involvement of the First Secretary of the Senate and was sent to me through Dr. Tavitian. When I received this new text, I tore away the old text of the petition—without tearing the part with the signatures—and pasted the new text in its place. Several days later, Harutyun Aslanian and Hagop Esayan brought the petition back to me; I accepted it and took it to the Joint Assembly. The Joint Assembly wrote a new note of presentation addressed to the Grand Vizier and decided to present the petition. The Assembly's note was very brief saying simply, "We are presenting to the government this text that was prepared and signed by the people and presented to us." Together with myself, the Chairmen of the two Administrative Assemblies—Abp. Yeghishé Turian and Dr. Kr. Tavitian—signed it. Because the [Grand] Vizier had recently made a comment to Harutyun Aslanian to the effect, "I do not much see the Patriarch lately," I took with me the two Chairmen, and all of us went to see the Grand Vizier.

The Grand Vizier met us with a smiling face and said, "Tell the Armenians of the Capital that they will never be bothered. They can be assured of this." As he was uttering these words of reassurance, I said to him, "At this time, I have only one request from the State: an announcement that the Armenians are not outside the law." The Grand Vizier did not answer what I said, but continued saying pleasant things to us, and then we left. It was clear that the Sublime Porte had taken this decision because of the pressure coming from the Allies but wanted to make it seem as though it had done it by seeing the people's loyalty.

Then we had additional proof.

On the 10th of March [1916], a sailboat cast anchor off the shore of Haydar Pasha. In it there were 120 Armenians of Edirne and Rodosto, who had been sent away from Rodosto 16 days earlier toward Nicomedia, to be driven further inland from there. When they arrived in Nicomedia, the local Prefect refused to accept them, saying, “I have orders from the Central Government that there will no longer be any deportations of Armenians,” and he ordered them to go back.

By the time the boat reached the waters off Haydar Pasha, the passengers had run out of food, and they asked to have bread sent to them.

For more than a year, bread had been distributed in Constantinople only to those who could present a *vesika* [certificate], so no bakery would have agreed to give bread to such a large number of people without the government's authorization. It was Thursday evening, and such an authorization could not be obtained the following day. Fortunately, I had taken some of the five or six sacks of flour given daily to the Surp Prgich Hospital and set it aside at our house in preparation for such unexpected situations. I ordered that bread be baked for these unfortunates with two of those sacks of flour. It was impossible to send this flour to the bakery and ask them to make the bread. So the Patriarchate's door-keepers joined forces with our household staff and kneaded the dough, then I had the consecrated bread trays borrowed from the four churches in our neighborhood and had *saji hats* [flat] bread prepared from those two sacks of flour. The following day, I had one of our door-keepers take this bread to the sail boat with some olives. I also had 10 pounds in gold coins delivered to the Prelacy Vicar for Rodosto, Priest Khoren Jamjian, who was on the boat.

For me, the return of these unfortunates was proof that the suggestions made by the German and Bulgarian Ambassadors had not been completely fruitless.

Dr. Torkomian also remembers the appeal he made in my name to the Ambassador of Persia, Muhammed Kajar Khan, through the intermediation of the Embassy's physician, Dr. Bazil Khan. Naturally, the Ambassador of Persia, as well as their Consuls in the provinces, had much good-will toward our people. They rendered services to several individuals and saved some people, but they were unable to do anything on a larger scale.

Dr. Torkomian also remembers the appeal he made in my name to Ahmed Riza Bey.¹⁵⁶ Ahmed Riza Bey was a former revolutionary and because of this he had been made a Senator, but he was not an Ittihad Party member and did not agree with that party's excesses. During my period of exile in Mosul, I remember reading in Turkish newspapers Ahmed Riza's long speeches in the Senate, in which he criticized severely the present government, describing the miserable condition of the Armenians.

F. Relief Work

As Patriarch, I worked to save my flock from misery and to prevent malice from being inflicted upon it, or at least to limit its extent. To this end, I applied everywhere. At the same time, I considered myself under obligation to help the refugee and deported Armenians survive famine and to alleviate their misery.

The crisis was so great and the need so pressing that the Political Assembly permitted me to use essentially all the funds at the disposal of the Patriarchate for the purpose of meeting the present needs. Only a small amount of money, which had been bequeathed for designated purposes, was kept off limits. Through this arrangement, I was able to send relief funds—

generally for distribution to the needy—to Konia, Aleppo, Garin, Samson, Brusa, Bandërma [Bandirma], Esgishehir, Damascus, Jerusalem, etc., without having to request the Assembly's approval every time. I also sent relief funds to the following clergy: the Catholicos of Cilicia, Bp. Sdepannos Hovagimian, Bp. Garabed Mazlëmian, Kevork Vartabed Aslanian, Ohan Vartabed Garabedian, and Barkev Vartabed Tanielian. Likewise, I established a monthly salary for Knel Vartabed Kalemkyarian of Sepasdia, which I remitted to his brother.

We gave one pound of monthly assistance to the deported priests. I sent relief funds to Father Sdepan Vartabed Kalpakjian of Eskishehir, who distributed it to the needy deportees there. Similarly, I sent funds to Priest Dionisios Drezian of Brusa (recently moved there from the Dardanelles), and to Priests Gumsi and Vosgi of Bandërma, who had succeeded in remaining where they were, under the guise of providing pastoral services to soldiers' families. In reality, these clergy owed this favor to their friendship with Turkish officials.

In Constantinople, relief funds were distributed through Hayg Khojasarian to S. Srents, Kevork Mesrob, Taniel Varuzhan and his wife,¹⁵⁷ and Hagop Kyufejian (Oshagan).

We also felt obliged to attend to the needs of Armenians soldiers whose families had been deported. In particular, the Armenian soldiers at the Dardanelles front, when ill or wounded, were sent to their hometowns for one or two months to recuperate. Because the families of many of these soldiers had been deported, the young men came to Constantinople and relied on the Patriarchate's charity. I designated the school just outside Kum-Kapu as a place for them to live, and I gave them five piasters daily from the Patriarchate's Treasury. These selective and random relief activities were limited, leaving untouched the mass of our people wandering far from their native lands, deprived of everything and subject to persecution and misery; they continued to be the principal subject of our anxieties. To send relief to the masses, we tried to organize a relief network encompassing the principal regions where the deportees were located. Thus, we sent relief funds to Konia for the deportees of Western Asia Minor who were concentrated there. We made arrangements so that Bp. Mesrob Naroyan, assisted by Apig Mubahyajian, Khosrov Babayan, and Dikran Amseyan, who had themselves been deported there, would distribute the relief funds we sent—1 piaster daily to almost 5,000 needy people. Working under the supervision of Bp. Mesrob were two younger seminarians from Armash, both of them deportees: Hrand Vartabed and Hëmayag Vartabed. I cannot recall for what reason, Hrand Vartabed Hovasapian had been arrested and sent to Constantinople. He appears to have suffered considerably in jail, and, after his release—and especially after my departure from Constantinople—he threw himself wholeheartedly into the arms of Turkish police, and started collaborating with the spy Harutyun Mgërdichian in the periodical *Dajar*.

One of the major stops for the deportees in Syria was Damascus. Arisdages Vartabed Khachadurian was there, and he supervised the distribution of relief funds. In Aleppo there was a special commission chaired by the Prelacy Vicar, Priest Harutyun Yesayan, who later suffered considerably in jail. We were unable to do anything at all for the masses wandering in Der Zor and the Arabian deserts beyond, and these people—much to my regret—were left to their fate.

Whatever we did was not a great deal, but it helped to some extent. To do more, we would have needed significant means, which unfortunately we did not have. Our means consisted of the funds at the Patriarchate's disposal, which were insignificant in view of the limitless needs. There was no possibility for raising funds, because every Armenian faced an uncertain future and wanted to keep for himself what he had. Even if they had been willing

to donate money, it would have been impossible for the Patriarchate to engage in fund-raising, because it would have been viewed as an anti-government project.

Unfortunately, Armenians abroad were not fully informed about the need to send relief. We were not at liberty to disclose the situation publicly because (a) this would have been considered a project against the Turkish government, and (b) communication with the outside world was not possible, because ties had been severed. For this reason, the funds we received from abroad consisted of \$5,000 from the United States and 11,000 Francs from Bern [Switzerland]—altogether about 4,000 pounds, which was insignificant next to our vast needs.

In addition to not receiving contributions from abroad, we faced difficulties even in using the money that we had, because a moratorium was declared at the beginning of the war, and banks refused to make payments. Fortunately, we had the cooperation of Mr. Berj Kerestegian of the Ottoman Bank, and we did not have any difficulties with this bank. We were able to withdraw from the Patriarchate's accounts whenever and in whatever amounts we needed. Even for transferring money to the countryside, they charged us a very modest fee of 10 piasters. At the beginning of the war, I believe we had 10,000 to 12,000 pounds at this bank, which I was able to receive in its entirety through a series of withdrawals.

The second bank keeping our money was the Armenian Bank. Regretfully, they took advantage of the moratorium and gave us difficulty. Begging and pleading, I managed to withdraw some of our money. Eventually, in March 1916, I obtained from them a check for 12,900 pounds, which was to be cashed gradually until the end of 1917.

After we started receiving funds from abroad, we developed a relationship with a third bank, the Bible House. I opened a current account there and gave them the checks I had obtained from the Armenian Bank. Here I should mention with gratitude the name of Mr. Pitt, a venerable American. As the Treasurer of the Bible House and a friend of the Armenians, he had been very helpful during the 1895-1896 massacres. During this war, too, he was extremely helpful to us. By the end of 1915, Mr. Pitt received \$100,000 from the United States. Also, at the beginning of 1915 he received 500 pounds from Germany, which had been raised there. Every week, Mr. Pitt sent 500 pounds to Aleppo and another 500 to Konia, as well as other amounts to other places. In this way he brought his precious contribution to the work of alleviating the condition of the unfortunate Armenian refugees and earned our Nation's gratitude. I was in constant communication with him through our Vicar Yervant Vartabed, who I often sent to him. Dr. Dodd was the representative of the Bible House in Konia, where he personally distributed the relief funds.

When the war broke out, we thought—like many others—that everything would end in four or five months. A year went by, and we saw that the end of the war was not near; on the other hand, the Patriarchate's revenues were diminishing because there were fewer weddings and the right to issue sealed *ilmukhaber* [certificates] was taken away from the Patriarchate's authority.

In consultation with the Political Assembly, we terminated the employment of a portion of our staff—starting with the most junior employees—giving them severance pay. Subsequently, the Political Assembly was obliged to cut the salaries of its staff by 20% twice. In this way, the Patriarchate was somehow administered, but there were other institutions of the nation that had great financial difficulties and were faced with revenue shortages. One of the most important and demanding of these institutions was the Surp Prgich National Hospital, which had great provisioning difficulties.

I took advantage of the fact that sick and wounded soldiers from the Dardanelles front were being admitted to and cared for at this hospital, and I petitioned Enver Pasha so that he would order the *Iasheh* [Foodstuffs Commission] to supply the National Hospital with flour, etc.

The head of this Commission was Topal Ismayil Pasha. I think we gave him a bribe of 150 pounds and succeeded in obtaining—in return for an insignificant payment—five sacks of flour and a certain amount of sugar every day. This was a great help to the provisioning of the hospital.

G. Information From the Deportees

Sending relief to the refugees was not enough. It was also necessary to receive information on their condition. I always received news from the areas surrounding Constantinople. Bp. Mesrob always sent me news from Konia through Armenian railway functionaries. Occasionally, I received letters from Aleppo. When the deportees' caravans reached Aleppo—in an extremely decimated and moribund condition—Catholicos Sahag sent me a letter describing their true condition through the local German Consul's wife. Dragoman Hayg Taykesenian brought and delivered it to me, emphasizing the confidentiality. I showed this letter to Prof. Khachadrian, who kept it until the following day. Hardly a month had passed before Taykesenian came to let me know that the letter had been reprinted in the Tiflis daily *Mēshag*, verbatim and bearing the Catholicos's signature. The local Tashnagsutyun Committee had taken the letter from Prof. Khachadrian and sent it abroad, and that was how a copy had arrived in Tiflis.

This thoughtless act quite likely led to the Central Government issuing an order to have Catholicos Sahag isolated in a village near Aleppo. An equally important reason for this order may have been a telegram the Catholicos had sent from Aleppo to the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Minister of War, the Chairman of the Parliament, and Jemal Pasha. In this telegram, the Catholicos said: "Even if the Armenian nation did not perform any valuable services for the State during the last five or six centuries, still it deserves human compassion. What they have suffered until now should be considered sufficient. Orders should be given now to settle them at the place decided, so that they will be spared the ordeal of spending the winter outdoors, exposed to the cold and the rain." In any event, for whatever reason Catholicos Sahag was ordered to go to a district near Aleppo, whereas he petitioned Jemal Pasha for permission—because of his financial difficulties—to relocate to Damascus or Jerusalem together with his monks. The Ministry of Justice sent a telegram asking him to obey the government's decision and to notify the Ministry of the date of his departure and his destination.

The Catholicos left on the 21st of October for Idlib, contrary to the Lieutenant Governor's preference, which was to keep him in Mumbij. On the 22nd of October he reached there in the company of Bps. Yeghishé and Kyud, and Giragos and Yeprem Vartabeds, and they were all turned back. Kevork Vartabed Aslanian managed to stay in Idlib with his relatives; the Abbot of the Surp Garabed Monastery of Gesaria, Sēmpad Vartabed, Partoghimeos Vartabed, and Bp. Bedros Sarajian of Fērnuz were also allowed to stay. On the 24th of October, the Catholicos reached Aleppo. Bishop Sdepannos reached Aleppo before the 21st of October and wanted to continue on to Jerusalem, but he was not allowed. Catholicos

Sahag left Aleppo on the 27th of October and reached Jerusalem on the 31st of October [1916].

I was not aware of these events at the time, much as I was not aware of many other events taking place in the provinces. We heard many rumors and only occasionally received letters—from Catholicos Sahag, Bp. Mesrob Naroyan, and others—which had been sent to us with a thousand and one difficulties.

I heard by chance about Catholicos Sahag's move to Idlib through travelers, and this troubled me. I made a personal appeal to Jemal Pasha, who was in Constantinople at that time, and requested that the Catholicos be allowed to go to Jerusalem because of his advanced age. Jemal Pasha informed me that several days earlier he had given orders for the Catholicos to be transferred by train to Jerusalem in full comfort and had already received news of the Catholicos' arrival. This report calmed my anxiety about Catholicos Sahag. During the same conversation, Jemal Pasha announced that the Armenian deportees would find great amenities if they stayed within the borders of Syria. Already he had given orders for them to receive rations of the soldiers' *baksimat* [hard biscuit].

I consider it necessary to state that, in the area under Jemal Pasha's rule—Syria, Palestine, Cilicia, etc.—the Armenian deportees lived more comfortably than in the other areas. Jemal Pasha had been Governor of Adana, and many people who knew him from that time enjoyed his protection. It was already clear that Talaat, Enver, and Jemal were not in agreement. Jemal Pasha, as a Minister, implemented the decision of the Council of Ministers. This decision was, "*Armenians are to be removed from the military operations areas.*" The decision to massacre and exterminate was Ittihad's, and Interior Minister Talaat—who was also the Chairman of Ittihad's Executive Committee—was implementing a decision taken outside the government. Jemal Pasha did not want to execute this decision, and the Armenians within the boundaries of Syria were not massacred. Even the murderers of Zohrab and Vartkes were arrested and hanged in Aleppo. Jemal Pasha treated the Arabs of Syria more severely than he did the Armenians, to whom he suggested temporarily adopting Islam until the storm subsided.

Catholicos Sahag sent us information through various channels even after reaching Jerusalem. Shortly after arriving in Jerusalem he managed to send us a comprehensive letter, in which he wrote:

The road from Aleppo to Damascus was lined with thousands of Armenian refugees. Some were living in tents and others in the open air, begging for bread and water and asking for news about their friends. We went through places where one *tenekeh* [tin can] of water cost six to seven piasters, but still there was no one to give it. Many refugees—no one knows the exact number—are in the area of Kerek, and in the district of Salt there are about 400 households. Every village has 100 households of refugees, and in the *sanjak* of Serai there are approximately 500 households. These people come to the monastery, where they receive 30 to 40 loaves of bread a day, which eat in the kitchen. About 80 refugees from Adana—with the special favor of Jemal Pasha—have arrived in Jerusalem and are living in the monastery compound. There are also many soldiers with their families. Every day, two or three Armenian *amele* [laborers] die.

Catholicos Sahag, in his letter of the 14th of January 1916 from Jerusalem wrote the following.

Abbot Garabed of Tomarza died in Aleppo, also the monk Taniel and the three Vartabeds: Der Ghevont of Adana, Der Boghos, and Der Sarkis of Hajën [Hacin]. In the beginning of October, the *sevkiat* [dispatch] became stricter in Aleppo. With great determination and without any hesitation, the authorities are driving out of the city whomever they get their hands on.

Abp. Yeghishé Turian was greatly touched by Catholicos Sahag's conscientious reports and heartrending letters and said that the Catholicos of Cilicia was the "Yeghishé of our times." Indeed, Catholicos Sahag was a gifted writer; he wrote in a very simple and personal yet deeply moving style, and he signed his letters with the title, "Catholicos of the Ruins."

He was the only one who managed to send us letters until the end. In addition to his, other letters reached me occasionally from other places, which gave us information about the state of the refugees. For instance, I received through a traveler from the Prelacy of Aleppo a letter in French dated the 22nd of January 1916, with the following comments.

The Political Assembly is continuing its duties with four members: Chairman H. Mazlëmian, Secretary T. Shëdigian, and [members] Hovhannes Naha and Vahib Tyufengjian. The schools are not open. After the caravans of refugees started arriving, through the initiative of the Catholicos, a Refugee Assistance Commission was formed, its members elected by the Political Assembly and approved by the Catholicos: President Priest Harutyun, Chairman Vahan Kavafian, Secretary Sarkis Jierjian, Treasurer H. Barsamian, and members T. Jidejian and Rupen Ejzajian (Protestant). Also present at its sessions is counselor Shëdigian from the Political Assembly. The latter also supervises the three orphanages housing 800 orphans. Until the end of November, these orphanages were administered by the Relief Commission and supported by the Protestants. Then the government took one of them—housing 300 orphans—under its charge and appointed as its Directress a German, Miss B. Bohner, who had already worked at the orphanages of Marash and Harunieh.

In another letter from the Prelacy of Aleppo, dated the 17th of March, we read the following.

The imagination, the tongue, and the pen are incapable of expressing faithfully this reality. The relief assistance you have sent is not even 1 percent of what is needed. Among the 15,000 refugees in Aleppo, as well as among those in other areas—Der Zor, Mosul, Kerek and everywhere in Mesopotamia—unbelievably large numbers are dying of contagious diseases and hunger. We have to admit that the condition of those in the Province of Syria is relatively better. The details in the letters coming to us are enough to make even rocks weep. If we do not receive 5,000 liras by the end of this month, not even one-eighth of these refugees will survive the summer. If it were not for the kindness and goodwill of the German Consul, our misery would have spread even further. It is certain that the Kaiser's government is doing what it can to improve the condition of the refugees, but it is as though nature has its own will and does not wish to leave the refugees at peace. These days, the Armenians of Aleppo are also anxiously contemplating the possibility of being deported. Tomorrow we will appeal to Jemal Pasha and our Governor for their grace

and mercy and will inform you of the result. Thanks to the government, the Prelacy is able to function normally. The refugee assistance Commission is functioning with the same membership, and the Catholicos of Cilicia is giving us encouragement with his blessings. We will communicate more details to you at a later time, but for now we beseech you to send us assistance, for which thousands of refugees are waiting in misery and hunger. In the area of Damascus, hundreds of intellectuals—professors, writers, and male and female schoolteachers—are dying of hunger. More than 300 widows and orphans of priests are obliged to beg for their daily sustenance. In their frequent letters, they beg us to inform you of their condition. For our part, we ask you urgently to consider the condition of these intellectuals and clergy, and that of their families, and to make the arrangements necessary for improving their condition and giving them encouragement.

Mesrob Vartabed wrote us from Konia on the 22nd of January [1916]:

After having rounded up men suitable for agricultural work, now they are going after those who are of military age and taking them into custody. If it continues like this, there will be no men left. Every day we discover additional destitute and needy people. Those who have some resources spend what they have and fall into poverty because they do not have any revenue. We also try to reach Armenian deportees who have been sent to the villages, to the extent that the means of communication allow and our money suffices. Occasionally we hear unpleasant things from remote villages—attempted rapes, robberies, and murders. Now funds are being raised from both settled and refugee Armenians for the army's winter clothes. All of this is happening with the orders of the local authorities.... Many of these poor souls are falling victim to typhoid and typhus epidemics.

Around that time, the middle of April [1916], Mrs. Aghaser arrived in Constantinople. She came to me and said that she had been in Kēghi with her husband, who was the Director of the United Fellowship's schools in that area. At the beginning of 1915, a new *Kaimakam* was appointed—a kindly man who rented a house in the Armenian quarter. Relations between the two people [Armenians and Turks] were very good. Toward the end of April 1915, he was transferred to Garin and replaced by a substitute. A day or two after the substitute's arrival, Kurds staged an attack on the village of Khups, but they withdrew in the face of the Armenians' resistance, leaving behind numerous victims. The Armenians of Khups took refuge in the nearby town of Kēghi. On the 22nd of April [1915], the substitute *Kaimakam* invited the Armenian notables and the Prelate to a meeting and announced to them that the government had ordered that all Armenians were to leave regions near the frontier and move to Kharpert, where all safety measures had been taken. He allowed two days for preparations. The lady continued:

I left in the first group on the 30th of May. The Prelate had wanted to leave in the second group, but the *Kaimakam* did not allow it, and the Prelate caught up with us on the second day of our departure. Four hundred soldiers had come from Garin. Some soldiers and gendarmes accompanied our group, presumably for our safety. After three days, we reached the village of Tepe, which is not far from the village of

Chan. The *Kaimakam* caught up with us there and took 25 people away from our group at night, supposedly for questioning. The Prelate and my husband were among them. The following day we continued on our way, and we did not see these people again. The night before we reached Palu, all men were separated from the group by force under the pretext of distributing the *tain* [rations]; as soon as they had been taken to a distance, a terrible attack commenced upon us.

All the men were murdered and the rest of us thoroughly robbed. When we reached the bridge at Palu, many of the desperate women threw themselves off and drowned. Our caravan, initially composed of 1,200 people, was down to 200 or 250 by now. We wanted to stay in Palu, but the *Kaimakam* strictly forbade it. After 25 days, we reached Kharpert, all naked and hungry. Four other women and myself managed to stay in Kharpert, and the rest continued to Diarbekir. Later, we heard that several of them reached Aleppo. For a while, I worked as a supervisor in the Turkish orphanage at Kharpert. Ittiḥad had opened this orphanage for Armenian orphans. It sheltered 700 children under the care of Armenian women. Some time later, the Governor said, "We are raising our own enemies!" He shut down the orphanage, loaded the orphans and the caretakers into carts, and sent them toward Malatia. Later, we heard that all of them had been thrown into the Euphrates river. [The orphans]—boys and girls—were between the ages of 3 and 12. The groups from Kēghi that left after us were tortured more on the way than we were; they arrived in Kharpert more severely decimated in numbers than us and almost completely naked.

Occasionally, soldiers came to us from various places—Kastemuni, Angora, and elsewhere—and brought us important information. All of these soldiers stated that their commanders—some motivated by humanitarian feelings and others by fanaticism—proposed that they become Muslims. The soldiers asked for my advice. The soldiers who were native *Bolsetsis* [Constantinopolitans] were especially concerned that, if they converted, their families would be forced to convert, too. I advised such soldiers to go through a fake conversion or a name change to save their lives, and I reassured them that I would extend my protection to their families if they were threatened with violence.

It is impossible to describe the condition in which the Armenians found themselves in the countryside. What I have presented so far is only a small selection of examples from those terrible events and the horrible suffering that the deported Armenian refugees experienced and whose true condition in the vast area of dispersion—not only in Aleppo and Konia, but also in Kharpert and Diarbekir and in the deserts from Ras ul-Ain and Mosul to Der Zor and the south of the Dead Sea—was indescribable.

H. Preservation of the Nation's Property

Early in 1916, having heard that the government was intending to confiscate bank accounts belonging to various Armenians organizations, I immediately had the Political Assembly pass a decision (on the 29th of January) to have all such accounts transferred to the name of the Patriarchate. The decision was implemented, and the funds belonging to Tēbrotsaser, Azkanēver,¹⁵⁸ Zavarian Fund, "Help Sasun," and other entities were transferred

to the Patriarchate's name. A week later, the government sent a circular to the banks, inquiring as to the amount of money they held belonging to these institutions and associations, and the banks answered that they held no such funds.

On the other hand, thinking that valuable papers belonging to the Patriarchate, neighborhood councils, charities, and church choirs—which were deposited at banks for safekeeping—could also be endangered, I collected them all in exchange for receipts, and sent them in a bag for safekeeping in the cellar of the U.S. Embassy.

The United Fellowship was visited by policemen several times, and its directors, terrified of conducting the Fellowship's affairs, decided to dissolve it. Feeling powerless, I ordered the office administrator of the United Fellowship, Levon Hajian, to bring to the Patriarchate the books and registers of the organization, as well as two paintings by Aivazovsky,¹⁵⁹ and to close the office. Following the example of the United Fellowship, [the representatives of] Azkanëver brought their books to the Patriarchate.

I sent the two Aivazovsky paintings to the U.S. Embassy for safekeeping.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, I sent there in a separate bag all the correspondence and records pertaining to the Reforms project. I sent certain other papers for safekeeping to the Swedish Embassy, through Mrs. Inga Nalbandian.

It is known that, during the arrests of the 11th/24th of April 1915, the editorial offices of *Azadamard* were searched, and everyone found on the premises, as well as all well-known Tashnagsagans, were arrested and deported. The only prominent Tashnagsagans left in Constantinople were Vartkes, who was shortly after arrested and, together with Kr[ikor] Zohrab, sent toward Diarbekir, to be killed on the way; the deputy from Mush, Kegham Der Garabedian, who was in bed with tuberculosis; Sarkis Srents, Shavarsh Misakian,¹⁶¹ Siruni,¹⁶² and others, who having been in hiding, were never found or exiled.

Of these few Tashnagsagans who had avoided exile, Kegham and Cheogyurian¹⁶³ often visited me. I do not know what he had in mind, but every month Kegham brought me one-tenth of his salary, which the Tashnagsutyun apparently used to collect from those elected to the Ottoman Parliament on its lists. On the day following, Cheogyurian would return to claim the same money in the name of the Committee. So, my relations were good with Kegham, with Cheogyurian, and with the Tashnagsutyun, but when the funds belonging to the "Help Sasun" and Zavarian Funds were transferred to the name of the Patriarchate, Kegham and Cheogyurian came to see me, and demanded—in the name of the Committee—that these monies be given to them. They said that the funds in question had been collected through *Azadamard*, that Tashnagsagans were the principal contributors, and that now they needed the money to help the families of deported Tashnagsagan comrades. It was obvious that these funds were now entered in the accounts of the Patriarchate, and I was unable to make payments to the Committee without endangering both my person and the Patriarchate. If the Committee were to receive these funds from the Patriarchate, it would be very difficult to keep it a secret, because the Patriarchate was surrounded by spies on all sides, and spies were probably present even among the staff of the Patriarchate. I explained this to them and refused to make any payment. The two of them came and went several times and argued with me and finally brought me a letter of threat from the Committee.

Eventually, an agreement became possible. We agreed that they would present to me a list of needy persons, even if this list contained fabricated and fictitious names. I agreed that I would pay relief funds to these people in exchange for a signed receipt. In this manner, I paid them the entire amount, which, I believe, was about 1,000 pounds.

A short while later, the Tashnagsagans made an arrangement with the *kavas*⁶⁴ of the Bulgarian Embassy to take Shavarsh Misakian away from Constantinople. Shavarsh arrived at the wharf in disguise, carrying all the papers and records of the Committee, but a policeman—alerted beforehand by the *kavas* and waiting in ambush—arrested him and took him to jail where he was badly tortured and even made an unsuccessful attempt to commit suicide. He was held in jail until the end of the war, and the police scrutinized the captured papers in detail.

The Armenian texts captured were analyzed by Reshad, the Chief of the *Kəsm-i Siyasi* [Political Section] who knew Armenian well, and the spy Harutyun Mgërdichian, a onetime teacher. Among the records of the Committee, they came across the initials “Z.B.” The Committee had had relations with this person, received news from him and eventually sent a threatening letter to him over a sum of money. Mgërdichian insisted that “Z.B.” stood for “Zaven Badriark” [Patriarch Zaven], whereas Reshad insisted that this could not be true.

Mgërdichian even dared to come and see me over this matter. “I am translating the Tashnagsutyun’s papers into Turkish,” he said, “and Your name is mentioned in them, and there is mention of them having sent you a letter of threat.” I refuted this, saying, “I have never had any contacts with the Tashnagsutyun, and never received any letters of threat from them.” Nevertheless, it seems that the government was convinced that “Z.B.” was no other than myself, and, when they announced the new law that deposed me, they showed the Patriarchate as being under the revolutionaries’ influence.

After the war, I heard that Reshad had been convinced that the abbreviation in question signified my name, but he insisted that this could not be true, to save me. I think that Reshad’s goodwill in my regard was based, at least in part, on his good neighborly relations with the architect Simon Melkonian, who lived next door to him in Orta-Kyugh [Ortaköy]. Reshad Bey also knew Yervant Vartabed, because when the Vartabed was the Prelate of Erznga, Reshad Bey had been sent there on official business. Reshad Bey was a conscientious official, and capable of occasional acts of kindness. Many Armenians owe him their salvation: Yervant Vartabed, Kevork Mesrob, etc. Also several people owe their return from exile to him: Bp. Mesrob Naroyan, Apig Mubahyajian, etc.

I. Liberation of the Orphans, and How Mrs. Murad and Some Other Women Avoided Exile

When I heard that many Armenian children were being brought to Constantinople from the provinces and used as servants in Turkish households, I tried to get hold of some of them. The first among these was a little girl named Zëvart or Zabel, whom a certain Major Feyzi Bey brought to me at the Patriarchate. The officer explained to me that he had brought the little girl from Trebizond, but he was concerned that she would not get along with his own children, and he now had to leave for the front.

I accepted the little girl with gratitude and expressed my thanks to Feyzi Bey. When I noticed that the little one had fever, I called Dr. Jevahirjian immediately, who announced that the unfortunate girl was suffering from typhus. I had her sent immediately to the [Surp Prgich] National Hospital, where she was treated. After that, we adopted her. The little girl’s mother was already dead, but her father, Krisdapor Shahlamian, came to Constantinople from Kharkov after the war; when he saw that she was comfortable in our house, he left and went away, without ever seeking her out again. When I was leaving for exile, I placed this little girl

in the Tëbrotsaser School, and, upon my return in 1918, I took her home from there. Later, she left Constantinople with my brother's daughter [Vartanush], and was married in Constantza to a young man named Hayg Balian.¹⁶⁵

Another 8 to 10 girls were entrusted to the care of the Kalfayan Orphanage. One of them had an interesting story. Siranush of Shabin-Karahisar had been an eyewitness to the heroic defense of that city, and, despite being 12 years old, this intelligent girl told me in great detail what she had seen. After it was all over, the government [officials] selected 40 girls and sent them to the Turkish orphanage in Sepasdia. She had been one of them. A Turkish peddler had taken her from there and brought her to Constantinople as a servant to his family. Siranush had fled from that household with the help of an Armenian and come to seek refuge in our house.

On the 23rd of January 1916, a secret policeman went to the Tëbrotsaser School and told the Assistant Headmaster that Mrs. Agyuliné Murad Topalian, together with her adopted daughter Esther, would have to leave Constantinople within eight days for Konia, Angora, or Gesaria. Two days later I sent the Chargé d'Affaires to the Police Chief to say, "The Patriarch says, 'I cannot become involved in matters like this and therefore cannot engage myself to warning Mrs. [Agyuliné] Boyajian.'" The Police Chief responded that he did not wish to inflict upon women the kind of behavior often meted out to men in such situations. He said, "I wanted Mrs. Boyajian to be sent to a place where there are Armenians, so that she might survive; but seeing that the Patriarch does not want to get involved, then I shall give orders to have her arrested and exiled." Indeed, in the presence of the Chargé d'Affaires, he gave orders to this effect by telephone. Mrs. Boyajian heard [about the arrest order] and left her house, so that it would not be possible to arrest her. Until the end of the war, Mrs. Boyajian remained in Constantinople, even going about town in disguise from time to time.

Several days later, several women came to me and said the police had given them notice to leave Constantinople in two or three days to go and join their families in their places of exile. I advised these women to hide for one or two days, and I wrote a personal letter to Enver Pasha, requesting his intercession in these women's case. The Chargé d'Affaires took the letter to Enver's house in the evening, because the following day was Friday. It appears that at the Friday *selamlék*,¹⁶⁶ Enver said whatever was necessary to the Police Chief Bedri Bey, because, on the following Saturday, policemen came once more to these women's homes and said to them, "For the time being, you can stay."

J. The Annulment of the National Constitution and the Abolition of the Constantinople Patriarchate

Early in January 1916, the Chargé d'Affaires of the Patriarchate, Kamer Shirinian, received a passport to go to Filibeh [Plovdiv] to see his wife and children, who had been living there for a year. On his return, he related to me that he had met Pyuzant Kechian in Filibeh. Kechian told him that, when applying for permission to go to Bulgaria, he had met with Police Chief Bedri Bey and the Police Political Section Chief Reshad Bey, who had told him, among other things, that the Armenian National Constitution had already been annulled, as had been the Constantinople Patriarchate. Likewise, they had told him that a new law had already been prepared, and that it would be announced at a suitable time.

With this law, it had been planned to detach the Patriarchate from Echmiadzin and to

unite it with the Cilician Catholicosate, thus severing all ties with Echmiadzin. Kechian added that, when he arrived in Filibeh, he heard that the Armenian newspapers abroad were attacking him because he, too, was of this opinion and produced propaganda in favor of ceasing the mention of the Echmiadzin Catholicos's name in churches [in Turkey]. "I still insist that this is what we should do," he said. I think that it must have been Kechian who made this recommendation to the government, which in turn appropriated the idea and was now attempting to make it into a law.

The Patriarchate's Chargé d'Affaires became suspicious after this conversation and attempted to verify its truth. By approaching the functionaries at the Ministry of Justice and Religions informally, he learned that there was, indeed, such a project.

The occasion for which the government was waiting was, regretfully, created by us.

At the Joint Assembly session on the 18th of March 1916, Abp. Turian declared that the term of duty of the Administrative Assemblies had expired and that it was necessary to request permission from the Ministry of Justice either for the Assemblies to continue their duty or for new elections to take place.

I was obliged to divulge the information I had received regarding the government's plans. I explained that I had heard talk of the proposal to change the Law on the Patriarchate and that an application for new elections or for the continuation of the current term of duty would provide an occasion to hasten this decision. Members of the Assemblies, regretfully, did not listen to me and as of that day stopped convening sessions.

I was obliged to send the Chargé d'Affaires to the Superintendent of Religions, to announce that the Patriarchate's Assemblies had retired, and I requested permission to hold new elections. The Superintendent of Religions, Beha Bey, first wanted to know whether there was a sufficient number of members in Constantinople, and when I informed him on the following day that there were more than 50 members, he said, "Wait a few days."

Thus, on Easter 1916 (the 10th of April) I was very sad and depressed, especially so because of the Assemblymen having retired, leaving me all alone in the Patriarchate. Very few people came for greetings on Easter day, and, from the government, only the Minister of Justice and the Superintendent of Religions sent their visiting cards. I was thus left all alone at a time of crisis—a depressing situation for a leader. I was the helpless shepherd of a flock facing an enormous disaster, and this caused me great pain.

As Patriarch, I had come under suspicion, and many people were avoiding me. Very few people remained around me and gave me encouragement. Many people kept their distance. On the 14th of April 1916, I went to the Palace on the anniversary of Sultan Reshad's ascension to the throne. In the waiting hall, I was perturbed to notice the difference accorded to the Greek Patriarch and myself. Whereas the Greek Patriarch conversed merrily with Greek senators, deputies, and high officials, who were taking turns to come near him, kiss his right hand, and wish him well, nobody came near me, and even Armenian functionaries avoided me for fear of their own skin. State Council member Hrand Asadur¹⁶⁷ passed twice in front of me, pretending not to see me.¹⁶⁸ As for Bedros Halajian, he did not even come in my general direction. Naturally, this situation caused me great pain and distress.

It was distressing to be alone as the administrator of a Nation condemned to death and not have any counselors. I also saw with anger that certain men, who should have assumed their responsibilities and worked with me, were indifferent. The *mebuses* who, as the representatives of the Armenian Nation should have expended efforts, were entirely careless. Of these, the Armenian *mebus* of Constantinople, Bedros Halajian, as an Ittihadist and a former

Minister, was the most influential, but he kept the doors of his house tightly shut against all petitioners and received nobody.

Of the Ottoman deputies, only Onnig Ihsan worked courageously and saved quite a few people from exile. [Another deputy], Hovsep Madatian, saved only his own family, including a 70 year-old maid. Kegham Der Garabedian often visited me; he would beat on his knees and weep while relating to me the details he had heard about the massacre in Mush.¹⁶⁹ The other *mebuses* were content to save their own relatives. The majority of the members of the National Assemblies had forgotten the way to the Patriarchate, and they showed no interest in what the Patriarch was doing. There were [only] a handful of people who visited me and gave me encouragement.

Of the clergy, His Eminence Turian—inasmuch as he was the Chairman of the Religious Assembly—occasionally visited me, as did Hayg Khojasarian, the Chairman of the General Assembly, and Dr. Tavitian, the Chairman of the Political Assembly, who was still performing his duties with great devotion. Other than these, practically no one else came near me.

I was left all alone with the Patriarchate's staff. My Vicar, Yervant Vartabed Perdahjian, was an excellent assistant. He did not refuse to do anything that I proposed. [In comparison], the Vicar at the Jerusalem Patriarchate, Sēmpad Vartabed Kazazian, acted prudently, so as not to endanger his person or his position.

The Chargé d'Affaires of the Patriarchate, Kamer Shirinian, presented himself as a Turkophile. He had regular contacts with Turks, enjoyed their confidence, brought me news from government circles, and accomplished many things. I believe that some people's doubts with regard to his having sacrificed the Nation's interests are mistaken. Shirinian did not know about and was not interested in anything other than the Patriarchate's relations with the government. He built himself a place, helped numerous people in their official business, and benefited personally from it. I was aware of what he was doing but decided to tolerate it, because his efforts, after all, were beneficial to various Armenians. He also benefited the Patriarchate by bringing us news from the government offices, allowing us to adjust our steps based on this information.

Among Shirinian's numerous services to individuals, he saved Nerses Ohanian from deportation and Arshag Alboyajian¹⁷⁰ from deportation even after he had been arrested and succeeded in having [Hayg] Khojasarian returned from his place of exile. Shirinian saw to it that the provisioning of the Surp Prgich National Hospital was assured by daily government quotas and helped numerous people to flee abroad.

Other staff of the Patriarchate were not capable of playing an active role or giving me support and encouragement. They were like human machines: they contented themselves with helping me in everyday affairs and drafting the texts ordered. There was no one among them capable of giving an opinion, making a suggestion, or proposing a solution.

I spent the period from April to July of 1916 abandoned and in a discouraged state. I was left only with the Patriarchate's staff. It was as though I was anticipating an imminent storm: the clouds were gathering, and preliminary signs were evident around us. These few months were the period of calm that precedes the storm. I had the premonition of a surprise, and when it came it did not catch me unawares, because I had received information about it beforehand.

On the 28th of July 1916 (Old Calendar), just before noon, the Chief of Police, Ahmed Bey, and the Superintendent of Religions, Beha Bey, came to the Patriarchate by automobile. They came in and sat down with me. After the exchange of greetings, Ahmed Bey¹⁷¹ looked

Beha Bey in the face, as though this were a signal for Beha Bey to say whatever he had to say. Beha Bey took out of his pocket an official communication, said "This is from the Minister of Justice," and extended it to me. The envelope was already open. I took out the letter inside and read in silence the contents, which were the following:

Ministry of Justice and Religion
Directorate of Religions
No. 15

To the Former Patriarch of the Armenians of Constantinople
Most Honorable Zaven Effendi

Most Honorable Sir,

A Statute on the Armenian Catholicosate and Patriarchate has been presented by the Ministry of Religions to His Majesty the Sultan, approved by the exalted authorization of the Sultan and published in the *Takvimi Vakayi* today. According to this Statute, the Catholicosates of Sis and Aghtamar have been merged and the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Jerusalem also joined to this new Catholicosate.¹⁷² Consequently, Your position and the structure of the Armenian Patriarchate have come to an end, and the General Director of Police Ahmed Bey and the Superintendent of Religions Beha Bey have been ordered to place under seal—with the participation of Your Honor—all the belongings and documents pertaining to the Patriarchate in order to keep them under police protection until they are delivered to the person appointed by the Catholicos-Patriarch as his Vicar. This document was prepared for the execution of what is necessary and appropriate.

Deputy Minister of Justice and Religion
Signature (illegible)

The 11th of shevval 334, and the 28th of July 1916.

After reading this document, I held my head and said "Very well. What do you order me to do now?" Their response was, "Let us seal the rooms of the Patriarchate." I stood up and said, "I am at your orders," and led them out of my room and to the rooms of the Patriarchate's staff. All staff members took their personal effects from their desks and came outside. The doors were locked and sealed with our three seals. After we had thus closed all the other rooms, we returned to my room.

I asked, "Will these keys remain here, or will you take them with you?" "Let them stay here," they answered. I showed them the iron trunk next to my desk and said, "This contains my personal effects. May I take them with me?" They said, "Very well." I opened the trunk, transferred its contents into my briefcase and locked it. I put the key to the trunk, the other keys, and the Patriarchate's seals in the drawer of my desk, locked the drawer, and took the key. While I was doing these things, the two officials were seated in my room. At that time, Beha Bey said to me: "On the way here the two of us were arguing. I said, 'He is from Mosul,' and Ahmed Bey insisted that you were from Baghdad. Which is correct?" I responded, "I was born in Mosul and grew up in Baghdad." After this exchange, we locked my room and all three of us applied our seals. The key remained with me. We came downstairs together. The two of them went away in their automobile and I headed home.

The following day, Kamer Shirinian ran into Beha Bey, and the latter said to him, “Zaven Effendi is so cool headed! During the entire procedure yesterday, he showed no emotion at all.”

On the following day, the Armenian papers took the Statute from the official newspaper and reprinted it, accompanied by the explanations of the Milli Telegraphic Agency:

The Sublime Porte, having observed that, as a consequence of the Assemblies formed by the Armenian Constitution, the Patriarchate had fallen under the influence of Armenian Revolutionaries, has modified [the Constitution] and established a Statute much like the one for the Greek Patriarchate. According to this Statute, there will be two assemblies, which will be authorized to deal only with religious, educational, and philanthropic work. The Sis and Aghtamar Catholicosates, and the Constantinople and Jerusalem Patriarchates have all been joined together in the person of a Catholicos-Patriarch, independent of Echmiadzin.

In this way, not only the Nation[al] Constitution but also the Constantinople and Jerusalem Patriarchates were being annulled. Both Patriarchates were being attached to the Cilician Catholicosate, whose seat would be in Jerusalem. In reality, a Catholicos-Patriarch was being created for Armenians living within the borders of Turkey. There was nothing else for me to do but to withdraw to my house and wait for the arrangements of Catholicos Sahag.

Meanwhile, I applied to the Grand Vizier with a petition and requested that a pension be approved for me, in accordance with the established custom.¹⁷³ I received news the day before leaving Constantinople that the Council of Ministers had authorized for me a pension of 25 pounds.

In those days, the Vicar, Yervant Vartabed Perdahjian, the Jerusalem Vicar, Sëmpad Vartabed Kazazian, and the Chargé d’Affaires, Kamer Shirinian, were always with me. The latter two anticipated that Catholicos Sahag would probably appoint me as his Vicar in Constantinople.

Hardly a day or two after my forced resignation, I sent Sëmpad Vartabed to all the Bishops in Constantinople—Yeghishé Turian, Vahram Manguni, Kapriel Jevahirjian, Hëmayag Timaksian, and Taniel Hagopian—stating that I was only a Bishop like them now, and that I was considering making an appeal to the government jointly with them, to request the government’s compassion. I gave particular instructions to Sëmpad Vartabed to remind the Bishops that, when I had proposed something similar to them when I was still Patriarch, they had said, “The Nation has a Patriarch, and it is his responsibility to make appeals.” Now that there was no Patriarch left, what did they think? All of them, with the exception of Bp. Taniel, replied that such an undertaking could be more harmful than beneficial. I think Bp. Taniel Hagopian’s demonstrated willingness cost him dearly, and he was sent off to Jerusalem several days later.

Similarly, Yervant Vartabed’s devotion toward me caused him to be exiled to Jerusalem; he was summoned to the police station, and [the Political Section Chief] Reshad Bey advised him to leave for Jerusalem.

To complete the liquidation of the Constantinople Patriarchate, at about this time, the police informed the students of the Armash Seminary, who were at the Bezazian School, that they had to leave for Jerusalem because they were theological students and the new Patriarch was located there. Indeed, the very same week they were put on the road, but not before two

of them were detained by the police. Those detained were the two cousins [father's brothers' sons] of Karekin Pastërmajian.¹⁷⁴ One of them was the middle son of Karekin's [paternal] uncle Setrag, and the other was Kegham, the son of his [paternal] uncle Dikran, deceased before the War. When the war started, both of them were students at the Mekhitarian School of Péra.

When the news of Setrag's assassination arrived, the Mekhitarians brought and delivered to the Patriarchate the two Pastërmajians, arguing that, because of the expense involved in feeding them, they could no longer afford to keep boarding students. Mrs. Hovsep Madatian, their [paternal] aunt, and Mrs. Hagop Hamamjian, the daughter of their [paternal] aunt, had taken an interest in these young men's welfare as long as Setrag Pastërmajian was alive, but now neither of the two women wanted to see the young men's faces, and I placed both of them as boarders at the Bezazian School at our expense, together with the Armash seminarians.

When the police authorities ordered the Armash seminarians to go to Jerusalem, Boghos Bezazian, hoping to put the two Pastërmajians out of harm's way, mixed them in with the seminarians, but someone at the police station betrayed them. Bezazian hastened to their [paternal] aunt's house and pleaded for their aunt's husband, Hovsep Madatian, to use his influence as a *mebus* to save them, but Mrs. Sophie Madatian put Bezazian out of her home, shouting, "I have neither brothers nor nephews!" In this manner, the two innocent young men were taken toward Brusa and martyred.

Hovsep Madatian had been the External Relations Rector of the Sanasarian School during the time I was the Prelate of Garin. (The Internal Relations and Curriculum Rectors were Apulian and Soghigian, respectively.) I had numerous conflicts with Madatian during that time, because he was in the habit of reporting to the Governor incidents from the Prelacy and the Nation's life.

Madatian was elected *mebus* in 1914 on the Ittihad slate, naturally, because he was known as a Turkophile. Earlier, his father had converted to Islam in Samson and had had Hovsep circumcised, too. Madatian related this with pride in Muslim circles. Nevertheless, in accordance with the Turkish law at that time, the Nation had taken young Hovsep from his father and raised him as though he were an orphan.

IV. My Life as an Exile

A. On the Way to Exile

I was waiting in an uncertain state when, on the sixth day after my removal from office, a poor woman named Rehan,¹⁷⁵ who I knew from Garin and who was now living in Kum-Kapu, came to see me clandestinely, late in the evening. She wanted to tell me that she had gone to the bread distribution place at a nearby mosque and had heard the *mukhtar* [headman] tell the *imam*, "Tomorrow they will exile the Armenians' Patriarch." The *imam* asked, "Where to?" and the *mukhtar* responded, "Probably to Jerusalem."

The following day, a policeman in civilian clothes came to our house in the afternoon, came upstairs to my room, and said, "The Director General of the Police Ahmed Bey wants to see you." When I asked, "Now?" he said, "Yes, we will go together."

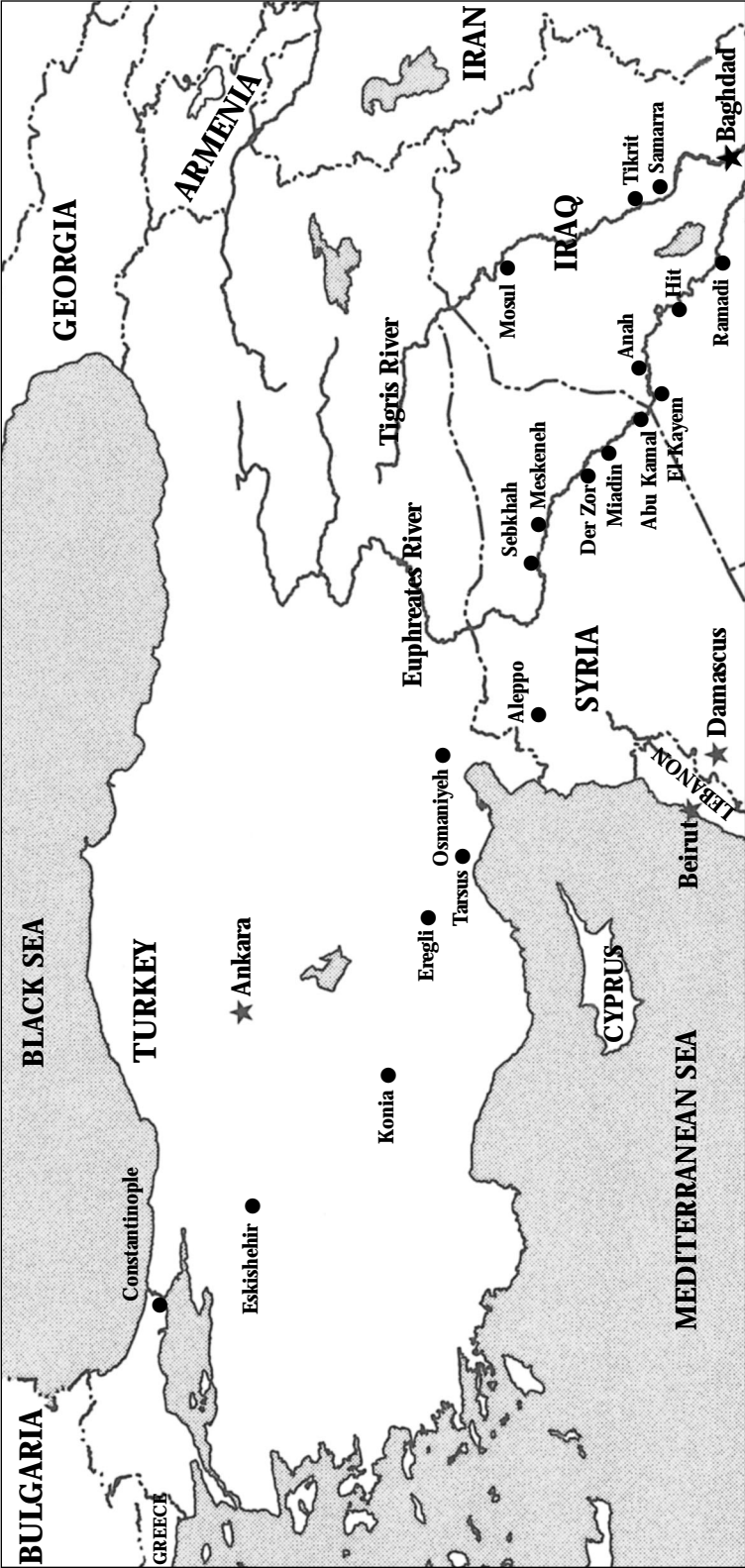
My brother and his daughter came to me. I asked for several handkerchiefs and took some money. I told my brother to assume full responsibility for his children,¹⁷⁶ because I would probably not return but would be sent to Jerusalem. Then I left with the policeman. Taking advantage of the policeman going out to talk with another policeman about the carriage, I instructed my brother to send Yeranuhi¹⁷⁷ to Shmavonian, to inform him of what happened.

At the police headquarters, I was received by a person other than Ahmed Bey, who said to me, "I called you on behalf of Ahmed Bey, to inform you that the government does not find your continued residence in Constantinople appropriate; therefore, you must leave for your native land of Baghdad in a few days, and you should do this at your own initiative, without commotion." "I am thankful that you are ordering me to leave for Baghdad," I said, "My mother has not seen me in 27 years, and she will be grateful to the State. As you know, several days ago, Ahmed Bey came to the Patriarchate together with the Superintendent of Religions, and together we sealed up everything until such time as they could be delivered to the representative of the Catholicos-Patriarch. Has this representative been appointed, so that I might effect a transfer, or do I leave things as they are and go away?"

The policeman took the telephone in hand and tried to reach Ahmed Bey, but he was unable to do it despite repeated attempts. He made me wait for almost an hour, then said, "Ahmed Bey is with Talaat Pasha—I was unable to speak with him. Please go home and I shall inform you." He summoned a policeman and said, "Take the effendi home." Then he turned to me and asked, "Would you like me to assign you a policeman for your protection?" I said, "I do not need such a thing," upon which he said, "Very well, then. You may go."

I went home accompanied by the policeman. Although I was not interned, I was under surveillance. A policeman was constantly watching our house. At the time, I thought this was to spy on visitors coming to us, but later I learned that it was to prevent me from fleeing.

It dawned upon me that my exile must have been decided upon even at the time the two superintendents from the Police and the Ministry of Religions had come to seal up the Patriarchate. Their indirect question as to my land of birth had been for a purpose.



The cities and towns denoted with black circles indicate the route Zaven Patriarch followed on his exile from Constantinople and through Syria to Baghdad and Mosul in Iraq, 1916.

Until my departure from Constantinople, only Yervant Vartabed visited me every day, whereas Sēmpad Vartabed and Kamer Shirinian stopped visiting me; even when I went to the Patriarchate for the transfer, they did not talk to me or come near me.

There was no news from the police. On the 14th of August, a policeman came to my home and said, “The Superintendent of Religions, Beha Bey, and Reshad Bey have gone to the Patriarchate and are asking for you.” I left for the Patriarchate immediately. When I arrived, I saw that the two officials and Bp. Kapriel Jevahirjian were there. I opened the door to my office and invited them in. The Superintendent of Religions showed me Catholicos Sahag’s telegram to Bp. Jevahirjian, with which the Catholicos was appointing the Bishop as his Vicar in Constantinople.

After congratulating [Bp. Jevahirjian], I opened the drawer of my desk, took the keys and seals out, and gave them to him. Then I addressed myself to Reshad Bey and said, “You know that for several months now I have been conducting the Patriarchate’s business alone—without an Administrative Assembly. Would it not be possible for me to stay a few more days in Constantinople, so that I might be able to close and transfer my accounts.” Reshad Bey agreed and asked, “How many days would be needed?” I said, “One week,” and he said, “You may stay.”

I also requested that a policeman accompany me on the way. I was thinking that, because I was going to be murdered on the way, at least the government should not be able to claim innocence. Then I requested that the police in Kum-Kapu announce that there was no obstacle to anyone buying my property. This was necessary because, once word was out that I was being exiled, people would think that the government intended to seize my property, and nobody would want to buy things from me. Reshad Bey agreed to this request, too. This is how we took leave of one another.

During the week, I went to the Patriarchate several times, and worked in the Religious Assembly’s room with Cashier Dikran Nēshastajian and Bookkeeper Garbis Der Mikayelian. We compiled the accounts and recorded the amounts held in the bank accounts and in the Patriarchate’s coffers, and then all three of us put our signatures.

I did not hear any expressions of commiseration from Bp. Jevahirjian or the Patriarchate’s staff. Only door-keeper Boghos Agha Sērabian stayed with me the whole time and even accompanied me on the day of my departure from Constantinople to the Haydar Pasha [Train Station].¹⁷⁸

During these days, together with Yervant Vartabed I wrote a letter addressed to Dr. Torkomian, who later published it in *Vem* (no. 19) and gave the original to the Nubarian Manuscript Depository in Paris. Here are the contents of that letter.

Honorable Doctor,

You must have heard that last Sunday at 4:00 p.m. I was led by several policemen to the Police Headquarters where one of the Chiefs of the Political Section, in the name of the Director General of the Police—who gave the order from the offices of the Minister of Interior Affairs—informed me that I had to leave Constantinople within two to three days.

I commented that, in conformity with the order received from the Minister of Justice, the Director General of the Police, the Superintendent of Religions, and I had sealed the Patriarchate. Would it not, therefore, be necessary that I wait until such time as the Catholicosal Vicar in Constantinople be appointed, so that I could

deliver everything to that person? The Police Chief being with the Interior Minister, it was not possible to talk with him by telephone. Therefore, I asked for his instructions to be communicated to me the following day or for him to give me an appointment to discuss this matter. Then, once again accompanied by a policeman, I returned to my house, which until now has been under police surveillance.

It has been five days, and I still have not been given a response, despite numerous attempts by the Chargé d’Affaires on my behalf.

I heard that the Catholicos accepted the position offered to him and has already assigned a Vicar. An official telegram is said to have arrived, but *his* telegrams have not arrived yet.

The government has decided to exile me to Baghdad as a way of dealing one last blow to the Armenian nation. At the present time, an Armenian can attempt to cross the distance from Aleppo to Baghdad only by risking death. Even if this were not a conspiracy on the part of the government, I know that a clergyman like myself cannot come out of there alive—and I am actually not sure that this is not a conspiracy.

At the opportune moment, I would not hesitate to have my blood mixed in with that of hundreds¹⁷⁹ of my flock in the deserts of Mesopotamia, if it were not for the fact that such an event would cause a tragic heartbreak for all Turkish Armenians. Therefore, for the love of these suffering and forever persecuted people, of which you are a member, I request that you solicit the attention and effective intercession of friends to spare the Armenian people this bitter cup.

Your devoted friend,

Abp. Zaven

The 10th of August 1915 [1916]

Dr. Torkomian says that he gave my letter, in translation, to Mejid Effendi and Msgr. Dolci, through whose efforts I was presumably saved. I think that a bigger role was played by Arshag Shmavonian, who later told Yervant Vartabed that, as soon as he received the news through Miss Momjian, he applied to the Embassy’s Chargé d’Affaires—who had been performing Ambassador Morgenthau’s functions while he was away on vacation and whose name I regretfully do not recall—and told him what had happened, and the two of them went to see the German Ambassador De Metternich.

On the following day, the German Ambassador and the U.S. Chargé d’Affaires separately made appeals to Foreign Affairs Minister Khalil Bey.

The German Ambassador had Khalil Bey understand that the civilized world is already blaming the Germans and holding them responsible for the massacres of the Armenians, and, therefore, in order not to give new reasons [for criticism], I should not be taken outside the Capital. Khalil Bey insisted that this was a matter of internal politics and that my exile was being implemented because of necessity.

The German Ambassador objected that I could be killed en route and that this could give occasion for the civilized world once again to attack and blame Germany. The Minister reassured him that every precaution would be taken for my safety and that I would reach Baghdad comfortably.

Inasmuch as I was hearing these words of comfort, still I was preparing to leave Constantinople with the conviction that I was going to my death. I could not see why the Turkish government—after having led to their deaths hundreds of thousands of Armenians—

would hesitate before having me murdered. An ambush could very well be arranged somewhere on my route. I had this in mind as I was making my preparations.

My brother, having received the news Shmavonian had sent him, decided to accompany me to Baghdad. He would thus join his wife and other children, whom he had not seen in two years. He had personally been acquainted with the Police Chief Ahmed Bey since the latter's tour of duty in Baghdad. He applied to the Police Chief and requested his assistance to reach Baghdad safely. Ahmed Bey suggested that my brother join me during this trip and assured him that all precautions would be taken for our safety on the road. Ahmed Bey also gave my brother a signed paper to be produced in the event of need. We decided to leave my brother's children in Constantinople and to travel by ourselves.¹⁸⁰ This turned out to be impossible, because my brother's elder daughter [Vartanush] begged us to take her along. When she heard our concern about the dangers of the journey, she said that she wanted to share our fate—why should she remain alive if her father and uncle were killed? We were unable to dissuade her and agreed to take her along.

We sold a part of our belongings and stored certain other things in one room of the Patriarchate. Now we were ready to leave, abandoned by everyone and completely isolated, but still enjoying the sympathy and compassion of the masses, which was a great encouragement for me during these oppressive times. In fact, the public's support was an unforgettable thing for me; it was my only consolation and support as I unflinchingly prepared to take the road to a probable death on which the Turkish government was sending me.

Ordinary Armenians were always sincere with me and did what they could to help and support me. For example, two or three poor families living near our house kept an eye on the policemen watching our house and alerted us through our maid. Others sent us various reports and comments. It was once again ordinary people's spontaneous expressions that moved me profoundly when I went to the Mother Church the day before departing from Constantinople. I prayed in the vestry and could not restrain myself from crying over my people's misfortune. When I came out of the vestry to take communion, the parishioners in the church and the girl students of the Tëbrotsaser School who were in the choir all started to sob and cry.

On the following day (Tuesday, the 22nd of August [1916]) when two policemen came to our house to accompany me on my journey, our street was filled with women and children from one end to the other.

As soon as the street door was opened, they started streaming into the house. They all kissed my hand, softly murmured, "May God help You!" and went out again to line the street and forlornly watched my departure.

We left in two cars, another car carrying our accompanying policemen. The Directress of the Tëbrotsaser School, Miss Arpiarian, the Patriarchate's doorman, Boghos Agha Srabian, and our relative, Dr. Varzhabedian and his sister, accompanied us.

After we crossed the bridge [over the Golden Horn] and boarded the ship for Haydar Pasha, the policemen took their leave. A moment later, Miss Arpiar[ian] came up to me, pointed out a man sitting a certain distance away and said, "That man is the secret policeman called Hidayet, who ruined many families. He seems to have shaved his beard, apparently he will be accompanying you." Indeed, after the ship docked at Haydar Pasha, this man came up to my brother, announced that he would be accompanying us, and offered to purchase the train tickets. Hidayet was the former Armenian Catholic Sislian Vartabed, who later became a Muslim and joined the secret police. He and another man accompanied us all the way to



The Patriarch with his older brother, Hovagim and his daughters, Vartanush (right) and Aznive (left), c. 1913–1916, Constantinople.

Aleppo. The other man was an Arabic-speaking policeman from Urfa who let us know from the first day that he spoke Arabic; Hidayet, on the other hand, never admitted that he spoke Armenian. The police were aware that my brother and I spoke Arabic. Concerned that the two of us could communicate sensitive information between us either in Armenian or in Arabic, they seemed to have decided to send with us spies who knew both languages.

On the second day of our trip, we reached Esgishehir [Eskishehir]. There I received a visit from Father Sdepan Kalpakjian and one or two accompanying Armenians, who had been able to stay there because they were relatives of railroad employees. The local Military Commissioner, Osman Bey, became very upset, yelling and scolding Hidayet for allowing people to come near me. Hidayet calmly answered that he was doing what he had been ordered.

On the third evening, we reached Konia and, on the fourth (the 25th of August), Pyuzanti [Pozanti], the last railroad station. At Ereyli [Eregkli], I think it was Priest Manug who came and stated that Teotig¹⁸¹ was on our train, too, and requested me to take him in my carriage after Pyuzanti. I responded, "I am under strict surveillance, and if I were to show such consideration toward him, it could put him in danger."

In Pyuzanti, the government was able to locate only two carriages,¹⁸² and we left town in these quite late. We crossed the Taurus mountain chain during the night and, the following day at noon, reached Darson or Tarsus, where we stayed at an inn. Civilians were allowed to travel on the railroad only one day of the week; the rest of the time the railroad was assigned to military use. Hidayet telegraphed Mersin and succeeded in obtaining permission for me to travel on a military train.

While I was waiting at the station to be shown to my wagon, someone approached me and said in Armenian, "May God help you. Emmanuel Balian." I understood that the man was Emmanuel Vartabed Balian, a former convert [to the Armenian Apostolic Church] from Catholicism who had later renounced the holy orders in Trebizond and married. I was curious to know what he was doing there. He related to me that he had been the *Kaimakam* of Kaza in the Province of Izmir but had been removed from office and deported to Aleppo. When the Governor of Aleppo, Bekir Sami Bey, saw him, he said, "Manuel Effendi, you are Greek! Why have you been deported with the Armenians?" Emmanuel Balian had understood the significance of the Governor's words and responded that he had said this many times, but nobody had listened to him. Upon this, Bekir Sami Bey said, "I know who you are," and, because [Balian] had gone to medical school for a year or two, the Governor arranged for him to be sent to Darson as a physician, to examine and treat soldiers passing through there.

The major in charge of the soldiers in our train and their physician Dr. Goregian treated us with much kindness and consideration. The major came to see me and uttered words of consolation; he also instructed the functionaries to do whatever was required for our comfort.

Toward morning, we reached Osmaniye. At our inn, was a Persian man who had arrived from Persia and was going to Constantinople by way of Baghdad and Der Zor. He said, "Blood is flowing freely all along the road! It is impossible for this man to pass through those areas uninjured—unless he is willing to change his attire. And I am certain that he will not agree to it!"

Hidayet managed to find two carriages with the Governor's help.¹⁸³ On the 27th of August, at midnight, we reached the village of Hasan Beyli at the peak of the mountain and found it deserted.¹⁸⁴ In the morning, we reached the Islahiye station, where unarmed German soldiers begged us for bread. From there, we left by train again and several hours later

reached Katma, where we saw large numbers of Armenian refugees in the open fields. As I was looking out the window of my wagon, a man in Bedouin attire approached me and said, "Karmen."¹⁸⁵ I immediately told him to go away, because I was under surveillance.

On the evening of the 28th of August [1916], we reached Aleppo, where, on orders received from the government, a room was prepared for us at a hotel.

At the time of my departure from Constantinople, I had heard that military convoys were traveling by way of Ras ul-Ain, and I had sent Kamer [Shirinian] to request from Enver Pasha that I be given the means to travel to Baghdad via that route. I had received an answer indicating that the Governor of Aleppo would be advised of this. Now I sent Hidayet to Governor Mustafa Abdul Khalik—with whom I was already acquainted—to request a meeting.

Hidayet's mission had ended in Aleppo, and he was preparing to return to Constantinople. I rewarded him with a monetary gift, and he succeeded in obtaining an appointment for me with the Governor. I went to see the Governor accompanied by a policeman. The Governor received me immediately and expressed his regrets that I had to leave Constantinople: "The government is like a father. Sometimes it becomes angry at its children, but it always has tenderness toward them." Then he added, "It happened to you as it happened to us, too. Nobody is left in the highland districts—everybody has perished!"

In response to my question as to whether the Governor had received instructions from Enver Pasha to have me sent via Ras ul-Ain, he answered in the negative. When I inquired whether the road through Der Zor was safe, he said, "Often it is safe, but a few days ago two German officers were killed. If the Arabs respect the State, it is possible to go with only one military policeman; if they do not, even fifty is not enough."

The meeting lasted about half an hour, after which I returned to the hotel. The soldier who had accompanied me saw that the Governor came out to the door of his office to say goodbye and begged me to ask for him again for my journey to Baghdad.

When I returned to the hotel, I saw that a soldier was trying to prevent my brother from leaving the hotel without his permission, by standing guard in front of our door or under the stairs to the second floor. I became annoyed when I saw this. I requested a policeman to accompany me to the Governor's in a carriage. The Governor came out of a meeting to see me, and I said to him, "I was told to leave Constantinople on my own initiative, and I asked to have policemen accompany me for my safety. I came all the way here quite comfortably. Now in your district severe measures are being implemented toward me." The Governor was intrigued and asked: "What happened?" I told him about the behavior of the policeman at the hotel. He established telephone contact with the Police Chief immediately and asked, "What are your orders regarding the Patriarch Effendi?"

Not satisfied with the answer, he ordered, "Read it to me!" A moment later he told the police chief, "That does not apply here!" Then he turned to me and said, "You may go about and receive visitors as you like." "Thank you," I said. "Personally I do not have any desire to go anywhere, but I would like my brother to be free to go out and purchase food." When I returned to the hotel, the overzealous policeman was no longer there, but secret policemen were all around the hotel.

I stayed in Aleppo for 10 days, not coming out of the hotel. During this time, I received two visits from the Prelacy Vicar—I think he was Priest Mgërdich—who had been sent as a replacement when Priest Harutyun Yesayan was jailed. During the first visit, the Vicar brought me news that the German and the U.S. Consuls had informed him that I was expected in Aleppo and wanted to know whether I had reached there comfortably and also which

coachmen would be driving me from here onward, which policemen and which military policemen would be escorting me, etc. This curiosity was reassuring, because it indicated that these two governments were seriously interested in my safety.

About five or six days later, I sent my brother to the Police Chief to ask that my departure be hastened. The Chief said, "Why is he in a hurry? He is not on top of a mountain, after all! Aleppo is a lovely city, let him go on walks, etc." Then he added that he was trying to put together a substantial number of military policemen to accompany me but had not succeeded in doing this so far, and that was why he was postponing my departure, but that he hoped that it would all be arranged soon. The following day, my brother brought me news that a girl related to a Christian member of the *mejlis-i idare* of Aleppo was being sent away in marriage to Baghdad, together with her mother and brother, and that the family had applied to the government to be given one or two military policemen as escorts. In response to this request, the commander of the military police had said, "Let them go with the Patriarch of the Armenians, they will have not 2 but 10 military policemen, and they will be safer." Now the girl's family had sent someone to ask when I was intending to leave. This news reassured me further.

We purchased provisions for the road and changed several pounds so as to have loose change. On the 8th of September (Old Calendar), we started off, having with us one *komis-eri muavin* [Assistant Commissioner of Police],¹⁸⁶ 10 military policemen, and a *chavush* [sergeant].

We had started off rather late and stayed the night at an inn called Nahr-ul Deheb (Golden Brook). Late in the night, our escorts spotted three barefoot Armenians who were sneaking by the inn to go to Aleppo. The *chavush* and one of the policemen captured them, gave them a severe beating, took all the money they were carrying, and locked them up in one of the rooms of the inn. After much pleading, the three refugees were granted their freedom around midnight.

The following day (the 9th of September), after traveling for 12 hours, we reached Meskeneh on the Euphrates river. Seeing the murky waters of the Euphrates, I was taken by a particular sadness. I stood and gazed at this river, which had become the mute witness of Armenian suffering. At one time, I had known intimately the sources of this river on the Plain of Garin—Mount Khachapayd and Sev Chur [Karasu]. Like a motion picture, I visualized before my eyes one after the other the clear and bright brooks coming down the hills and merging into the Euphrates.

I imagined seeing all those brooks, streams, and rivulets in Terjan, Këghi, and Erznga; the rivers of Armenia, Meghraked and Aradzani, into which the Armenian nation—my flock—mixed its sweat, and whose better days I had seen in Armenia, and now, having left their plow and threshing floors idle, were wandering the deserts!

The barbarian Turk had destroyed the Armenian who was the salt of the land—the element that gave the land its taste and flavor. The Armenians' blood and tears were mixed into the waters of the Euphrates, from Erznga, Kemakh, Agn, and Kharpert all the way down to these deserts. I was now to drink from these bloody-tasting waters.

At a distance to my left, I could see living in numerous motley tents the nomadic remnants of a nation that had steadfastly lived on its land for millennia, cultivating and beautifying it. Here, by the shores of the Euphrates, Armenian women deportees did their wash in the murky waters. Even in this desert, however, they were persecuted and forbidden to satiate their thirst in the waters of their native river—the Euphrates river that is now tinted by the

color of [their] blood. Even my soldier escorts and their *chavush* denied the refugees a drink of water, and I became dizzy when I saw this.

I saw some Armenian refugees sneak to the Euphrates to take water. One of them had taken some water, mounted his donkey, and headed toward the tents. When he saw me, he approached me in amazement and asked, “*Der Baba, sende syurgyun gidiyorsën?* (Holy Father, are you, too, going into exile?)” “*Yök,*” I said, “*ben gendi memleketime, Baghdada gidiyorëm* (No, I am going to Baghdad, my native land.)” The man threw all caution aside and screamed, “*Shyukyur Allaha, bir Ermeni gyordyum ki syurgyun deyil dër!* (Praise God, I saw one Armenian who is not an exile!)”

On the banks of this river in the middle of the desert, the Armenian was still being persecuted with unrelenting severity. An Armenian boy had brought *saji hats* [flat bread] for sale. Our coachmen unabashedly snatched the boy's goods without giving any money. The policeman who saw this happen completely ignored the boy's protests and dryly said, “What can I do?” Another child in rags approached me to ask for alms, but the policeman forbade him, too. We spent the night there inside the carriages.

Beyond Meskeneh, the road seemed to be a path of death. We could see human bones everywhere—skulls, legs, and arms. We even passed by a corpse. It was a man of about 40, half naked, probably dead for two or three days. Our escorts were completely indifferent in the face of these deathly and terrifying sights. They looked around them as though these were all very familiar things. I said a prayer for the soul of this man and the souls of thousands of others for whom nobody had even prayed.

As though it were not enough to travel through these disturbing and terrifying images, barely having left the smell of death behind us, we were surrounded by Arab bandits intent on robbing us. Our military police escorts resisted these bandits and even gave chase for two hours, at which point the bandits gave up and fled.

After 15 hours, we reached Hamam, where a former Armash seminarian—a native of Rodosto—recognized me and spread the news. During this journey, I tried as much as possible to hide my identity, thinking that seeing me being sent into exile would leave a bad impression on the Armenian refugees and lead them to despair even more. Despite my efforts, though, I was often recognized.

When the news spread, refugees living in about 150 tents tried to come and see me during the night, but they were prevented. The following day (Sunday, the 11th of September [1916]) all these deportees lined the sides of the road, and, until the military policemen climbed on their horses, they approached from both sides to kiss my hand as our carriage passed through the lines. I was putting 1-, 2-, and 5-piaster coins in the hands of those who came forward, but the coachman, seeing that more and more people were coming forward and obstructing our way, started whipping his horses. As the carriage sped off, I started throwing money by the handful.

Around noon, we reached Ziaret and stopped by the river to rest the horses. From the nearby refugee camp, Turkish-speaking Armenian women—natives of Aintab and Marash—came forward to sell needlework to the voyagers. First, they went to the other passengers—the bride-to-be, her mother and brother, and an Aleppo native called Erias with his wife—but they purchased relatively little. Then the women came to us and said, “We had other pieces but we sold them to the Arabs. They do not want these. What can we do? We are selling these to buy bread for our children.” The policeman was watching us. I told my niece sitting next to me, “Buy whatever they bring,” and I started giving them money. When the

vendor said 5, I gave 10. The women were watching me in amazement, while I was angrily sending them away.

Our escort, Suleiman Chavush, was a native of Marash. Some of the women recognized and went near him. Suleiman Chavush started consoling them. Some of the other women—without knowing who I was—came near me and lamented, “Akh, Der Baba [Holy Father], when will this end? We are suffering for our faith and the Nation, but we have no strength left! We hear that relief distributors will arrive, but when will they arrive?” Others were saying, “We’re hungry,” and they eagerly collected and devoured watermelon rind from the ground. As we were going away, I gave money to all of them. They followed our carriage a short distance on foot, then they wished us a safe trip and left.

Toward the evening, we reached the Arab village of Sabkhah. We had now entered the limits of Der Zor. There were only six Armenian families here, originally from Gars Bazar. They had been moved here from Hamam to serve as coachmen for the *menzil* [army transport corps]. When they learned who I was, they approached me and sincerely offered their services. We purchased a few chickens from them, and in this way our food for the next day or two was assured.

On the 12th of September, we reached Ma’dan, a spacious locality by the river. Armenian refugees had stayed here for months, but now there were none. In five more hours we reached Tbni, where there were only three Armenians: one from Izmir and two from the villages of Sepasdia. They were serving at an inn under adopted Muslim names.

Night had barely fallen when the mother of the bride-to-be came into the room and said that the Assistant Commissioner Mustafa had said, “Several soldiers have arrived. They are going home on leave and they have a warrant authorizing them to take carriages wherever they find them. So, they will take all our carriages and we will have to stay here.” I said to the woman, “Do not be afraid. Leave it to me if they say such things to you again.” The woman left, and several minutes later Mustafa came to our room and said the same things. I became very angry and said, “Why are you telling me these things? Why did the State send you to accompany me? Are you not supposed to see to it that I travel in comfort and safety? If they take my carriage and leave me on the mountain, are you able to leave me and go?” I made a few threats, as well.

Having heard me shout, Suleiman Chavush came over and tried to calm me. The Commissioner was bluffing. We were one day’s distance from Der Zor. [The Commissioner] would have to return from there, and he had thought of scaring us and extorting a few piasters. As I gradually became convinced that there was no threat to my life, I started to behave more boldly.

On Tuesday, the 13th of September, at a distance of two to three hours from Tbni, we ran into an Air Force captain, who was riding with an Armenian coachman, accompanied by a 10- to 12-year-old girl.

The Captain requested that we take him and the girl in our carriages until Der Zor. Thinking that it would be a good thing to have a powerful traveling companion, I accepted: the Captain went into my brother’s carriage and the girl came into mine.

Shortly afterward, it was revealed that the girl was Armenian.¹⁸⁷ She was Lusia from Aintab—now renamed Munireh. Her father, Nazar Barsamian, and her mother, Rakel, had both died at Meskeneh. She had been staying at the orphanage in Meskeneh with her sister Ovsanna. Their younger brother, Yervant, was at the orphanage in Aintab and the elder brother, Tavit, at the orphanage in Aleppo. His father used to be a weaver of *alaja*.¹⁸⁸ The Captain

had taken her from the Meskeneh orphanage, where there were 335 children under the government's supervision.

I learned that there was talk about transporting the orphanage to Der Zor in a few days. Previously the Government had supplied the orphanage with two sheep and bread daily; lately it has been giving only flour, enough to give the orphans bread in the morning and the evening. No assistance was given to the refugees.

We reached Der Zor at 8:00 p.m. and settled at an inn. There were only three rooms at the inn: two had been assigned to Russian subjects who were being transferred from Baghdad to Konia, and we were given the remaining one.

One of the Russian subjects had been there for quite some time. He had heard that, over the last month, more than 150,000 Armenians had been collected within the limits of Der Zor and sent, under the supervision of Circassians, to the Marat district by the Khabur river. Nothing had been heard of them since, and it was suspected that some of them were dead or killed. The [Armenian] prisoners, too, had been taken out, sent off by themselves and killed. Barkev Vartabed had been sent along with them, and there was no news of him, either.

The Captain took the girl, settled her for the night and came back. The Assistant Commissioner Mustafa came to the inn and said to me, "The Police Chief wants to see you." My brother, the Captain, and I followed him. Our Commissioner had an open warrant in his hand and a sealed letter addressed to the Governor of Der Zor.

Mustafa gave the Police Chief the open warrant, the Police Chief read it and put it on the desk. Mustafa also extended to him the sealed letter, but the Police Chief ordered Mustafa to take it to the Governor. The Police Chief did not pay us any attention. I was standing by the door. Without waiting for an invitation, I entered the room and sat on a chair. My brother and the Captain did the same. The Police Chief remained silent until Mustafa brought back the letter addressed to the Governor, now bearing a hand-written note to the attention of the Police Chief.

The Police Chief read the letter twice, then he put it down. With a smile, he said "Welcome!" to us. He changed his attitude, showed respect and hospitality. He asked us about our lodgings. When he learned that we were at the inn, he said, "You will not be comfortable there, we have to find you another place." Requesting our permission, he went to see the Mutesarif Bey. A few minutes later he returned to announce that the Mutesarif Bey sent his greetings to us through him, that he found it inappropriate for honorable guests such as us to stay at an inn, and that he had given orders for a room to be prepared for us in the *Belediye* [Municipality] building. The Head of the *Belediye* [i.e., the Mayor], Tyurki Bey, came. After chattering a while, he invited me to go with him.

The Government Building at Der Zor being in an uninhabitable state, government offices had been moved to the Municipality Building, and that is where I was taken. A room in this building was put at my disposal. My brother and his daughter remained at the inn, and the passengers who had been accompanying us went to stay with their relatives.

The Mayor and the Police Chief stayed with me until late at night and—what a mockery!—talked about justice and philanthropy! My supper was sent from the house of the Mutesarif. Because I was to leave early the next day, to express my thanks for this kind treatment, I asked the Police Chief to give me the opportunity to see the Governor.

After supper in the evening, Governor Salih Zeki Bey¹⁸⁹ came to my room. This man, who had spilled the blood of 150,000 Armenians, greeted me with exemplary Turkish duplicity: he stopped by the door and prostrated himself all the way to the floor, knees together and

hands joined on his belly. When I expressed my thanks, he said, "It is our duty to serve and provide for the comfort of honorable guests like you." He stayed a few minutes and then left.

On Wednesday, the 14th of September [1916], no arrangements were made for my travel until the evening. My midday and evening meals were provided. At noon, the Mayor was my table companion and, in the evening, the Police Chief. I brought up with them my travel needs. The Police Chief said, "God willing, it will be taken care of tomorrow. The Commander of the Police Force and many of the policemen are not here. They have gone to collect taxes, but they should be back by tomorrow."

The Police Chief, seeing that I was not making any comments on the Armenians that had been brought to Der Zor, embarked on the issue himself and said that the Armenians who had come to those regions had been sent by the Central Government's orders to the desert, to be settled on the banks of the Khabur river. He said that the area was very fertile, except that the weather was not good. Numerous times refugees were settled there, but they were not able to withstand the severe climate. "Let us see if the Armenians will be able to withstand it," he said. I did not respond to these words. The following day, at noon, my brother came and related that while he was away from the inn, a little girl had clandestinely arrived and asked for me. When my brother's daughter, Vartanush, said that I was not there, the little girl gave a piece of paper, which my brother brought to me. The 12 signatories, all clergymen, were informing me that they would soon be exiled and requesting [monetary] assistance. One of them was Der Bedros,¹⁹⁰ the Armenian Catholic priest of Der Zor, who had rendered many services to our people.

Vartanush read that letter and said to the little girl: "My little one, I do not have money on me now, but if you could come back in a little while, I will certainly give you some money." The little girl went and did not come back. Later we heard that, on the following morning, the jailed clergymen were sent toward Khabur and were all massacred on the way.

In the morning, as I was looking out the window, a woman saw me from the open space across the building. She was surprised to see a clergyman in a government building; she called another woman and they made the sign of the cross to let me know that they were Armenians. Regretfully, they could do nothing and left the area disillusioned.

Likewise, in the street I came across a 10- to 12-year-old boy with a red cloth tied to his arm, who was guiding young children in tattered rags, speaking to them in Turkish. Surely these children were being taken to an orphanage for Armenians.¹⁹¹

On Thursday, the 15th of September, the Police Chief came and told me that he still did not have enough military policemen. I decided to wait until noon, but in vain. My brother informed me that our Aleppine traveling companions, having concluded that I was a detainee and that there was a plot against my life, had left without the military policemen. Our coachmen were also starting to complain, because they had been waiting for two days already. I began to suspect that possibly a different order had been received from Constantinople and that that was why I was being detained. Finally I asked to see the [Assistant] Commissioner and requested that he arrange for me to meet with the Prefect; the latter agreed to see me at 10:00 p.m. (Turkish time). "I have come to beseech you to send me away," I said. "The longer I stay here, the more I am causing you discomfort, because I am taking your place. I am not comfortable either, because I am not continuing toward my destination." Immediately the Prefect called the Police Chief and inquired, "Why is the Patriarch not leaving?" The Police Chief explained that there were not enough military policemen. Upon this I said, "I need the State's *nüfûz* [influence, authority], and then one or two soldiers should be enough." The

Prefect arranged for me to leave immediately—as I had requested—with four military policemen as my escorts. As the Prefect was taking leave, he said, “God willing, all this will pass quickly.”

It was rainy; we were on our way in about an hour. After driving in the pitch black night for two or three hours, our coachmen realized that they had lost their way. They decided that it would be prudent to spend the night exactly where we were. The military policemen slept on the ground all around the carriage and we stayed inside the carriages. At dawn, the coachmen found their way, and we continued on to Miadin, which we reached on Friday, the 16th of September, at 1:00 p.m. At the inn where we were staying, there was a young man, Onnig from Sepasdia, who had managed to stay, thanks to his uncle having settled here some time ago. He said, “Two months ago there were 3,000 Armenians here. All of them were taken to the other side of the water and driven to the desert. Now there are only five or six Armenian households left.”

One of the men who left had sent a letter to his brother, [Mr.] Aroyan, who was still in town:

*Halukhatrēnēz sival olunur. Bizleri sival ederiseniz hala Suvarda oturuyoruz. Burada 300 chadēr kader kaldē, geoya bunlardan ümid var deyolar, amma aklēm kesmeyor. Herif dibinden syupyurmege bazar etmiş, balki daha birkach gyun burda kalērēz, elinde var ise bize bir jyuzi yardēm daha et, kardashēm iriden ufagha hepinizde halal idiniz.*¹⁹²

Suvar

Krikor Aroyan

Another man wrote to his sister:

*Hal u khatērlarēnēzē syuvaldan songra bizleri syuval ederiseniz tarikhe kadar janēmēz sagh, amma Allahdan ümid kesildi, chyunki Miyardine yarēm saat kadar kaldē gechdim amma nasib degil imish, ne chareh bajēm bu son defa olarak mektubēm jyumleten halal edin jyumle dostlara el veda...*¹⁹³

Garabed Etmekjian

We stayed there for one day, and a hailstorm started toward the evening. The marketplace was shut down and there was nothing to buy. Locals were saying that, when Armenians lived there, everything was available.

The Captain accompanying us to Baghdad came and said to me that the policeman and military policemen were suggesting that I pay their and their horses' expenses. I said, “They have been sent by the State. I will gladly pay them, provided they give me a receipt, so that upon my arrival in Baghdad I can request that the government repay me.” After they received this message, they shut up.

We resumed our journey on Saturday, the 17th of September, at 1:00 p.m. On our path we saw a herd of sheep. The military policemen approached the herd, grabbed a lamb, and gave it to the Commissioner riding in the carriage, without paying any attention to the cries and screams of the Arab shepherd. After eight hours of travel, we reached Salēhieh. The inn having been requisitioned by the military authorities, we settled for the night at the gendarmerie guardhouse.

There were only two Arab households. The servant in the guardhouse was a certain

Minas. He and his wife Surpig were natives of Gaban near Marash. They told me that previously there had been 40 Armenian households here, but these were all sent toward the desert.

The Arab shepherd whose lamb we had taken, caught up with us on horseback, but the lamb had already been slaughtered. After he shouted and argued a while, I gave him 30 piasters in paper money. The Arab took the skin of the sheep and went away; all dined on the lamb that evening.

On Sunday, the 18th of September,¹⁹⁴ we departed at 12:00 [noon] and arrived at Abu Kemal at 5 p.m. Here, too, there were 200 to 300 [Armenian] households that had been taken beyond the water. Remaining behind were a youth named Hagop from Aslanbeg, an iron-smith from Adapazar, and several bakers, one of them with his family.

On Tuesday, the 19th of September,¹⁹⁵ we left at 12:00 [noon], reached El Kayim four hours later and Nahieh 10 and a-half hours later. Here I came across six Armenian soldiers, whose friends—about 150 Armenians and 100 Greeks from Afion Karahisar, Keotahya and Chalgara—were engaged in road construction near Anah.

On Wednesday, the 20th of September,¹⁹⁶ we left at 12:00 [noon] and, after 5 hours, reached the district center of Anah. There had been 1,600 Armenians here, but two months ago they were sent toward Der Zor. There were only eight household left: bakers, ironsmiths, and masons, all of whom were working for the government. These people heard about my arrival and sent a man to inquire if I needed anything. I asked them to bring us two or three freshly killed, boiled chickens. They did as I asked. Considering their destitute state, I paid them 5 pounds for it.

The *Kaimakam* was apparently keeping three Armenian women from Urfa. There were also three coachmen from Aintab and Darson whose carriages had been confiscated by the government. "We are working here for the government," they said, "and [yet] our families have been taken to the desert from Der Zor to be killed."

The Assistant Commissioner, Bedri, was a native of Anah. He took the military policemen to his house, where they ate and drank all night. Toward morning, they sent someone to tell the coachmen to prepare the horses for the trip, but they were too drunk to come.

Bedri was pretending to be sick and did not want to continue on the journey. The Prefect, to whom I turned, could not oblige Bedri to take to the road. This obliged me to telegraph the Mutesarif and wait for his answer. Bedri agreed to leave very early on the following day, Thursday, the 23rd of September [1916]. At 5:30 p.m., we reached Fnemiyeh, where I saw Armenian soldiers in an *amele taburi* [labor brigade]. Most of them were from the villages of Brusa, and they complained to me that, while they were working for the state, their families were suffering in the deserts. At 10:00 p.m., we reached Haditha. The local *Mudir*, as a consequence of my telegram [to the Mutesarif], had received orders to look after me. He had taken the initiative and prepared a house for me, and that is where he led me. Bedri also had received a telegram, and was very humbled by it. Now he slept by our room's doorstep and guarded us through the night. Here, too, the same story: there used to be many Armenians, but two months ago they were sent toward Der Zor.

On Friday, the 23rd of September, we departed at 12:00 [noon] and reached [the limits of] Baghdad at 6:00 p.m. and Hit at 12:30 a.m.. We had now come out of the accursed [limits of] Der Zor.

Bedri became even more docile and started to make efforts to earn our friendship, so that upon our arrival in Baghdad I would not complain about him. Today, he showed me the

telegram that he had received unsealed, in which he was being ordered to deliver me to Baghdad safely and comfortably (*salima wa murfaha*).

On Saturday, the 24th of September, first we visited the salt mines, then departed at 2:00 p.m., and reached the district center of Ramadi at 10:00 p.m. On the following day, Sunday, the 25th of September, we departed at 1:00 p.m. and arrived in Fellujeh by 8:00 p.m. The Kuyumjian family of Baghdad had a presentable house here, where they entertained honorable people passing through the area, but they were concerned about my traveling under surveillance and pretended not to have heard about my arrival. As a result, we were obliged to spend the night at an inn.

On Monday, the 26th of September, we finally arrived in Baghdad. Our carriages headed straight to the police station, where my brother and his daughter were told they were free to go where they wished, but I was asked to produce a guarantor. My brother-in-law, the lawyer, Kerovpé Setian, came to give a guarantee, I then went [to my brother's] home.

The Aleppine family that had been traveling with us had continued separately from us after Der Zor. My brother had foreseen that if this family reached Baghdad before us, they might spread unfavorable news about us and worry our relatives. To prevent this, he had telegraphed a Muslim [Arab] friend of his from Anah and informed him of our expected time of arrival. Thanks to this, our relatives were not taken by surprise.

I had left Baghdad 26 years ago. After an absence of more than a quarter of a century I was now returning. My father had passed away, and my mother was aged. Many changes had taken place in the city, and my life, too, had gone through many changes and ups and downs.

B. In Baghdad

Baghdad was in the path of the advancing British army from the Persian Gulf. At the time I reached Baghdad, because of the significant British advance, numerous severe measures were being implemented. The entire population was caught up in an atmosphere of terror, and there had been many people from all nations—Arabs, Jews, Armenians, and other Christians—exiled to the interior regions.

Several months later, when I had moved to Mosul, the former Police Chief, [Mehemmed] Khalid Effendi, related to me that, when he was appointed Police Chief and the Governor was Suleiman Nazif—who had a reputation as a writer—he had inherited from his predecessor a file on the Armenians of Baghdad that indicated that almost all of them were worthy of deportation.

A few days after assuming his post, Mehemmed Khalid took a look at the file, presented it to the Governor, summarized the contents, and said: “If You wish Your name, too, to be put on the list of the mass murderers, then give me execution orders; otherwise, the few Armenians here are Arabized in language and temperament, and what is said in this file is all fabrications and lies.” Having heard this, the Governor took the file from the Police Chief's hands and threw it in the stove.

The local Armenians were spared from the deportations, but both the Governor and the Police Chief were quickly moved to Mosul. The new Lieutenant Governor, Fayik Bey, did not want to leave the local Armenians entirely untouched by the terror: he had a few people jailed and some others deported, and in this way he considered himself to have fulfilled his duty as a Turkish official.

Some of the Armenian notables of Baghdad had been deported to Der Zor, and the rest to Ras ul-Ain, but they did not stay long in these places. During those days, the [German] commander for Mesopotamia, Von der Goltz,¹⁹⁷ passing through those areas on his way to Baghdad, was petitioned by the deportees; they were allowed to return to their native places several days later. Two of their companions had meanwhile died of natural causes and were buried locally. One of the deceased was Tavit Hovhannes Tateosian, a patriotic and wealthy co-national, a British subject, and a supporter of education. The other was the veteran and meritorious schoolteacher of Baghdad, Mihran Svajian.

When I reached Baghdad, the Armenians of the city had escaped the fright and were living under the administration of Ali Suad Bey,¹⁹⁸ even though Enver's paternal uncle and the well-known Khalil Pasha of Van, were living in Baghdad. After my arrival in Baghdad, very few acquaintances came to see me, and I understood this was because I was under surveillance from a distance, and I did not blame anyone. Even Prelate Paren Vartabed Melkonian did not come. When I requested permission to reside outside the city, the police did not permit it, and, whenever I walked out of my house, a policeman followed me at a distance.

I stayed in Baghdad for five months, and, during this time, I went to church only three times. On the day of my arrival, I went to Holy Trinity to visit my father's grave. I went to the Holy Mother of God Church on the 6th of January 1917 for Christmas and on the 2nd of February 1917 for my mother's funeral. By that time, the Holy Trinity Church was occupied by the military.

I paid a visit to each of my sisters once and did not visit the homes of any other Armenians. Willingly I confined myself to my house, so as not to bring harm to anyone. I am grateful to an Armenian youth, Boghos S. Boghosian,¹⁹⁹ who came to give me English lessons three times a week, and thereby helped me not waste my time.

Paren Vartabed, too, became a companion to me. When the Holy Trinity Church and the Prelacy—which was in the Church's courtyard—were occupied, he came to stay with us until Baghdad was occupied [by the British forces].

I was under no obligation to report my presence to the police. I went only once to see the Governor, and that was to request that my pension be forwarded to the *Defterdarutyun*²⁰⁰ of Baghdad. On this occasion, Ali Suad Bey accepted me graciously and promised to do whatever was necessary.

After their defeat at Al-Kut,²⁰¹ the British were making preparations for a full year. The Germans and the Turks were doing the same. Baghdad had become a militarized city, and Germans were everywhere. Favorable news was received from the front every day and published.

During the night of the 2nd of February 1917, the city was disrupted by disturbances, and the Germans living near us started to depart. News spread that the Turkish forces at the front, unable to resist, had begun to pull back. At the same time, several military steam boats were reported to be moving upstream to bombard our city. Military personnel started sending their families out of the city by train. In the morning, the news about the warships was found to be false, the people calmed down, and the government started calmly evacuating the city. At the first opportunity, they started moving the prisoners and the refugees to Mosul.

[The authorities] started looking for Hagop Nersesian, who had been the interpreter for the British Consulate before the war. A native of Tokat, he was a talented linguist and philologist. As it was reported, he committed the error of seeking refuge at a friend's house. The Prelate and his staff were jailed at the police station, until Nersesian was found two days later.

He was immediately deported to the South and, as we heard, thrown into the river and drowned.

Although, for a moment, I, too, thought of fleeing and hiding, I did not wish to endanger all my relatives and other people by such an act of egotism. On the 28th of February, word was sent to me from the church that a policeman had been seen asking for me and our house had been pointed out to him. Predicting his intention, I waited for the arrival of the policeman. He came and said to me, "*Efendi, sende yaryn gidejeksın.* [Effendi, you too will go tomorrow.]" I asked, "*Nereye?* [Where?]" He responded, "*Ne bileyim, Stambula mi bashka yere mi....* [How am I to know? To Istanbul to somewhere else....]" I understood that the policeman's comment was about my being sent to Mosul, where everyone else was going. After a short consultation with my brother, I decided to go to the Governor and request [transportation] amenities and permission to remain for one more day in Baghdad.

Governor Ali Suad had left 15 or 20 days earlier, and our old acquaintance Memduh Bey had replaced him.²⁰² When I presented my visiting card, Memduh immediately invited me in. As soon as he saw me, he said, "*Buyurunuz, Hayr Surp*"²⁰³ [I am at your command, Holy Father!]" He introduced me to the Police Chief, who was with him, then offered me a seat next to him. I related to him how the policeman—sent in the name of the government—had commented on my destination, without actually saying where I was being sent. "Yes," said Memduh, "we cannot leave a venerable person such as yourself in the hands of the enemy. You have to go to Mosul, and that's where we will go later."

The Governor and the Police Chief accepted my plea for a delay of one day for my departure. Then I requested, (a) that arrangements be made for my state pension to be paid to me in Mosul and (b) that I be allowed transportation facilities and the protection of an accompanying policeman, especially against the Shiite²⁰⁴ fanatics of Samarra,²⁰⁵ who did not accept Christians into their city. The train we planned to take would have to go through Samarra.

The Governor suggested that we go to the Prefecture in the afternoon so that he could make the necessary arrangements for these two requests. Indeed, the same afternoon he resolved both issues: he had the arrearage of my pension paid and gave me the *jyzdan* [booklet], and he informed me that a major had been sent to Samarra to set up a tent for us, where we would stay until we left Samarra for Mosul, and that a policeman was going to accompany us the entire way. He also informed me that he had telegraphed the Governor of Mosul so that I would be given transportation amenities and a carriage. I thanked him and left.

C. To Mosul

It was decreed that I was to leave for Mosul, and I reconciled myself to my fate. I decided to go alone, leaving my brother in Baghdad at the head of his family. It was probable that the city would fall to British forces very shortly.

This separation caused great anxiety in our family. My brother's daughter, Vartanush, who had accompanied me here from Constantinople, wept and lamented, and said, "I shall not let my uncle leave alone." At all costs she wanted to accompany me. Her father, mother, [maternal] aunt, and others advised and exhorted her in vain. They told her that the British would probably enter Baghdad and everyone would find freedom, whereas, by going to Mosul, she would continue to live under Turkish terror. In addition, her uncle being an exile, if some-

thing happened to him on the way to Mosul or once arrived there, she would be left by herself, a young girl subject to all kinds of temptations, but Vartanush wept and stuttered and insisted on her decision. Unable to convince his daughter, my brother asked me to take Vartanush along, so that she would calm down and not fall ill from her distress. I explained to my brother the difficulties I was likely to encounter, the worries I would have if Vartanush were with me, and how her presence would complicate my situation further, but he had made up his mind. Then I said to him: "I can take her with me if you can find us a carriage to Mosul, because I cannot trust the government's promise that I will find a carriage in Samarra." My brother tried to find a carriage for two days. He finally found a carriage owner who agreed to rent him one for 35 pounds.²⁰⁶ The owner argued that it was quite possible that Baghdad would be occupied before the carriage returned and that his carriage would remain in Mosul.

We decided to leave by train on the 2nd of March until Samarra, and to have the carriage delivered there to us on the evening of the following day.

We left Baghdad accompanied by a policeman, taking with us as much of our personal property as the carriage was able to carry. After five hours, we reached to the station of Samarra. We did not go into the [town], because tents had been set up [near the station] to accommodate all the people who had fled Baghdad. The people who were already in these tents were mainly the families of military staff. The major in charge of the tents agreed to let us have a tent for two days. A military policeman was posted next to our tent for my protection. We stayed there a day and a half (one day and two nights), and witnessed scenes of fighting due to demands made by military wives for bread rations.

Toward the evening of the 3rd of March, I was informed that the carriage I had rented had arrived in Samarra and that it would be delivered to me the following day, together with two military policemen. Indeed, the military policemen came to find us the following day, and we set out in the carriage. Around noon, other carriages caught up with us. These were carrying the German Consul of Baghdad, the Director of the Deutsche Bank, and about 20 German and Austrian subjects of both genders. These carriages were accompanied by a caravan of about 25 carts carrying the consular and bank files, all under the protection of German soldiers. When I saw these carts, I was reassured that our trip to Mosul was going to take place in their company and under comfortable conditions.

During a rest stop, an old man came up to me and said, "Are you Father Atanas?"²⁰⁷ "No," I said, "I am the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople." After the old man went away, the German Consul came near me and said, "At the time of your arrival in Baghdad, they asked me from the Embassy, 'Did he reach there safely and soundly?' I answered in the affirmative at the time. I think I was not mistaken." "Thank you," I said, "I owe a lot to the kindness of your Ambassador."

We reached Tikrit²⁰⁸ the same evening. I settled at the home of an Arab woman, whose only son was in the army. My traveling companions went to a house that had been reserved for them. A fierce military policeman spent the night in the courtyard and kept an eye on us. In the morning, this policeman announced that an unmounted military policeman was going to accompany us from there onward, and we would have to share our carriage with him. I objected and even took the matter to the *chavush*; I threatened him that I would return to Samarra to complain to the Governor about this. Finally the *chavush* agreed to give us a mounted military policeman for the rest of the way to Mosul. This man was a Shiite, and we only saw his face in the morning.

On the 5th of March, we left Tikrit and arrived in Gayyara²⁰⁹ before noon. We stopped at the guard post. The Chief of the military policemen came out and asked me, "Do you speak Turkish or Arabic?" When I said, "We are able to speak in both languages," he led me inside and gave orders to have a samovar prepared.

He was very interested in receiving news from Baghdad and the war front. We were the first caravan arriving from Baghdad and therefore the first messengers. I shared with him the latest *Agence*²¹⁰ report, which announced, "We brought reinforcements from the Persian front, gave a strong blow to the enemy forces, and turned them back."

After listening with curiosity to my report about the evacuation of Baghdad, the Chief said, "Effendi, we have a few eggs. Will you honor us by accepting them?" I suggested that they keep them, as they were stationed in an uninhabited location. He said, "We always manage to get them from the villages around here," and ordered that the eggs be given to our coachman. The other passengers saw the gendarme carrying the eggs, and they wanted to purchase them, but the gendarme said, "They are gifts for the Effendi." Later Vartanush told me she was present at the time and commented, "You should have seen their faces!"

We arrived at a dilapidated inn late at night and stayed there.

On the 6th of March, we departed from the inn. We were taking a rest stop at noon when an automobile from Mosul arrived and stopped near us. Germans came out of the automobile and started conversing with the Germans in our caravan. The driver of the automobile came out and greeted me and asked, "Effendi, do you recognize me?" I said that I did not. Then he explained, "I was lying ill at the inn at Anah, and you gave me medicine." I remembered that indeed I had seen a Turkish soldier at the inn at Anah, pale and feverish, unable to take advantage of his leave to go to his native Konia. I had given him a few sulfa tablets I had on me and wished him good health. The medication I gave seemed to have cured him, and he had now become an automobile driver. Immediately, he opened his bag and emptied in front of Vartanush the chocolate that was inside; he also emptied the milk in his *matara* [canteen] into a dish we produced. "Effendi," he said, "forgive me that I do not have anything else. I am grateful to you." To think that this man, once reduced to a useless soldier, had been cured with a few sulfa tablets! How many others were suffering and dying because they did not have those few tablets!

The same evening we arrived in Shergat, settled in one room of an inn, and spent the night there. The group of Germans decided to spend the morning of the 7th of March in that area, and we did the same. Before the war, a German [archeological?] society had conducted excavations in that area. We all went to the site, where an Arab approached us and offered to show us around. He guided us and showed us everything that was to see. When I rewarded him with 40 *para*, he was satisfied with it and even thanked me sincerely, commenting, "I took the Germans around for more than two hours, and they did not even put 10 *para* in my palm!"

On the 8th of March we left Shergat. When we arrived at an inn that evening, the Germans took up all the rooms available and did not leave us any. We were forced to sleep in the carriage.

On the morning of the 9th of March, we took to the road before the others, and around noon we reached Hamam Alil, which is commonly referred to as Hamam Ali. There was a source of hot mineral water here, which was in a complete state of neglect.

Outside the village, we spread our small carpet on a field and sent the coachman to a nearby village to bring us some yogurt. In the village, there was a guard house, and their

chavush came to see me and hear news from Baghdad. We sat down and started conversing, and the coachman returned to say that no yogurt was left.

When the *chavush* heard this, he immediately sent a military policeman to a friend's house and had a big pot of yogurt brought. We had hardly eaten half of the pot when the Germans caught up with us. They, too, sent a man to the village to ask for yogurt, and their man came back empty-handed. They gladly accepted our leftover yogurt, diluted it with water and all drank from it. The *chavush* refused the payment I offered him for the yogurt, and he did this right in front of the Germans!

We left [Hamam Alil] immediately and arrived in Mosul two hours later. Our gendarme stopped the coach outside the city and went to the gendarmerie building nearby to see his superior and deliver the official letter about me that he had been carrying. He came out right away and said that his superior was not there. I insisted that he come with me to the government building to say whatever he had to say. He was persuaded to do this, and the two of us went to the government building. As soon as we walked in, a gendarmerie official led me to their chief's room. The chief received me respectfully and immediately sent the letter to the Governor. A moment later, we received confirmation that the official letter had been sent to the Police Chief.

I went to the [police station] myself and found exactly what I was expecting: Mehmed Khalid Effendi, whose person and background were well familiar to me. He was born in a village in the district of Manazgerd [Malazgirt], baptized Harutyun (I think this was his real name), and later became the son-in-law of the local priest. Having received a relatively good education, he entered the teaching profession and taught at several villages on the Plain of Mush. He saw that government officials and police were very ill disposed toward educated Armenians, frequently having them jailed with slanderous accusations. He conceived the idea of becoming a Muslim and enrolling in the police force. He went ahead with this decision, [adopted the name of] Mehmed Khalid, quickly rose in the ranks, and was appointed the Police Commissioner of Mush. I know that he cultivated close contacts with Armenian revolutionaries and rendered many services to Antranig,²¹¹ Kevork [Chavush],²¹² etc. When I was the Prelate of Garin, the Abbot of Surp Garabed Monastery, Vartan Vartabed Hagopian, approached me with an urgent and important request. He said that the Commissioner had been very helpful to us and recommended that I use my influence to have the Commissioner's brother-in-law [wife's brother] accepted at the Sanasarian School. I obliged the Abbot by making inquiries with the school. All the places for that year's incoming students were taken, and, in order not to send the boy back, I kept him at the Prelacy and sent him as a day student for his first year, signing him up as a boarding student for the following year.

Mehmed Effendi soon reciprocated this favor in the following way. The following year, Karekin Pastërmajian sent me 100 pounds from Alexandropole, to be delivered to Vartan Vartabed, "to be spent on the orphans." I obtained a check from the Mesrigian brothers—well-known businessmen of the Garin marketplace—and sent it to Vartan Vartabed in a registered letter. My letter was opened before it left Garin and a letter appended by the Governor's office, stating, "We trust the sender of this letter. Make verifications locally and ensure that [the money] is not used for mischievous purposes." The letter arrived in Mush and was delivered to the Police Chief's inspection. Several days later, the Police Chief issued a favorable report, and the money was delivered and used for the intended purpose—i.e., revolutionary work. Later I encountered Mehmed Effendi again when he was the Police Chief of Van. For the sake of prudence, he visited me only infrequently.

I came out of the gendarmes' room and entered Police Chief Mehemmed Effendi's room. He met me like a friend and, after a brief conversation, informed me that the local notable and *mukhtar* [village headman], Sarkis Chakmakjian, had received a telegram from my brother in Baghdad and had come and shown it to [the Commissioner]. The telegram announced my departure toward Mosul and requested that Chakmakjian rent for me a suitable residence.

Mehemmed Effendi recommended that Chakmakjian receive me in his house for a few days, until I arrived in Mosul and could rent a suitable house myself. Having heard this, I wanted to leave, saying that my brother's daughter was waiting for me in a coach outside the city.

The Police Chief immediately gave orders for a Christian policeman who was with us to go and accompany the coach to Chakmakjian's house. Shortly thereafter, he gave me a police escort to the same destination. Sarkis Chakmakjian hosted us for 18 days and left us greatly satisfied. I rented a house belonging to a widow related to the Armenian Ruhijanian family and settled into the same bedroom where the Prelate of Mesopotamia, Mesrob Vartabed, had stayed [20] years earlier, when he had come to Mosul to supervise the construction of a church.

Several days after arriving in Mosul, we heard that, on the day of our arrival in Mosul (the 9th of March [1917]), the British had occupied Baghdad.

D. In Turkish Mosul

The Governor of Mosul, Haydar Bey, was an Albanian completely unknown to me, yet he behaved very kindly toward me. He did not have anyone follow me, and, about a month after my arrival, he sent me word, "Why doesn't the Patriarch ever visit me?" I had only visited him twice, when he was replaced by our longtime acquaintance Memduh Bey, the last Governor of Baghdad. Memduh Bey pretended to be our friend, but actually he demonstrated ill will toward me: hardly a month after his arrival, he and Commander Khalil Pasha ordered the Police Chief to place me under strict surveillance. They stationed a policeman at the corner of Suq el-Shairin, who kept his gaze on our street door and every day submitted a *zhurnal* [report] on what he saw.

The kindness of the Police Chief in this instance was that the policeman he assigned to watch us was not a mischievous man prone to slanders; he observed honestly and reported what he saw. For this, I occasionally gave him monetary gifts. When the surveillance first started, I sent Vartanush in disguise to the home of the Police Chief to ask for an explanation. She brought me back an answer that there was nothing about this surveillance that should cause me concern. After settling in Mosul, thanks to the Police Chief, I was able to purchase for a good price, making payment in paper money, certain goods that had been confiscated by the government—fabric for making suits, sugar, coffee, etc. Grain could be purchased relatively cheaply, but I did not buy very much, as I was not sure that the British would not soon advance toward Mosul. It was only five or six months later, when I saw that the British were staying [in Baghdad] and that everything was becoming more expensive, that I purchased some wheat to stock for the coming winter. Before I was placed under surveillance, I saw that Armenian children and women were wandering the streets and begging, and this saddened me very much, because I had not yet seen Armenians beg. Regretfully, I had no resources for coming to their aid. Toward the end of my stay in Constantinople—due to the stringency of

the Patriarchate's coffers—my monthly salary had been cut from 50 to 30 pounds, and I had very modest savings. In addition, life was expensive, and our household included many people.

Still, my conscience could not stand seeing these children beg practically naked. With Chakmakjian's assistance, I started purchasing quantities of the thick red local fabric and had complete outfits made for the boys and girls who came to us for alms: long tunics for the girls and the small boys, and shirt-and-breeches sets for the older boys. These outfits would serve them as daytime wear and as bedding at night. In a few days, the streets were filled with beggars in red. Thinking that the government might interpret this badly, I changed the color to blue. When the outfitting of the [Armenian] beggars ended, I announced that I would also give clothes similar to these to Arab beggars who came to us, whether grown ups or children, and I did as I promised. In addition, I toured the miserable huts and ruins in which the poor deportees were living and distributed straw mats to those who needed them.

When I started this work, I thought of applying to Catholicos Sahag for money, but, thinking that a request sent by me could endanger him, I had Vartanush write open postcards in Turkish to Yervant Vartabed, in which she addressed him as her [paternal] uncle, saying that her relatives (i.e., the refugees) were in great misery and asked him to talk to his older [paternal] uncle about sending them some relief funds. In honor of Yervant Vartabed, it should be said that he did not leave these postcards without a response. Catholicos Sahag sent me first 150, then 100, pounds to be used for this purpose. A one-pound bank note was worth about 14 to 15 silver piasters, and outfitting one child cost about 2 pounds, so these funds did not provide a significant remedy. I engaged in all these activities before the surveillance, but I acted very cautiously afterward.

The Chaldeans²¹³—including their Patriarch, clergy, and community—did not show much compassion toward me or our people's misery. The Jacobite Assyrians²¹⁴ put at our people's disposal their cemetery in the city and their village churches. The Jacobite Prelate and their clergy behaved cautiously toward us and did not manifest much closeness, despite the fact that the Prelate Mtran²¹⁵ Tuma had been my colleague and friend in Diarbekir.

The Assyrian Catholics were quite different. Their Prelate, Mtran Habra visited me often and consoled me, even though this was not well regarded by the government. Their clergy did likewise. I should make special mention of Khuri²¹⁶ Yusuf Khayat, Kass²¹⁷ Hanna Hëbbi, and Kass Hanna, who not only came to visit me, but also visited our people and consoled them.

I was especially indebted to Kass Hanna Hëbbi. He was the secretary of the Papal Nuncio of Mosul, and jobless ever since the Nuncio had left because of the war. He wrote and spoke French and Arabic well. Generously and without expecting anything in return, he [Kass Hanna] gave me Arabic lessons until the end of my stay. I had studied Arabic thoroughly before, both in the Chaldean and the [Armenian] schools of Baghdad, but I had been away from the Arabic-speaking world for 27 years and, from lack of use, had forgotten the language almost completely. Kass Hanna provided French and Arabic books for me to read and on occasion rendered me important services by acting as an intermediary between me and the outside world.

I should also mention with gratitude the name of Sarkis Kochunian, who sent me free of charge the *Zhamanag* newspaper [of Constantinople] during my entire stay in Mosul, addressing it to "Vartanush Yeretsian."²¹⁸

I had almost no contact with the Armenians [of Mosul]. Apart from Priest Krikor Hagopian²¹⁹ and Sarkis Chakmakjian, very few people visited me.

I went to the government building every 30 or 40 days to talk to the Governor and the Police Chief, although I was under no obligation to report to them, and to receive my salary. Occasionally I went to church, and also on occasion—when the weather was good—I took walks with Vartanush outside the city, toward Tahra.

Some women deportees from Garin came to see me occasionally to lament their sad state.

The Yezidi²²⁰ sheik Ismail Bey visited me twice. I had heard that Yezidis had sheltered on their Mount Sinjar many deportees that were being driven toward Mosul and treated them very well. Ismail Bey—who had visited Echmiadzin and Constantinople several years before and been hosted by the Patriarchate—proposed to arrange for my escape from Mosul to Baghdad through the desert. I thanked him and declined his offer, thinking that, if I fled, cruelty would be intensified upon our unfortunate deportees and that they could be forced to pay a very dear price for my flight. Indeed, a short time later, I received letters in Mosul from prisoners in Gesaria, who were expressing much satisfaction about my not trying to flee, also expressing their worry that, if I ever did such a thing, their suffering would be intensified.

Military rule in Mosul became increasingly severe. There were about 50 or 60 impoverished Armenians who, having somehow saved their lives, were doing various jobs and feeding their families. These people were rounded up and sent to a distant place for road construction work. Confiscations started in nearby villages and in the city itself. It was impossible to come through the city gates with grain, fresh or dried fruits, groceries, or fuel. Travelers leaving the city were subjected to body searches, and even a handful of raisins would be confiscated. As a result, the city was thrown into an artificial famine, and not only the refugees but even the locals started dying of hunger. Night and day one could hear people scream “*Jawa’an!*” [hungry!], all over the city.

During these terrible days, we witnessed something quite significant. The Germans and the Austrians had private gathering houses, where their co-nationals visiting the city—officers and soldiers—could stay. Many poor people subsisted on the Austrians’ kitchen waste, whereas the leftovers of the German kitchen were thrown to street dogs but never given to the poor. The Germans reportedly showed the same merciless behavior during their journey to Mesopotamia over Ras ul-Ain. On their way, they crossed paths with numerous pathetic Armenians recently robbed by desert tribes. When these unfortunates asked them for alms, the Germans turned their backs on them and did not show the slightest compassion.

At the time of famine, the area around Mosul had not only a large number of Armenians, but many Kurdish refugees, as well, who had fled here from the Russian attack on Van and Paghesh. In the winter of 1917/1918, the unfortunate people of Mosul were unable to find anything to eat, there was not even any grass on which [sheep] could graze. People roasted dogs, cats, and other dead animals on the *külhans* [heating stoves] of public baths. During those days, an Arab man started luring little boys to his home, killing and skinning them, and selling their cooked meat. One day, he was observed as he took a native woman’s son home to kill. The man’s home was searched and the skulls of 18 murdered boys found in the water well. Rumors immediately started spreading that these crimes had been committed by an Armenian refugee. Thanks to the Police Chief’s alertness and skill, the truth was immediately revealed: the Arab criminal and his wife were arrested within two or three days, everything was revealed through their own daughter’s confession, and the merciless criminal was hanged, together with his wife.

During these days, 200 to 300 Kurds were dying daily. In the streets, there were starving, dying Kurds lying everywhere, moaning “*Bërsima!*” [I am hungry!],²²¹ and dying by the tens

and hundreds. One day, I went to Governor Memduh and said to him, "The Armenians who are dying of hunger are condemned to death anyway, but you call these Kurds *multeji*—people fleeing the enemy and taking refuge with the government. How is it that you do not think of doing anything for them, and you let them die of hunger like this?" With a cynicism that is impossible to understand, the Governor answered, "*Sayê ile almamêshêz ya!* (We did not receive them by the count!)" With this response, I considered it pointless to continue and left.

It was also notable that, during this time, the Armenians' loss was relatively light. Being a relatively more refined and urbanized element [than the others in the area], Armenian women from Garin and other cities had by and large been employed for little or no wages in Mosul as servants in the homes of the wealthy, the military, and the city's officials. These women managed to keep themselves alive, and often their relatives and friends, too. Therefore, the number of Armenians dying from famine did not exceed 10 per day, climbing to 11 or 12 for only one or two days.

It was related to me that Armenians had had many more casualties during the previous year, when they had just arrived in Mosul without men and unfamiliar with the land. At that time, the road from Ras ul-Ain to Mosul was lined with Armenian corpses. Even after their arrival in Mosul, the deportees had suffered many losses because of typhus and their exhaustion from the trip.

Before the start of the mass killings at Der Zor, two groups from there had reached Mosul with relatively few losses. These refugees were later sent on to Kirkuk. Only a small fraction of those in the caravans sent to Mosul by way of Ras ul-Ain or Jezireh reached their destination. The caravan of *Garnetsi* sent by way of Diarbekir had reached Mosul with few losses, but only women had arrived and no men. Thus, the majority of the refugees in Mosul were women from Garin and Sghert, who had reached the city after 18 to 20 days on the road, subsisting only on grass.

It is natural that, during such times of loneliness, hunger, and persecution, many of the women abandoned their morals. Several groups managed to cross uninhabited areas with the help of Arabs, take refuge with the British authorities, and be saved. Regretfully, some of these were caught while trying to flee and severely punished with imprisonment or exile.

Two local Armenians, baker Serop and Safo, were among those organizing the flights. They were caught and paid for their sins at the gallows. One day Serop sent me a message that my brother had sent word from Baghdad, asking if I needed money. I would be able to receive money from Serop, on the condition that my brother pay Serop's brother in Baghdad. My financial condition was very worrisome. My monthly salary was paid in paper money, and the merchants did not accept it at the marketplace. It was necessary to take [the paper money] to a money-changer to exchange it for silver money, which could then be used for shopping. One paper pound fetched 13 or 14 silver piasters. My monthly salary of 24 pounds and 25 piasters—after the deduction of 75 piasters for the retirement fund—was barely 300 piasters. This amount was inadequate in the face of the high prices we had to pay for everything—despite having already stocked our bread [i.e., flour], *bulghur*, and oil. Therefore, I gladly accepted Serop's proposal, thinking that, if I did not, I would soon face hunger myself. I accepted 30 pounds (gold coins) from Serop and gave him a receipt to send to Baghdad to be cashed from my brother. This happened in February. About that time, a group of Armenians, guided by an Arab, again left for Baghdad. Serop gave my receipt/promissory note to the Arab guide, who he knew. After four or five days on the road, the group was captured—including

the Arab guide—by a military police patrol and brought to the city. It was heard that all the letters the Arab had been carrying had also been captured and were being translated. After Serop was arrested and jailed, our anxiety and fear was unimaginable. At any moment, I was expecting my arrest and death. Vartanush took a vow that, if we were spared this calamity, she would fast through the entire Lenten period and distribute meat dishes to the poor. We were praying day and night and living in a state of terror. After two months of crisis, we were relieved when we heard—after poor Serop was hanged—that even though the Arab guide was carrying my receipt, when he saw military police surrounding their convoy about to arrest them all, he took some of the papers out of his pocket, chewed them thoroughly, and swallowed. In this manner, my note fell into the government's hands.

I had good reason to worry—as Commander Khalil Pasha had announced—that “for as long as the Patriarch is here, the flight of people will not end. It is the Patriarch himself who is organizing them.” Governor Memduh had commented to one of his servants—either Zartar Didisian of Garin or Khachadurian's daughter Satenig—“*Bu Patrighin etini yiyemedik!*” (We could not eat this Patriarch's flesh!) Zartar quickly came to let me know. Therefore, both officials were gnashing their teeth and waiting for a small pretext on which to destroy me. They could very well have used the receipt for condemning me as a person communicating with or sending news to the enemy.

Another incident, as well, illustrated the government's hostile feelings.

A month or two earlier, when I visited the Governor, I said to him, “The State is giving me a monthly salary, because I have no revenue when I am out of office, and I am unable to open a store like a lay person. Therefore I ask you: Is it possible to live on this salary here and now?” He said, “No,” and added, “if you wish, I can help you, but you are giving bread to the poor.” (He had learned this from the *zhurnals*) “I thank you,” I said. “When I hear the voices of the poor day and night, the bread I eat does not go down my throat. I will be very pleased if you can send me to such a place where I can live on this salary. Perhaps Konia, or some other place, or to Jerusalem, where I can share with the monks their *karavana* [mess] and eat my fill.”

In his response, the Governor said, “If you wanted to go somewhere within the boundaries of my Governorate, I could have authorized it, but, because you are asking to go to a place that is outside, I have to write to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Talaat Bey is presently not there, because he has gone to Germany. I will write to him when he returns.” I thanked him and left. After a while, I visited the Governor again and reopened the subject. In his response, he said, “Talaat Pasha is back and I have written to him, but I have not yet received a response.”

The same day I also went to the Police Chief. I had hardly sat down in his room when a servant came and said that the Governor wanted him. After 15 or 20 minutes the Chief returned and said to me, “For God's sake, do not go to see this Governor again!” I looked at him with surprise and asked what had happened, and he asked me in turn, “What did you tell him when you went to see him earlier today?” I related our conversation, and the Chief explained, “He called me and asked, ‘What do you say, shall we send the Patriarch to Der Zor? Is it a good idea?’ And I answered, ‘Bey Effendi, Der Zor is very near the enemy. This man could escape from there and then we would be responsible.’ Upon this he said, ‘You are right! Let him stay here!’” Later I heard that once he arrived at home that evening, the Governor commented to his maids, “Your Patriarch wants to go to Jerusalem. Who knows what plots he will hatch once he arrives there!”

Apart from myself and Vartanush, in our household we had one of the grandchildren of my paternal uncle, Satenig—a little girl of about 8 or 10. Satenig's father had been killed in Sghert, and her mother and sister had died of hunger in Mosul.

Also living with us was Khoren Vartanian, a native of Kharpert who was about 14 or 15 years old. After his mother had died during the deportations, this young man had survived by becoming a servant for Kurds, then for Arabs in the area of Urfa. When the *ashiret* [tribe] keeping him had migrated near Mosul, he had fled and come to the city. The day after his arrival, he came to us and asked for clothes, so that he could change out of his Bedouin attire. I liked his alert mind and kept him in our household.²²² We also had living with us a little girl from Albisdan [Elbistan], called Güzel or Keghetsig.

By the autumn of 1917, we had made our preparations for the coming winter. In particular, I had purchased quite a lot of wheat, paying 50 to 60 piasters, and occasionally even 80 piasters, for one *vezneh*. The *vezneh* was a local measure that corresponded to 10 and a half *okhas*. Following the local custom, we had our wheat ground and stocked the flour at home. We had also made our own *bulghur*. When bread became expensive and hard to find, we started making bread every other day and distributed it to the poor—about five or six *okhas* every day. Alongside the Armenian poor I helped also the Muslim poor. Like the Muslim rich, who distributed alms indiscriminately, I distributed assistance to all the poor who came to me. We had a *tonir* [floor oven] at home for baking bread, but we did not have enough fuel. We barely managed to find enough wood for cooking our meals, and this was thanks to our neighbor, the baker Mehmed Emin. As mentioned, wood was a military supply and therefore subject to confiscation and generally hard to find.

Mehmed Emin was the baker at the bakery that was only a few feet from our house. A native of Mush, he had survived the 1915 massacre by becoming a Muslim. He had been assigned the task of baking bread for the troops. When the Russians approached Mush, he had fled to Mosul together with the Turks, and he continued as baker to the troops. He often visited me in the night and described to me with tears the massacre at Mush.

It goes without saying that as soon as the Armistice was announced, the baker tore off his turban. Mehmed Emin helped me a lot. He took turns with Serop baking our bread free of charge. Occasionally, he sent us wood and, during the winter, made sure that a fire was burning in our stove every day. After the war, he went to Constantinople, and I do not know where he went from there. Also in Mosul were the Uzunian brothers of Diarbekir, who had also become Muslims. They were in charge of filtering the petroleum brought from Gayyara and Zakho for the army's needs, and always supplied me with free gasoline. The *Mudir* of the *Régie* was a certain Rajis Effendi, an Assyrian Catholic married to an Armenian woman. Throughout my stay, he sent me tobacco free of charge. Sarkis Chakmakjian provided us with furniture, from his own home or from other people's homes. Mrs. Zartar Khachadurian and her daughter were servants at the Governor's house, and from there they brought us sugar.

Sultan Reshad died early in 1918. Sultan Muhammed Vahdeddin²²³ succeeded him, and demonstrated quite a bit of vigor as soon as he ascended to the throne. Vahdeddin continued his struggle against Ittihad to the end, but without much success. He reclaimed from Enver the title of Commander-in-Chief of the Army, and started to show his influence in the country's political life. During Vahdeddin's time, Ahmed Riza started raising his voice in the Senate in favor of the Armenians, and a general amnesty was declared for all [people accused of] political crimes.

When our Governor received the order for a general amnesty, he inquired with Constantinople as to how he should behave toward me. He received the response: "The former Patriarch of the Armenians is also eligible for the amnesty." After this, police surveillance over me ended. Our deported nationals ran to me to ask what course they should follow. I announced to all of them: "Let no one move from their places. We will be able to decide what to do only after the war ends."

During October 1918, the Turkish army, unable to resist the British attacks, started withdrawing, and many of its soldiers were captured. The evacuation of Mosul was inevitable. Government workers started moving to Zakho and Jezireh, and, on the 21st of October [1918], the Turks had entirely emptied the city. On that night, we felt happy that we were going to be liberated soon, but we also feared that mobs might take advantage of the absence of government authority. We were up practically the whole night.

After midnight, rumors started circulating in the streets that the Armistice had been signed. In the morning, we still did not believe these rumors. But the return of the Turkish officials was convincing proof that they were true. The government building was immediately put in order, and the authorities started tracking down and reclaiming goods that had been taken by the mob during the past day or two—desks, chairs, doors, windows, etc. The Governor did not come back immediately, but the commander of the troops, Ali Ihsan Pasha, arrived and took charge of the government. In a day or two, even taxes started being collected. We were living through uncertain times, and were overtaken by grief. Our eyes were fixed on the door, and we waited for messengers to bring us news.

At the time the Armistice was signed, the British army had come up to Hamam Alil, which was approximately two hours from [the limits of] Mosul on foot.

When the British started dropping flyers from their planes announcing the Armistice, the Turks did not know about it yet.

In early November, British officers came to Mosul, met with Turkish government officials, and left. On the 6th of November, the British forces arrived and set up their headquarters just outside of Mosul. On the same day, they told Ali Ihsan that he should leave the city within 24 hours, and the Turkish army should leave within 12 hours. The commander resisted, saying that the enemy forces had not occupied Mosul when the Armistice was signed, but he was compelled to leave after the 24 hours were over, and his soldiers, too, started pulling out of the city.²²⁴

The British immediately organized the city's administration, retaining only a small portion of the Turkish functionaries. The Commander of the British Army, Lieutenant General Sir William Marshall, arrived in Mosul later the same week. He invited the spiritual leaders to the government building—myself among them—and gave a speech.

The Commander announced that the city was now occupied by the British Army, and therefore they were now in charge. From the citizens, he demanded obedience to the laws and cleanliness, and added, "In all my life I had not seen such a dirty city!"

After two years spent in captivity, I felt myself liberated when the British arrived and took a deep breath. I did not consider abandoning the Armenian deportees congregated in the city and leaving for Constantinople or even for Baghdad. Instead, I started making plans to improve the deportees' condition.

I rented a more presentable house for three months. The British, having found me in Mosul, thought that I normally lived there—like the Patriarch of the Chaldeans. Accordingly, they placed me on the same footing as the other spiritual leaders.²²⁵ I soon became friends

with the Political Officer (*hakim-i siyasi*), Lieutenant Colonel Leachman,²²⁶ who spoke not only French but also Arabic, including several dialects. In fact, thanks to his deep mastery of Arabic, before the British Army had started advancing from Baghdad, Leachman had twice come to Mosul in Bedouin attire and returned with much useful information. He told me with a smile how a policeman had grown suspicious and arrested him during these excursions, but he had gone free after giving the policeman a *mejdieh*, and how, on another occasion, he had carried the Mayor's purchases home from the marketplace as a [fictitious] porter for one piaster.

Leachman's attitude toward me became more friendly when I had a chance to express myself during a meeting organized by Arabs shortly after the arrival of the British in Mosul. I had received an invitation to a meeting at the house of the very prominent El Omari family of the city, where the leaders and notables of all the Muslim and Christian [Arab] communities were going to be present. On the announced day, I had an appointment with Lieutenant Colonel Leachman, but I had two or three free hours before that, so I went to take part in this meeting, which was well attended, especially by Muslims. Of the Christians, the Chaldean Patriarch and the Bishop of the Assyrian Jacobites were present, and I was there with Sarkis Chakmakjian.

One of the people present explained the meeting's purpose: to submit a petition to the British authorities, expressing that the population of Mosul, being mainly Arab, wanted their land to be joined with Hejaz.²²⁷ Some of those present were aware of the issue beforehand and had brought other variants of the text of the petition, which they started reading.

I saw that the time of my appointment with Leachman was approaching and that there was no end in sight to the sequential reading of these texts. I requested a turn and I addressed those present as follows.

Esteemed members of the meeting! Having an appointment, I am obliged to leave, yet I do not want to leave without expressing my opinion. Thus, I ask for your indulgence in allowing me to say a few words. From what has been said and read, it is clear that there is a general desire to see Mosul joined with Hejaz. As the spiritual leader of the Armenians, I do not have the right to express an opinion on this, because the Armenians of Mosul are only your guests. As soon as the roads are safe they will leave, and they will keep in their hearts gratitude toward the people of Mosul, as the Mosulites treated them with goodwill and compassion during their days of need. The native Armenians of Mosul are so few in number that they do not have the right to speak. Nevertheless, I am your compatriot by birth, and, if you allow me to speak as a friend, modestly I wish to express an opinion.

Upon seeing signs of approval, I continued.

In my opinion, such a letter or petition is unnecessary, and it even goes against the rules of diplomacy. We did not invite the British here and therefore we cannot tell them, "Go away!" They occupied this land with the might of their arms. If some of the *ashirets* joined the British, that is because the British knew how to win their hearts. It is necessary to be patient for a while, and as leaders you have to work to raise the people's consciousness. The *khutbeh* [Friday sermon] in your mosques still mentions the Turkish Sultan's name, the educational program of your schools is still

prepared by the Turks. Your people still do not know that they are Arabs and therefore a nation different from the Turks. Raise the people's consciousness through the schools and the press, and the rest will come by itself. Hejaz is not going away, and it may well annex Mosul once it has taken the Arab world under its control, because Mosul is on the edge of the Arab world. This is my opinion, and certainly you are free to accept it or not.

After saying these words, I left immediately. Later I heard that there was a moment of silence after I had left, after which several people said, "What he said is right!" And the idea of a petition was abandoned.

Lieutenant Colonel Leachman heard²²⁸ what happened at this meeting on the following day, and after this he started demonstrating more goodwill toward me.

A week later, the *Naqib*²²⁹ of Mosul came to my house, accompanied by two notables. They asked me what would be preferable—British or French protection? [They explained to me that] the Catholics of Mosul (Chaldeans and Assyrians), led by the Chaldean Patriarch—whose seat was in Mosul—preferred the French and their protection. I told them about the cruelty and abuse France was committing in Algeria, which was being exposed in the French press and causing scandals. I emphasized to them that the British had administered colonies for centuries, that they put an Englishman at the head of each branch of government and allowed the local people a large share in the administration. I also said that Britain sent [qualified] people to administer its colonies, but France did not have such people to send, and those sent were often adventurers.

The *Naqib* and his companions, convinced, thanked me and left.

E. Under British Occupation

As mentioned, the deportees who had reached Mosul were for the most part women, girls, and infants from cities. They had reached Mosul and survived there thanks to the money and jewelry they had taken with them.

It would have been a difficult task even for tough men to wander and survive in foreign lands for almost three years, and these urban, delicate women were finally exhausted by it. They sold their few rings, bracelets, and earrings, spent the money on food, and then entered the homes of strangers as servants. Some of them were fortunate, ending up in the homes of honorable men; these women remained comfortable and virtuous until the end. Some other women stayed in their own homes and earned a living doing embroidery and sewing, but many Armenian women fell morally, especially those who were hired as maids by single men—military officers or civilian functionaries. There were also those who fell completely and became prostitutes.

Unfortunately, the last two groups of women immersed themselves in this filth with the encouragement and assistance of certain Armenians. A local rascal named Soghomon Zakarian (Suleimane Zako) was very prominent among these, and, through his lowly profession, he built quite a fortune.

One of the first things the British did was to subject all these women to medical examinations, because it was very likely that their officers and soldiers were going to have relations with them. All women who had contracted syphilis were rounded up and placed in the

hospital for treatment. When Lieutenant Colonel Leachman learned that a large part of these women were Armenians, he sent me word through Dr. Hanna Khayat that he wanted us to meet. This was the meeting I was scheduled to attend on the day of the [aforementioned] meeting held by the [notables] of Mosul.

I reported to Lieutenant Colonel Leachman and told him I had come after receiving the order he had sent me through Dr. Khayat. I thanked him for his caring toward me and requested that he show the same caring toward our unfortunate, deported people. Seeing his willingness to help us, I proposed that these fallen women be handed over to us, together with beds from the hospital and an allotment of 2,000 rupees per day for their subsistence. I also requested 1,000 kilograms of wool from the government warehouse, which these women would be given to spin.

In addition, I asked to be given 500 kilograms of wheat per day, which we would make into bread and distribute to the poor. I entreated him to help us collect Armenian infants who were living with Muslims and to place under our care Armenian women who were cohabiting with Muslims.

I considered it essential for the police to be informed of these efforts, and I requested that the police authorities be issued orders to help us. Leachman accepted all that I said, and promised that he would prepare such an order. Encouraged by this, I started working immediately to organize at least the care of those deportees and orphans who had come to Mosul.

The Jews of Baghdad, having heard that Mosul was taken [by the British], had made a collection and sent the resulting sum of 850 pounds to the government for distribution to the poor. The government had entrusted the money to the *Naqib*, instructing that it was to be distributed among the different communities through consultations with their spiritual leaders.

The distribution took place on the 13th of November [1918], and our share was decided to be 100 pounds. A few days later, the issue of the administration of the *Hilal Ahmar* (Red Crescent) hospital was resolved; the government distributed to the city's poor the money that had remained with them; on this occasion we received 2,000 piasters. Putting these two sums together, I rented five houses to accommodate and protect from the rigors of winter the homeless, as well as those gradually coming to the city from near and far.

In a matter of days, all that I had requested from Leachman had been accomplished. I set aside one of these houses for the fallen women. I visited them and said that, until now, the Nation had had its hands tied and could not do much for them, but from now on they were under the care of the Nation and would have to resign from their former life and live honorably. All of the women started to sob and said that they had lived that shameful life because they had been left all alone and hungry. They promised not to bring shame to the Nation's name from then on. It was a truly moving scene.

Supervisors were appointed over these women, and others, newly found, were added to their ranks. In all there were 250 women. Pots and pans and cutlery were purchased for them, and—in addition to bread—they were served hot meals. These women and others making requests were given wool to knit socks for the orphans. They were remunerated at the rate of 2 piasters and 10 *para* (silver) for each 40 drams knitted.²³⁰

On the 4th of December [1918], the wheat we had requested started to be delivered to us. We immediately had it ground and made into bread and began distributing it to the needy. The government gave us the wheat based on a daily ration of half a kilogram per person (i.e.,

enough for 1,000 needy persons); to save some of the wheat, I had 120 drams²³¹ of bread distributed per person. The needy received their bread at the church, by presenting tickets bearing my seal that I had issued to them. The Protestants took their bread to their meeting house for distribution.

I would go to the church every day and see groups of Armenians in Kurdish, Yezidi, peasant, farmer, and shepherd's attire. Toward the end of December, when I left Mosul, the number of the needy had reached 1,700 people.

From the ranks of the refugees, I selected several young men to help me with the bread distribution work and with the work of collecting orphans kept in Muslim families. I paid a small wage to some, and others—who were not needy—helped me without any remuneration. To these young men, I entrusted the following daily activities.

- (1) They took the wheat from the warehouse, brought it to our store to have it sifted, sent it to the mill to be ground, took it to the bakery to have it made into bread, brought the bread to the church, and distributed it.
- (2) They took the wool from the store, had it washed, distributed it to the women who were to spin it, received the spun wool, and paid the women.
- (3) They walked in the streets and the marketplaces, collected orphans, and brought them to me.

Two honorable priests, themselves deportees, worked with these young men: Priest Parsegh Torosian of Aslanbeg²³² and Priest Ghevont of Geyveh.²³³ Before the Armistice, I had read an article reprinted in *Zhamanag* (I think it had been translated from *Tanin*), in which an attack was mounted against the appointment of someone like Bp. Mushegh Seropian to the post of Prelate for Baghdad. As soon as the Armistice was signed, I wrote Bp. Mushegh a letter and informed him that I was in Mosul. My relatives in Baghdad, hearing various rumors, had been very worried about me. Various rumors claimed that the Turks had taken me to the gallows, murdered me, or taken me in an unknown direction when leaving the city. When my relatives heard that I was alive, they were greatly relieved.

About mid-November, Bp. Mushegh sent me a telegram of inquiry: “[Please inform] how many Armenian refugees there are in Mosul and how many of them need assistance, so that we may organize relief work.” Immediately, I responded with a telegram that there were almost 3,000 refugees in Mosul, of whom 1,000 needed immediate assistance. I also sent him by mail a detailed report, in which I explained the condition of the Armenian deportees in Mosul and the surrounding area and their needs.

The state of war had not come to an end, and my letters were taking a long time to reach Baghdad. When I became aware of this, I telegraphed Bp. Mushegh to come to Mosul quickly, so that we could do what was required together. I had written to him that the deportees in Mosul had many needs, and these needs were increasing as more deportees came to the region from districts near and far. Petitions needed to be submitted to take significant quantities of relief to faraway districts.

On the 10th or the 11th of December [1918], I applied to Leachman again, stating that the daily allotment of 500 kilograms of wheat had been established on the basis of 1,000 needy people, whereas now—with the new arrivals from the surrounding areas—their number exceeded 1,500 and requesting that the daily wheat ration be increased. Leachman informed me that the representative of the American Armeno-Syrian Society,²³⁴ Mr.

McDowell, had already left Baghdad and was expected in Mosul in a few days and that this issue had to be resolved with him. Mr. McDowell arrived in Mosul on the 15th of December [1918]. When I met him, he said that he had come for the Assyrians, but seeing the Armenians' destitute condition, he would immediately report this and would undertake work for them, [but] only after he received a response. McDowell said much the same several days later, when he came to our house for a welcome visit upon Bp. Mushegh Seropian's arrival from Baghdad. Nevertheless, he also announced to us that, in view of the very large number of destitute Armenians in the area—about whom he had not known anything previously—he would start relief work with the available money. He would send a telegram to New York for money and another to Egypt for assistance. As can be seen, even before Bp. Mushegh's arrival in Mosul, through my repeated petitions, relief work on behalf of the deportees and orphans had already started taking form.

I wish that I had not telegraphed Bp. Mushegh to come to Mosul, and that Bp. Mushegh had not told the British authorities in Baghdad that he wanted to go to Mosul because I had invited him! I wish that I had not given my approval to Bp. Mushegh's arrival in Mosul when Lieutenant Colonel Leachman—following the instructions the Baghdad authorities had wired him—asked me about it!

Bp. Mushegh's arrival did not help us, and it probably harmed our interests. With his bold and imprudent actions, Bp. Mushegh caused disputes and scandals. On account of the state of war, means of transportation had been placed under military authorities' control and it was difficult to find them. Bp. Mushegh took advantage of the British authorities' goodwill and, to carry his and his secretary Mardiros Kuyumjian's possessions, received permission to use one automobile and several mules.

Regretfully, Bp. Mushegh abused the goodwill shown to him by engaging in commercial activities. In the name of the orphans and at reduced rates he had carried to Mosul large quantities of coffee, fabrics, ready-made clothes, leather, sugar, etc., which were then sold in the marketplace of Mosul as though they were the personal goods of Mardiros Kuyumjian. Bp. Mushegh arrived in civilian clothes and continued to go about in them, except when dealing with government offices. When local non-Armenians visited me, I felt obliged to explain that Bp. Mushegh had lived in the United States, and adopted the habits of American clergymen.

From the very day of his arrival, Bp. Mushegh started criticizing right and left. I became his first target, because he had not been happy about the way he had been met upon his arrival.

There was a simple reason for this, though. Bp. Mushegh had sent me a telegram announcing the 18th of December as his date of arrival, but because of mud on the highways, he had arrived one day late. On the announced day of arrival I had sent several priests and other people to greet him, but only a fraction of this group came out on the following day, which the Bishop found inadequate. Indeed, he seemed to have expected me at the head of the welcome delegation and later complained that he had not been welcomed in an appropriate fashion.

Perhaps because of this, and possibly because he saw me as an obstacle to his unbridled and audacious manner of conducting his affairs, he made doing away with me his first pre-occupation and, as the most suitable solution, decided to have me sent away.

He could see that I was already established in Mosul, enjoyed good relations with the [British] government, and had been able to get a good start on the work to be done thanks to the help of the government. There was not much left for him to do.

This situation wounded his pride, and—to distance me from himself—on the second day of his arrival he suggested sending a telegram to Boghos Nubar Pasha in Paris, telling him that for the Nation's honor and vital interests, the Patriarch had to go to Constantinople. Because I did not have any information from the outside world, I agreed to this suggestion, as a way of seeing what others thought about me, and, on the 21st of December, the telegram was sent. While waiting for the response, Bp. Mushegh and I devoted ourselves to the care of our flock.

Lieutenant Colonel Leachman had gone to Sinjar, and, when he returned on the 24th of December, Bp. Mushegh and I presented to him the following memorandum with the following requests.

1. That the daily ration of wheat be raised from 500 to 1,500 kilograms.
2. That we be given the beds the government had confiscated from Turkish hospitals so that we might use them in the orphanage that was planned.
3. That the cotton in the military warehouse be given to us so that we could give it to 500 or so women in need, for them to spin and earn a living.
4. Because 25,000 rupees a month was required for the needs of the orphanage and other persons in need, and we were able to provide 15,000 of this from sources outside the city, we asked the government to give us 10,000 rupees a month until the exiles returned to their native areas.

We had both signed this memorandum. Lieutenant Colonel Leachman looked indignant when he saw us. He read the memorandum and gave us a vague answer, saying that he would need to speak with McDowell. Bp. Mushegh and I informed him that we had spoken with McDowell, but he insisted that this is what he would need to do, and he sent us away. Just as we were leaving, Leachman turned to Mushegh and said, “You complain about me, and then you come asking me for favors!” When Bp. Mushegh objected that Leachman had not helped him liberate the Armenian women being held by the sheik of the Enizeh [Unaizeh] tribe, Leachman answered, “What! Did you want us to wage another war against the Arab *ashirets* [tribes] for a few Armenian women?” As he was saying this, Leachman's face flushed from anger. Being entirely unfamiliar with the issue and caught by surprise, I was obliged to remain silent, considering it more prudent to leave.

In his book, *Tidumner yev Tadumner* [Intentions and Judgments], Bp. Mushegh Seropian mentions this issue (on p. 115) and complains that the British Prefect did not help him. Mushegh had complained to the Prefect about Leachman, but the Prefect had ignored the complaint.

Lieutenant Colonel Leachman had won over to the British side the Arab *ashirets* of Mesopotamia, and the British authorities did not make any moves without consulting him. As we came to see, Leachman was cautious toward the Arab *ashirets*, and did not want to upset them. Despite this, it appeared that he had behaved harshly toward a certain Sheik Farhat of the same *ashiret* [i.e., Unaizeh], and one of the Sheik's sons killed him. The Sheik was put in jail and died there. This incident, too, showed to what extent Leachman's concerns were valid.

I was greatly affected by the incident between Mushegh and Leachman. I worried about the coldness between them, because this could have an adverse effect on our refugees and orphans in Mosul once I had left the city.

After leaving Leachman's office, I took Mushegh with me and we visited Mr. Nolder, the Prefect of Mosul and its surroundings. I thanked him for his willingness to make an

announcement during his visit to the district of Dehok [Dahuk] to the effect that he had appointed a Chaldean of Dehok, a man named Gabriel, to collect the Armenians in the town and the villages. After this announcement, Gabriel collected men, women, and children, brought them to Mosul, and delivered them to us, all his expenses paid from the government treasury.

Upon my request, Leachman and Nolder had a letter of introduction drafted so that Gabriel and Apraham, a volunteer soldier from Sharnakh, could go to Dehok and Zakho and collect all the remaining Armenians. These two men left Mosul to undertake their mission the day before I left the city.

A month previously, I had asked Lieutenant Colonel Leachman to help me collect Armenian children being kept by Muslim families by making an announcement. Leachman fulfilled his promise by having a notice printed in the 10th of December [1918] issue of the official Arabic daily *Mosul*, in which the residents of the Province were instructed to deliver to Leachman all Armenian women, boys, or girls they might have been keeping *in an unacceptable manner*.

The final clause allowed the targeted population to interpret the notice in an arbitrary manner, and no one wanted to deliver willingly the Armenians they were keeping in their homes. I was compelled to ask Lieutenant Colonel Leachman to give orders so that the police would help us—when we informed them—take by force those Armenians who were still being held in Muslim households.

Leachman gave orders, and the police implemented them precisely: Armenian women and children were taken—sometimes by force—from houses that we indicated to them and sent to us. Several youths generously helped us with this work. I could not, however, benefit for long from this arrangement. Until Mushegh's arrival, I had been able to reclaim only 30 children, of which several were in my home and the rest in another building. Not having enough money, I had not been able to rent a building to be used exclusively as an orphanage.

I was waiting for Mushegh to make an arrangement in this regard. Indeed, after his arrival we rented a big building and moved all the orphans there. All preparations were not ready, however, because the linen Mushegh had brought was delivered to us only on the 27th of December.

On the 28th of December we opened the orphanage. On the 25th of December I had handed over to Mushegh all my accounts and the remaining money.

On the 24th of December, hardly an hour after I returned home from the visits I had paid to Leachman and Nolder in the company of Mushegh, I received a letter from Leachman in Arabic, in which he asked me to come and see him immediately. I did as he had asked.

Upon my arrival, Lieutenant Colonel Leachman told me that the War Office in London had sent orders to Baghdad—which were forwarded to him—instructing him to make all the necessary arrangements for my journey to Constantinople and that he was under the impression that these orders had been issued pursuant to a request originating from the Armenians of Constantinople. "Therefore," he said, "I am ready to use every means to send you away comfortably."

I thanked Leachman and informed him that I would be able to leave in three or four days, and that I would need two or three automobiles for my journey. In addition, I needed a certain sum of money to repay my debts, because there were no funds allocated for my journey. Leachman immediately ordered that I be paid 1,000 rupees. (From this sum, I repaid the 30

pounds that I had borrowed from the late baker Serop to his brother Matti.) Leachman then informed me that he had made the following arrangements in response to our petition of that morning:

1. The daily ration of wheat was to be increased from 500 to 1,500 kilograms.
2. All the cotton in the warehouse was to be delivered to us.
3. He had requested authorization from Baghdad for the 10,000 rupees per month.
4. Wherever we located beds and informed the authorities, he would issue orders for it to be delivered to us.

I gave him my sincere thanks and departed.

Regretfully, the information we had been given about the beds turned out to be wrong. We located only 120 wooden bed frames which were delivered to us two days later, together with the cotton. The wheat, too, started being delivered regularly.

I regret to say that, after my departure from Mosul, Lieutenant Colonel Leachman left aside his humanitarian attitude and started implementing policies aimed at befriending the majority Arab Muslim element on the land.

As we had seen, during his time in Baghdad, Leachman had not wanted to irritate the *ashirets* by collecting Armenian women and infants from their hands. After my departure, he followed the same path in Mosul. He even demanded that Mushegh deliver to him certain of the infants that I had claimed from Muslims and returned these to Muslims. It is not improbable that his antagonism toward Mushegh played some part in this decision. Mushegh protested vigorously against Leachman's behavior and wrote to me in Baghdad. I also protested, but our protests only served to upset Leachman, and he intensified his activities. Bp. Mushegh had not been able to win the hearts of government personalities in Mosul, and a tense situation had come about between himself and the British.

When I was in Baghdad, I received a letter from Bp. Mushegh (dated the 30th/31st of December [1918]), informing me that, the day after I had left, the government had demanded turning over a boy named Hayg, two girls from Yalova named Hayganush and Azniv, and an underage girl from Rodosto who was pregnant by a Muslim. When Bp. Mushegh refused to turn them over, the policeman informed him that he had Leachman's orders to arrest him. Bp. Mushegh was compelled to obey and delivered these children to the government, which returned Hayg to a Muslim woman with whom he had lived previously, the two girls from Yalova to a retired Turk named Abdullah, and the pregnant girl to the Muslim who had raped her.

Bp. Mushegh was very upset at what happened and sent a bitterly worded protest and forwarded a copy of this protest note for me to give to [the Civilian Commissioner] Wilson.²³⁵ In this letter, Bp. Mushegh informed me that he had wanted to send—on behalf of the Armenians of Mesopotamia—New Year's greetings telegrams to the Presidents of the United States and France and to the Kings of England and Italy, but that Leachman had not allowed it.

This letter showed to what extent Bp. Mushegh's relations with Leachman were strained in Mosul. In a session of the Deportees' Commission of Baghdad that was held under my presidency, the matter was debated and, after long consultations, the Commission decided that I should make a written appeal to the Civil Commissioner. I gave instructions for the drafting of this letter to Mr. Hagop Ghazigian, the Secretary of the Prelacy, and, after I

returned from a visit to Baqubah, I had it translated into English and sent it on the 8th of January [1919].

In my letter, after recounting what had happened in Mosul, I insisted that the children, reclaimed [from Bp. Mushegh] and returned to the Turks, were Armenians and added that, if the British Government found it inopportune or untimely for us to continue gathering our children, then they should let me know, so that I would instruct my representatives accordingly. Unfortunately, I left Baghdad without receiving a response to this letter and was unable to bring about a reconciliation between Leachman and Mushegh, which would certainly have benefited the refugees and the orphans.

From the very beginning, Bp. Mushegh approached the British as though he were still dealing with Turkish government officials. He lodged complaints against Leachman with others, failing to understand that the British do not interfere in the work of their officials, always siding with their officials and maintaining their authority vis-à-vis foreigners.

Bp. Mushegh had constant conflicts with the British and especially with Leachman, who was omnipotent in Mosul. Bp. Mushegh, being passionate, proved to be useless, and the Nation suffered from it. He did not even notice that the French representative in Baghdad had almost been neutralized, and he could not correspond unhindered with his colleague in Basra. Because of his lack of foresight, Mushegh was condemned to inactivity after my departure from Mosul.

Thus, barely 30 or 40 days after my departure, Bp. Mushegh saw that the government had taken everything into its hands, including the distribution of rations to the refugees and to the orphanages. He quickly made arrangements to transfer responsibility for the refugees to the local Deportees' Commission and left for Adana, presenting his illness as an excuse. When he attempted to return to Mesopotamia, the British government stopped him at Der Zor and informed him that he had been barred from entering Mesopotamia.

F. From Mosul to Constantinople

When I arrived home from Lieutenant Colonel Leachman's office, I found the following telegram:

*"Paris. 23. Patriarchate Arménien. Niaven [Zaven] Mosul. Délégation Nationale serait reconnaissante votre Béatitude venir Paris plus tôt possible prêter son précieux concours. Prions emmener avec vous professeur Khachadurian. Cablez réponse. Noubar."*²³⁶

It seemed, then, that Boghos Pasha had learned from Mushegh's telegram that I was in Mosul and had telegraphed me to go to Paris. My going to Constantinople had nothing to do with this request. The order from the War Office in London for me to be taken to Constantinople was not connected with Boghos Pasha's telegram in any way. We heard later that, as soon as the Armistice was signed, the official bodies of the Armenians in Constantinople had applied to the Turkish government to have the merger of the Constantinople Patriarchate and the Cilician Catholicosate annulled, the National Constitution reestablished, and have me returned to the city.

The Turkish government had first telegraphed Ali Ihsan Pasha in Nizibin [Nusaybin] and learned that I had stayed behind when the Turks left Mosul. Then they applied to the British

High Commissioner in Constantinople and asked them to find out where I was. The High Commissioner, through the Ministry of War in London, made inquiries in Baghdad. The British authorities in Baghdad asked Mushegh—he told me about this later in Mosul—and, having ascertained that I was alive and in Mosul, they answered the query.

When the National authorities in Constantinople learned that I was in Mosul, they immediately requested that the British High Commissioner grant the favor of my return. Pursuant to the Commissioner's request, the Ministry of War in London telegraphed Commander Marshall in Baghdad to send me to Constantinople, and this order was forwarded to Mosul.

On Sunday morning, the 29th of December [1918], Leachman's assistant, Mr. Scott, arrived at our house with three automobiles to send me on my way. I departed about 9:00 a.m., having with me my brother's daughter [Vartanush]; the above-mentioned Mihran Boyajian; Zareh Arevian, the military dentist from Izmir who had retreated to Mosul with the Ottoman Army in Persia and stayed; and Movses Ashjian, the interpreter of the United States Consulate in Iskenderun who had been deported to Mosul and also stayed. As a sign of respect, Mr. Scott accompanied us until we left the city and, to see to our comfort and safety, assigned to us as an escort a military official in a separate automobile.

On the same day, we reached Shergat, where the military authorities had already been alerted by telephone as to my arrival and extended us hospitality. On the 30th of December [1918] we left Shergat and arrived at Beiji, which is the departure point for trains leaving for Baghdad. Here, too, we were the guests of the military authorities, who had large tents prepared for us. After we settled in, they put at our disposal an interpreter and two soldiers to keep watch over the tents. We were immediately informed that we would not be able to leave that day, because the wagons were full with officers leaving on New Year's holidays, and they wanted to be in Baghdad on the 31st of [December]. We spent the night there, sharing a supper table with the local Major. We left toward evening on the following day and arrived in Baghdad on the 1st of January 1919.

Apart from my own relatives, many co-nationals—having heard the news [of my arrival] from the Prelacy—had come out to greet me. Bp. Mushegh had informed the Prelacy of my arrival, and the Mosul government had informed the Baghdad government. I went straight to the Prelacy and received the visitors. The [British] General Headquarters (GHQ) had written to the Prelacy, requesting to be notified when I arrived. I did, accordingly, let them know of my arrival, and, the same evening, a Major came to wish me welcome in the name of Commander Marshall. I asked the Major to transmit my thanks and respects to the Commander and to express my gratitude to the British government for the amenities it had put at my disposal. I requested from the Major an appointment with the Commander General so that I might offer my respects personally. Similarly, I sent a visiting card each to the Civil Commissioner [Wilson] and the Military Governor, requesting appointments.

Commander Marshall received me on the 3rd of January [1919]. Accompanying me were Mihran Boyajian and Zareh Arevian. First, I expressed my thanks to the British government, which, ever since occupying these areas, had dealt kindly with the Armenians and extended to them every amenity. The Commander made reference to the letter that I had written with Bp. Mushegh's advice, carried on my person, and sent to him upon my arrival, requesting that Armenian volunteer troops be recruited from the refugees in Mosul, given training, and escorted to their homeland. He said that it was not clear whether Mosul would remain in English or French hands, and, for this reason, such a thing could not yet be done.

Then the Commander informed me that General Antranig was continuing to stage attacks in various places, burning villages and massacring people—generally disregarding the signing of the Armistice! He announced, “I have reminded him about this. He is diminishing our sympathy toward the Armenians.” I answered, “I do not know anything about these events, because I have been cut off from communication and I still do not have information from certain places. When I establish contact with him, I shall try to have him understand these things.”

I had heard that Armenian volunteers in Baqubah were going to be sent to Mosul. I asked the Commander whether this was true and, if so, the reason for it. He said that this had been considered because of provisioning difficulties, but then it was seen that the British forces in Mosul were having to be provisioned from Baghdad, and the idea was abandoned.

Then I asked whether the arrangement for me to be sent to Constantinople had been made by the British or the Turkish government. He responded that he had received orders from the War Office in London, and it was probable that the orders were issued following a petition from the Armenians of Constantinople. I explained that I had also received a telegram from Boghos Pasha asking me to go to Paris. The Commander looked at a piece of writing in front of him and stated, “The British government attributes great importance to Your presence in Constantinople. You may go to Paris after putting Your affairs in order in Constantinople,” and suggested that I answer Boghos Pasha accordingly. I thanked the Commander and left. His assistant caught up with me in the courtyard and informed me that my departure would be telegraphed to Constantinople and Paris.

The same day, at 3:00 p.m., I visited the Military Governor with an appointment. I thanked him and requested that an automobile be placed at my disposal so that I could go to Baqubah and come back. He gave his approval.

Also the same day, I had an appointment with the Civil Commissioner [Wilson]. Accompanying me were Mihran Boyajian, Zareh Arevian, and Priest Vahan Tajirian. I thanked Wilson for the goodwill being shown by the government toward the refugees in Baghdad and Mosul and especially for his sympathy. I requested that the amount of 5,000 rupees that Bp. Mushegh had sent me from Baghdad to Mosul about a month ago be given to Bp. Mushegh, who was now in Mosul. Wilson responded that Leachman had already telegraphed him to say that the matter had been settled.

I took advantage of the opportunity to express that, in Mosul, I had applied to the government for a monthly subsidy of 10,000 rupees and that Leachman had promised to inquire about it with Baghdad. I said, “Now I wish to repeat my request in person.” He suggested that I submit my request in writing and gave me hope that it could be arranged. Then I requested that goods sent from abroad and destined for Armenian refugees be exempted from customs taxes. He objected that these could be for other persons. I commented that, because these goods were by and large intended for the refugees in Mosul, the government could easily supervise their distribution. He liked this idea and again asked me to submit it in writing.

In addition, I asked, “In four or five months, when the refugees in Mesopotamia return to their places, will their transportation expenses be met by the [British] government or the Armenian nation?” He said, “We have not yet thought anything about that.” I stated that I had asked simply to know what was planned, so that if the Nation was to bear a share, I could begin making arrangements for that as soon as I returned to Constantinople. Upon this, with evident goodwill, he said, “The government will take care of the transportation.” I thanked him once more and left.

The following day, on Sunday, the 5th of January [1919], I went to Baqubah with me Mr. Arevian in the automobile provided for me by the government. I was undertaking this trip upon the request of Mr. Samuel, a representative of the local [Armenians], who had asked me to go there to resolve a problem that had been occupying everyone's minds.

Before my arrival, Bp. Mushegh had applied to the [British] Headquarters and requested that the Armenian volunteers being trained in Baqubah be allowed to form a separate battalion and to be known as an Armenian unit. He had received the response that the Armenians would be formed as the Armenian portion of the Assyrian Division and that they were being trained only to escort the refugees back to their country and to keep the peace once on their native soil.

[Earlier] when I had reached Baghdad, I had heard that these Armenian soldiers were being asked to sign a sheet of paper with the following contents.

I agree to serve in the Assyrian Brigade until I am discharged from military service. Also, I (agree) to obey the legitimate orders given to me by those who have ranks higher than myself and to submit to the Indian Army's land forces. I agree to being sent to my native land, where the Assyrian regiment may [also] be sent.

Our soldiers did not want to sign this paper, which was becoming a big problem.

I arrived in Baqubah and reported to the commander, General Austin, who had already received a telegram from Baghdad about my arrival. He received me courteously in the tent. General Austin briefed me on the refugees and the structure of the troops and asked me to dine with him. He led me to the orphanage, where the Director, Mr. Arsen, met us. We visited the orphanage tents then left to go to the Armenian troops' headquarters. Mr. Levon, the commander of the Armenian troops, met us in the company of several of his subordinate officers. Shortly thereafter, the Armenian troops' trainer, Lieutenant Colonel McCarthy came, together with another officer. They talked about the sheet the Armenian soldiers were being asked to sign and showed me a copy of the letter Bp. Mushegh had sent and a copy of the paper, at the beginning of which the expression, "Armenian battalion of ..." had been added. They asked me to persuade the soldiers to sign the paper, assuring me that the British government's intention was merely to organize the Armenian troops better and to get them used to obedience. After these assurances, I went to see the Armenian troops, of whom there were about 850, excluding the Persian-Armenian troops, who were integrated into the Assyrian battalions. The soldiers were arranged in a circle, with their officers in front of them.

I addressed the troops and expressed my satisfaction at seeing Armenian troops for the first time and also expressed to them my boundless gratitude. I said that they could sign the paper that was presented to them and that, if they were treated differently, I as the Nation's representative—and having received a promise from the [British] officers—would complain to the appropriate authorities. I also urged them not to allow their relations with the British officers and their government to deteriorate over a matter such as this, which was of interest to the entire Nation. After I had finished my address, Lieutenant Colonel McCarthy wanted to know whether the troops were now ready to sign, and they said, "No." Then the Lieutenant Colonel asked Mr. Levon, "Are you personally willing to sign?" and the latter said, "Yes." Then, following the Lieutenant Colonel's invitation, Mr. Levon made a long address to the troops, reminding them of how they had had internal disagreements on various occasions and suffered because of it, and he urged them to come to an agreement among themselves and to

sign the paper. After Mr. Levon had finished his address, I asked the Lieutenant Colonel to leave the troops with their officers so that they could debate and exchange opinions. We agreed on this and left the troops. I went to the Commander's tent for lunch.

Over lunch, I asked the Commander whether it would not be possible to introduce a certain change into the statements in question. He appeared agreeable and I proposed, for instance, adding at the end an expression to the effect, "... with the refugees." He agreed to this, but he also discussed my proposal with two other officers over lunch. When taking leave, I asked him, "Will it be possible to make the modification?" and he answered, "I shall present it for General Marshall's approval."

I took leave of the Commander and went to the church, where I heard many people make speeches. I uttered words of encouragement to those present and, after conversing with them for a while, had a meeting with the People's Committee. I emphasized to them the importance of not creating discontent, because they were going to be in this area for only a few more months. I gave them a summary of what I had discussed with the Commander, and then I went to see the Nestorian²³⁷ Mar Shimun, who I knew from his period in Van, where he had been a student in the school that the Anglican Wigram had established particularly for the Nestorians.

In various conversations I found Mar Shimun full of hope for establishing an independent nation and an independent country. I asked him, "Is it true that you have decided to send people to Paris to present your case to the Peace Conference?" He said, "Seeing that the Kurds—reputedly with the British government's encouragement—have sent people there, we conceived the idea of doing the same. We proposed this to the British government, but we have not yet had a response."

I heard that Mar Shimun was going to be accompanied by his sister, Sërma Khatun, who was a graduate of the American school at Urmia [Iran], and Agha Bedros, who had been to the United States and who acted as a commander in their recent fighting. Then I asked Mar Shimun, "Did your troops²³⁸ sign the paper that was presented?" He said that they had signed it, but added that they had been promised that this force was not going to be asked to serve outside their country.

I returned to Baghdad in the evening.

I heard later that the Armenian troops had continued to resist signing the paper in the days following my visit. The British officers had proposed various modifications in the statement to be signed and even left the drafting of the statement to the troops themselves, but the soldiers had refused to sign any papers at all.

On the evening before my departure, Mr. Samuel came to see me with three other men—Samuel of Hamadan, Mihran Boyajian, and Mihran of Aleppo. I told them that I did not think it would be a good thing for our soldiers to sign such papers, and I surmised that there was something hidden under this insistence—something that was entirely unfavorable to our people and our soldiers. They were convinced, as well, and on the morning of my departure, Mr. Samuel left for Baqubah to transmit my ideas to the troops. On the night from the 8th to the 9th of January [1919], Priest Vartan Tajirian went to Baqubah and returned, having with him Vahram Vartabed, who was the Prelacy Vicar for those Armenian refugees.

As I was leaving, on the road the two clergymen related to me the events of the last two days and reported that the British officers were now ready to introduce into the statement to be signed by the soldiers the modifications requested, and that they were even willing to have the statement be drafted by the troops themselves. In the meantime, the Armenian troops had

been disarmed two days earlier, the matter had been reported to the [Headquarters] in Baghdad and orders were awaited from there.

I saw that the situation was being pushed to extremes and could end badly. I recommended to Mr. Tyurabian, who was the Chairman of the Political Assembly in Baghdad and—in Bp. Mushegh's absence—the Administrator of the Prelacy, that he write a letter to the GHQ and request their patience for a day or two and that he send several men to Baqubah to settle this matter without a rupture.

When leaving Mosul, I had taken with me letters written by Bp. Mushegh, the Chaldean Patriarch, and the Prelate of the Catholic Assyrians, Bp. Habra, and addressed to the French Commander Souard. After receiving the letter, the French Commander came to see me and enquired about the situation in Mosul. I asked him to send a coded telegram to Boghos Pasha in Paris, to let him know that, despite his telegram, the British government was obliging me to go not to Paris but to Constantinople and that he should forward new instructions to Cairo so that I could act accordingly. After my meeting with the Commander, I sent Tyurabian and Arevian to him and learned that the telegram had been sent.

The day after I arrived in Baghdad, the Prelacy sent a telegram to the [Armenian] National Union of Egypt inquiring whether the 500 or so refugees and orphans previously sent to Port Said had arrived. The response telegram confirmed that the orphans had arrived at Port Said 15 days earlier and congratulated me on having arrived safely in Baghdad.

The same day I also received the following telegram from Bp. Torkom [Koushagian].

Patriarch Zaven, The Armenian Church, Baghdad
Extremely satisfied with Your Beatitude's good news, we await impatiently Your joyous visit. Bp. Torkom

On the 9th of January, as I was leaving, I answered this telegram as follows.

Thank You. I am leaving today to see You.

I also received a telegram from Bp. Mushegh, as follows.

Mosul, 8 January, [To] Tyurabian, Armenian Church, Baghdad:
Nubar telegraphed to say he prefers and accepts the proposal for our Patriarch Zaven to return to Constantinople. Inform His Beatitude wherever he is. Mushegh

On the 7th of January [1919], a telegram arrived from Simon Mgërdich Gharibian²³⁹ in Basra stating that he had received written instructions from Boghos Pasha to send a representative from Mesopotamia to the [Armenian] General Assembly in Paris. A similar telegram arrived the following day at the Baghdad Prelacy. The Assembly decided to convene a meeting in Baghdad and organize elections. Notices were sent by telegram or by letter for Basra to elect one representative, Baqubah five, Mosul three, and Baghdad from one to three representatives. Tyurabian was elected as the representative from Basra. Also elected was Prof. Asdvadzadur Khachadrian, who was invited to accompany me on the 8th of January [1919] to Paris.

Bp. Mushegh had told me to telegraph from Baghdad to the Armenian-Assyrian Philanthropic Society in New York and to request that they send assistance to him to be

distributed among our refugees. Two or three days after arriving in Baghdad, I had a meeting alone with Dr. Levy,²⁴⁰ during which I learned that, for as long as the Society had representatives here, it was impossible for them to send us assistance. Previously, the Society had attempted to have Armenians distribute the assistance intended for the Armenian refugees at Enzeli [Bandar-e Anzali, Iran], and terrible abuses were revealed. Dr. Levy said, "What we lack is not money, but working men," and agreed to telegraph London and ask that two of their colleagues in Egypt be rushed to this region. I considered it superfluous to telegraph them myself, because it would not have accomplished anything.

On the 8th of January [1919], I followed [British Commissioner] Wilson's instructions and submitted a petition in writing, requesting that the government's assistance be raised to 10,000 rupees per month. There was no time to receive a response to this petition, because, on the evening of the same day, I was notified that I would leave on the following day's steamship.

Commander Souard came to see me the following morning and gave me a letter to be delivered to the [French] Consul in Basra, Mr. Roux. At 9:30, a special officer came representing the government and took us to the ship on board a steamboat. Thus, I left Baghdad on the 9th of January [1919] at 12:30, having with me Mihran Boyajian, Zareh Arevian, my brother's daughter, Vartanush, and my brother's younger son, Setrag.

Regrettably, the government steamboat number 54 was very slow. The following day we reached Bēzela or [Namanieh], where my sister Diruhi and her husband Sdepan Markarian came to pay us a visit. They had lived there for years and owned property.²⁴¹ On the fourth day we reached Uzeir, the pilgrimage site of the Jews where, according to tradition, the Prophet Elijah was buried.

In the evening of the 15th of January, we reached Margil—at a distance of half an hour from Basra—and stayed there until the morning. During the night, a government official came and informed us that he would personally arrive at 9:00 the following morning to escort us. Shortly afterward I received news from Mr. [Simon] Gharibian that there was a ship leaving for Egypt on the following day, the 16th of January, at noon, on which Mr. Arshag Safrasdian²⁴² would be a passenger—as he had informed me in a letter—for Paris. The Consul of Belgium, Mr. Dervishian, had made a request in writing to the military commander so that we, too, would be sent on this ship. On the following day, Messrs. S. Gharibian and Dervishian came on board the ship. A government official also came on board and announced that it was not possible for us to go on that day, because there was no room in the ship, and he sent a steam tug to remove our effects. We took Mr. Gharibian's steam tug and then a carriage to Basra, and arrived at the house belonging to Dimitriadis that the Armenian community had prepared for us. In this house, I accepted the visits of the Armenian, Chaldean, Latin, and Assyrian-Catholic spiritual leaders.

I sent to the French Consul the letter that was addressed to him. In response, he sent his Chancellor, Lucien Fénèbre, to wish me welcome. On the following day, I sent Mr. Arevian to the French Consul, through whom I communicated the news about Mosul and Baghdad, which satisfied the Consul.

On *Jrakalyuts* [Christmas Eve] and Christmas day (the 17th and 18th of January),²⁴³ I went to the Church and gave a sermon, as I had done on the evening of my arrival. At that time, the priest in Basra was Sahag Vartabed, a refugee from Van. Bishop Mushegh had condemned Priest Hamazasb of Basra to be defrocked because the latter had dared not to mention Bp. Mushegh's name during *Badarak* [Mass], arguing that Bp. Mushegh's title as Prelate

was not supported by a Patriarchal or Catholicos decree. When I was in Basra, Priest Hamazasb came to see me and requested a pardon. To maintain Mushegh's authority, I asked the supplicant to write a letter of retraction, and Priest Hamazasb did so. Just before leaving Basra, I sent Priest Hamazasb's letter to Mushegh, asking him to consider the punishment sufficient. Mushegh remained immovable and did not forgive him. The priest despaired and became a Catholic and remained a Catholic until his death. After I arrived in Constantinople, I was not able to follow up these developments.

In Basra, once again I worked on the issue of the refugees in Mosul. After consultations with Mr. Dervishian and S. Gharibian, we decided that the following telegrams should be sent with Dervishian's signature.

To Mr. Svazli, In the Care of Kyurkjian,²⁴⁴

With great sorrow we heard that there are thousands of Armenian deportees gathered in Mosul, naked and deprived of everything. Abp. Seropian is there with very insignificant and inadequate funds. Rush him immediate assistance, otherwise people will die of disease and hunger. Please make an appeal, in the name of humanity, to the Armenian-Assyrian Philanthropic Society²⁴⁵ and the American Red Cross, so that they will send money via telegraph without fail, either through their agents or to Abp. Seropian in Baghdad.

Basra, the 19th of January 1919

Dervishian

Estimable Dr. Levy,

Representative in Baghdad of the American Society for Armenian Relief

With very great sorrow I heard that, in connection with your charitable work, you have been given wrong information regarding the pathetic condition of the Armenian deportees in Baghdad and Mosul. I am familiar with the efforts you have made for the Armenians who survived the massacres. In the name of humanity, I appeal to your noble sentiments and beseech you to continue your assistance to save these unfortunate Armenians from sickness and death. Assured about your lofty sentiments, Estimable Doctor, I remain your humble servant.

Basra, the 19th of January 1919

Dervishian

Lt. Col. Wilson

Civil Commissioner, Baghdad

With great sorrow I heard that there are now tens of thousands of Armenians in Mosul who are naked and suffering from hunger and the cold. The monetary assistance that Armenians have put together and sent to Mosul is inadequate. Respectfully I request that you present the situation to Commander Marshall and request from him that he authorize that old military blankets and shoes be given to them and thus save these unfortunates from sickness and death.

Your Humble Servant,

Dervishian
Consul of Belgium

On the 20th of December [1918], the Civil Commissioner, Lt. Col. Wilson responded from Baghdad as follows:

To the Consul of Belgium—Basra

In response to your telegram of the 19th : The situation has been represented to you erroneously. In all, there are 2,000 Armenians, of whom 1,000 are in need of partial assistance. The British government is already giving them assistance. The U.S. Mission is helping as well. Already food, beds, and cotton for spinning have been given. You may be assured that wherever the British government sets foot, such things are not ignored.

Wilson
Civil Commissioner

On the 25th of January [1919], I received the following from the French Consul:

French Republic
Consulate of France in Mesopotamia

Basra, the 24th of January 1919

Your Eminence,

His Eminence Mushegh had the thoughtful consideration of sending a telegram to the President of the Council (of Ministers) in Paris on the occasion of the opening of the Peace Conference.

Touched by this attentiveness, His Excellency Mr. Clémenceau²⁴⁶ has assigned me the pleasant duty of thanking His Eminence Seropian and assuring him that France will be happy to continue her protection of the Armenian inhabitants so that massacres of they type of which they were the victims will not be repeated and to allow the preparation of a future, which they deserve through their history and civilization.

Through my Chancellor in Baghdad I have already communicated to His Eminence Seropian this response coming from the President of the Council (of Ministers), but I think that it will be equally enjoyable for Your Beatitude to learn about the assurance that France is giving through the authoritative voice of the head of its government to the Armenian inhabitants, toward whom she has always had great sympathy.

I take this opportunity to express to Your Beatitude my great sorrow for not having had the occasion of meeting you in person, and I present to you the assurance of my respectful sentiments.

French Consul
Roux

I answered this telegram in the following manner:

Basra, the 25th of January 1919

Mr. H. Roux
Consul of France in Mesopotamia
Basra

Mr. Consul,

I am deeply moved by the communication you kindly transmitted to me through your honorable letter today, bearing no. 66. In telegrams arriving from Europe announcing the opening of the Peace Conference, I am noticing with trouble that the name of Armenia is not mentioned. It was believed and hoped that after suffering martyrdom for centuries, [Armenia] would at last be liberated.

The assurance given by the President of the Council of Ministers of France, His Excellency Mr. Clémenceau, to Bp. Seropian, which you had the extreme kindness of communicating to me, fills my heart with joy, and it encourages me to return to Constantinople to occupy my throne once again with greater confidence. This assurance will also encourage all Armenians and compel them to love France. [Armenians] have already adopted the colors of the [French] flag, and her name will be forever inscribed in their hearts, now and after their liberation.

If you find it necessary to inform him about my departure from Basra, I ask you to assure the President of the Council (of Ministers) of my deep gratitude toward his person and to say that the Armenian Nation, with its gaze turned toward France, awaits impatiently the moment of its liberation and joins me in wishing for France's glory and prosperity.

Mr. Consul, I thank you for all the generous kindness You have shown the Armenians wherever you have happened to be, and I take this opportunity to present to you the assurance of my sincere sentiments.

Zaven
Patriarch of the Armenians of Turkey

Shortly after sending this letter, I paid a visit to the Consul in person and repeated my indebtedness. Our conversation turned to the question of whether Mosul would be left to the British or the French, and he said that, after the Russians [had agreed to make] peace, agreement had been reached between the French and the British that Mosul should be left to the French. He took out a map on which the frontiers of the lands to be governed by the two countries had been marked with red and blue lines.

According to this map, the area from Baghdad to the Great Zab river would be left to the British, and beyond that there would be a British zone of influence up to Altun Keoprü, whereas the Provinces of Diarbekir, Kharpert and Adana would be entirely governed by the French, and Mosul and Der Zor would be their zone of influence.

On Sunday, the 26th of January [1919], the French Consul, Mr. Roux, came to visit me, and at noon the same day I lunched at the home of the Belgian Consul, Mr. Dervishian.

On the 27th of January we received the following telegram:

To the Consul of Belgium—Basra,
Addendum to my earlier telegram:

You have been given erroneous information regarding Mosul. There are no more than 4,000 Armenians in Mosul, of whom 1,000 are in orphanages. The government has given them food and clothing. In addition, the government is giving a lot of money to the Armenian Archbishop, who is engaged in relief work, and this is in addition to the large sums he already appears to be receiving from external sources. Because the administration of the assistance supplied had not been entirely satisfactory, now it is entrusted to the care of a British Special Officer.

Civil Office

On the evening of the 28th of January, Messrs. Dervishian, Gharibian, and myself decided after consultation that Mr. Dervishian should express his thanks to [Commissioner] Wilson through a letter, commenting also on the issue of collecting orphans and women. It was decided that copies of telegrams exchanged should be sent to Bp. Mushegh.

On the 29th of January, Mr. Dervishian telegraphed the following:

Lt. Col. Wilson
Civil Commissioner
Baghdad

I thank the British authorities with all my heart for the measures they have undertaken to ensure the livelihood of the Armenian deportees. The Armenian nation's gratitude will be forever, and it will express it during its future independence as it is already expressing it here and now, and in the Caucasus—just barely having broken its chains thanks to the British intervention. Armenia has the right to seek out all its children wherever they may be, and it hopes that, through your noble assistance, it will be able to save the dispersed and unfortunate remnants of its people.

Expressing my personal thanks to you, I remain

Yours faithfully,

Dervishian

On the 2nd of February [1919], at last we departed from Basra. The ship belonged to the [British] government, and the transportation was free; we only paid for the meals. All the passengers were British military personnel. In addition to us, among the passengers there were the French Consul of Tehran and the Ambassador of Persia to the United States, who was going to his place of duty.

The ship stopped for only one day off Muscat and reached Suez on the 14th of February, where the Prelate of Egypt, Bp. Torkom, and several co-nationals had come to welcome me.

We disembarked the ship and traveled by rail along the Suez Canal and reached Port Said in the evening, where we found numerous co-nationals. There were [Armenians] who had come from Cairo and other cities as delegates of the National authorities and various organizations and entities. A large reception had been organized, in which local Greeks also participated. Because of this, I was led to the Greek church, where I prayed and made an address. Then we went to the hotel that had been prepared [for us].



The entrance of the Mother Church in Constantinople.

The local Armenians had planned to take me to Cairo and several days later to Alexandria, from where they would send me off to Constantinople, but, toward the evening, an officer sent by the military authorities came to see me and informed me that, in accordance with an order from the War Ministry in London, a destroyer was already waiting at port [Port Said] ready to take me to Constantinople. [Vahan] Malezian²⁴⁷ and other people objected, saying that I had to go to Cairo. But the officer answered that this was by order of the High Commissioner and that I had to leave.

Mr. Vahan Malezian, the representative of the [Armenian General] Benevolent [Union], telephoned Yakub Artin Pasha²⁴⁸ and requested his intervention. Yakub Artin Pasha applied to a few places and then came back to us with a response: the British authorities had said that the Arabs had wanted to stage demonstrations several times and were prevented; if the Armenians are now permitted to take their Patriarch to Cairo and organize demonstrations on this occasion, naturally this will lead to dissatisfaction and complaints from the Arab element. This is why the British authorities were insisting that I leave Port Said immediately for Constantinople.

All means having been exhausted, it was requested that my departure be postponed to the following day. This much was granted. A big feast was prepared that evening, at which were present all the people who had come to welcome me, as well as co-nationals from Port Said. Speeches were made and, after the meal, consultations took place on the orientation that should be adopted in Constantinople, especially toward the [Armenian] National Delegation.

On the following morning, the 14th of February [1919], a delegation came to see me from the camp of the *Suediatsis* [Suedia Armenians], headed by Mampré Vartabed Sirunian. After this, at 10:00, I took a steam tugboat, together with my traveling companions, and we were taken to the ship. The ship was the *contre-torpilleur* [Destroyer] *Acacia*, which had been ordered by London to take me to Constantinople. On the fourth day, we entered the Dardanelles, but the journey was uncomfortable due to stormy seas. To the very end, my companions and I were obliged to stay in bed until we entered the Sea of Marmara. From there onward, the sea was calmer and I was able to rest and regain my strength and composure.

As we were passing in front of Izmir, I announced my return via wireless to Bp. Madteos Injeyan. Our Captain also informed the Admiralty ship anchored off the coast of Constantinople that our ship was approaching Constantinople with the orders of the War Ministry and carrying on board the Armenian Patriarch.

Toward the evening, our ship dropped anchor in front of Salë Pazar [Salipazari], and our Captain left on a steam tug for the Admiral's ship. After the Captain left, a cargo boat came near our destroyer, but the Captain gave a signal from aboard the Admiral's ship for me not to leave until he returned. The Captain did not come back for a long time. I felt depressed from fatigue and went to bed.

The following morning, the Captain invited me to take breakfast with him and related to me that the recipients of his telegram had not understood what the word "Patriarch" meant, and that was why they had sent the steam tug. The Captain had given detailed explanations to the Admiral, and the latter had communicated these to the Ambassador.

On the 20th of February [1919], at 10:00 a.m., a steam tug was sent from the destroyer *Sizup*. The Captain and I headed for the destroyer, where a big reception was held, and [later] the Constantinople newspapers reported it. After the reception, I made my way to the Patriarchate through huge crowds of people. I blessed the faithful gathered inside the Mother

Church, prayed, and went up to the Patriarchate to resume my duties as Patriarch after an interruption of three years.

V. My Second Term as Patriarch (1919-1922)

A. The National Administrations

When I entered Constantinople on the 19th of February 1919, it had been four months since the Armistice. There was a high level of enthusiasm among the Armenians and the other subject peoples [of the Empire].

After the Mudros [Mudros] Armistice (the 30th of October 1918),²⁴⁹ destroyers of the Allied states had entered [the waters off] Constantinople and dropped anchor in the Bosphorus across from the Sultan's Palace. The capital city was occupied by the Allies and divided into three parts, each policed respectively by the three Allied powers and subordinated to the Assembly of High Commissioners, which was chaired by the British Admiral, Gardrobe.

Defeat had humbled the Turks. The Ittihad ministers and chiefs had fled the country or gone into hiding. The Sultan and his new ministers were silently awaiting the decisions that were going to decide the country's fate. The Armenian people immediately undertook to bring back to life the inactive Patriarchate. Even Catholicos Sahag's Vicar in Constantinople, Bp. Kapriel Jevahirjian, applied to the government, and the [Armenian] National Constitution that had been annulled on the 28th of July [1916] by the order of the government was reestablished on the 19th of October 1918.

Following the reestablishment, the administration of Dr. K. Tavitian—as the constitutionally elected entity—temporarily resumed its duties, and Bp. Mesrob Naroyan was elected Vicar. The return of the exiled Patriarch was demanded of the Sublime Porte when it was discovered that, during the removal of its officials from Mosul, the Patriarch had been left behind. The authorities applied to the British High Commission, requesting its assistance in my return to Constantinople. This is how the Ministry of War in London came to order the British authorities in Baghdad and Egypt to return me to Constantinople.

After my return to Constantinople, it was observed that the residences of ambassadors, diplomats, and [other] important personalities were in the Péra neighborhood of the city, that the Patriarchate—in the present state of affairs—was obliged to cultivate relations with foreign circles, and that the Patriarchate in Kum-Kapu was very far from these areas. Therefore, a spacious building was rented in Péra so that the Patriarch could live and set up his office there, having with him the Records Officer and the Chargé d'Affaires. The Administrative Assembly meetings were to take place here and foreign visitors and High Commissioners received, etc.

My first concern after arriving in Constantinople was to organize the Patriarchate's Assemblies. Some members of the [pre-War] National General Assembly, elected from the neighborhoods of Constantinople, had been martyred and some others were missing. New members were quickly elected and the two Administrative Assemblies reconstituted, under the Prime Ministerial system.

At the 4th of July 1919 session of the National General Assembly, Tavit Der Movsesian proposed and insisted that the election of the Political Assembly be left to the Patriarch, because the Patriarch enjoyed the Assembly's confidence. The Assembly accepted this proposal with an absolute majority. Dr. Tavitian had served with devotion during his term as Chairman and demonstrated certain important skills. With this in mind, I formed a new Political Assembly and entrusted the office of Chairman to him.

The election of the Patriarchate's two Administrative Assemblies took place in this manner from this date until the end of 1922. In the course of three years, four elections were called. The first two of these elections—on the 4th of July 1919 and the 29th of June 1920—were organized by [me as the] the Patriarch. In the last two, the National Assembly elected the Prime Minister and left him the task of choosing his colleagues. In this manner, Tavit Der Movsesian was the winner in the 8th of April 1921 elections, and Harutyun Mosdichian was elected on the 17th of February 1922.

This partial modification of the National Constitution was of great significance for the accomplishment of the work at hand, because it was impossible to elect a group of random people, put them together, and expect them to work effectively.

Now we had a difficult job ahead of us; not only had everything been ruined, but great efforts were needed to save the deportees and the orphans, and to [organize] relief work.

B. The Trusteeship Orphanages

Upon receiving news of the Armistice, the Armenians dispersed in Mesopotamia and Syria began to return from their places of exile. The Armenians of Cilicia—thanks to Jemal Pasha—had suffered comparatively less.²⁵⁰ They started returning to Cilicia with the particular encouragement of the French, who at that time ruled that area of Turkey and wanted to use the Armenians as a support. Some of the other deported Armenians, who were natives of areas other than Cilicia, also settled in Cilicia. Many deportees came to Constantinople, too, either to stay temporarily with relatives or friends or to leave for overseas destinations where they had relatives.

A small part of the deportees remained in the areas where they had been exiled. In 1918, some natives of the region of Van had come to Iraq by way of Iran; after the Armistice, the British transported most of these to Armenia, and only a few thousand Armenians remained in Iraq. An important portion of those arriving in Constantinople were from the environs of Constantinople, and these returned to their native areas. Thousands of widows and orphans from the interior regions—whose men folk had been murdered—stayed in Constantinople.

Feeding and sheltering the deportees who stayed in Constantinople was a duty that befell the undeported Armenians of Constantinople. The native Armenians of the city fulfilled this duty responsibly and honorably. The Armenians of Constantinople formed several societies, principal among which were the *Vorpakhnam Ėngerutyun* [Orphan Care Society], the *Darakrelots Ėngerutyun* [Deportees' Society], and the Armenian Red Cross. The first two merged together on the 28th of February 1919 and formed the *Hay Azkayin Khēnamagalutyun* [Armenian National Trusteeship], whereas the latter maintained its separate existence as a member of the International Red Cross.

The National Trusteeship set up branches in all neighborhoods of Constantinople, and established refugee stations and orphanages. It soon became evident that relief work on such

a [large] scale could not be financed through fundraisers and donations, and, at the beginning of September 1919, the National Representative Assembly passed a law obliging every Armenian who had revenues to start paying taxes commensurate with his financial ability beginning that month. The needs of destitute and homeless co-nationals would be met with the money collected, until they could resettle on their native lands. Because of this, the tax was called the “Fatherland Tax,” and it could be paid in one of two ways—as a lump sum or monthly installments. A commission was formed to supervise the registration process, and I often chaired its sessions.

In honor of the Armenians of Constantinople, it should be said that there was practically no one who tried to get out of this tax, and many of them put at our disposal sums of money beyond their financial ability. The Central Commission had formed Neighborhood Commissions, and the latter assessed each person's financial ability and the tax he should pay.

The Patriarchate started demanding a receipt indicating the payment of this tax from people applying for its services and denied its assistance to those who did not produce it. Similarly, the Trustee Councils of the neighborhood churches in Constantinople refused to perform baptisms, marriages, and funeral ceremonies for those who, despite having the financial ability, did not produce receipts for the Fatherland Tax.²⁵¹

The implementation of this law was entrusted to the National Central Finance Commission, whose bureau was located in the Holy Illuminator Church of Galatia. The stewardship of the funds collected was left to the National Trusteeship, a separate entity with its own Archives and Records Office located in the courtyard of the Holy Trinity Church of Péra.

The other Armenian denominations having also accepted this law, the entities mentioned had an All-National character. All the denominations had their representatives, and even more so after the formation of the All-National Assembly.

The Central Finance Commission paid regularly the expenses foreseen in the Trusteeship's budget, which at one time rose to 35,000 Ottoman pounds monthly.

A note sent to the Patriarchate on the 2nd of June 1922 indicated that, in the period from the Armistice until the end of December 1921, 1,536,157 Ottoman pounds was collected in Constantinople for the orphans and deportees.

The Fatherland Tax, within a short while, proved inadequate to meet the entire budget of the Trusteeship, even after the significant sums of money being raised by the American Armenians started arriving in Constantinople. A very difficult situation would have been created had the American Near East Relief (NER)²⁵² not come to our rescue by extending a helping hand to the Trusteeship.

This American humanitarian organization played a great providential role for our Nation. NER undertook to continue the work of the American Red Cross, which had mitigated the misery of the deported Armenian Nation by choosing Aleppo as its center and making its assistance available wherever it could. It is true that NER had originally been established to mitigate the Assyrians' misfortunes, but I can attest that it helped our people more than it did the Assyrians.

At first, NER came to the aid of the Armenian refugees in Iraq. It brought a significant contribution to the British effort to shelter these widows and orphans. NER opened numerous orphanages in Armenia that sheltered thousands of orphans. Likewise, it opened orphanages in the interior of Turkey, and, when political conditions turned unsuitable, it transferred the orphans under its care in Kharpert, Sepasdia, and other places to Syria; consolidated the various orphanages it had already been running in Syria; and cared for and educated these

orphans for several years. NER had an Auxiliary Center in Constantinople that supported the Armenian National Trusteeship significantly.

The Auxiliary supplied bread to all the orphanages and helped shelter the refugees by providing them clothes, blankets, and milk. Seeing that the Trusteeship's financial resources were gradually becoming insufficient, NER started matching and doubling the amount of financial aid the American Armenians had been sending. After January 1921, NER donated a regular sum of 20,000 [pounds?] every month.

In Constantinople, the National Trusteeship supervised the stewardship of the following orphanages.

- a. The Kuleli Central Orphanage. This was a spacious school on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, which the British military authorities had seized and given over to the Trusteeship in July 1920. Orphans from several orphanages previously operating in small houses had been brought here—approximately 1,000 in all. About 30 teachers had been assigned to their primary education, together with competent directors—initially Mr. Kevork Apulian (a former Rector at the Sanasarian School), followed by Dr. Sdepanian. This orphanage had music and physical education equipment. The American Auxiliary had designated 20,000 Ottoman pounds for arts and crafts sections in the Trusteeship's orphanages in general and in the Kuleli orphanage in particular. In the arts and crafts sections, some of the orphans trained to become shoemakers and tailors.
- b. The Beyler Beyi Orphanage. This was the former school of the Turkish military police, also on the Asiatic shores of the Bosphorus, which had been seized by the British military authorities and put at the Trusteeship's disposal. About 250 orphans were cared for here with the Auxiliary's assistance, and they were trained to become shoemakers, tailors, and carpenters.
- c. The Yedi-Kule Surp Prgich National Hospital Orphanage. One building of the Surp Prgich National Hospital had been set aside for those orphans who were suffering from trachoma and other diseases. Physicians and pharmacists were charged with treating them, and primary education was supplied to approximately 300 orphan boys and girls.
- d. The Beshigtash Girls' Orphanage. This was a spacious private home, seized by the English military authorities and placed at the Trusteeship's disposal. About 120 orphan girls received their primary education here.
- e. The Kum-Kapu Girls' Orphanage. Located at the Jerusalem House. Approximately 100 orphan girls were kept here. The older girls attended the Minasian Girls' School in the same neighborhood, and the younger girls received their kindergarten education in the same building.
- f. The Sgyudar [Scutari, Üsküdar] Girls' Orphanage. About 100 orphan girls were sheltered and educated at this orphanage—located in the American College building—until the end.
- g. The Khas-Kyugh [Hasköy] Girls' Trachoma Orphanage. Located at the Armenian school of the village.²⁵³ Approximately 130 orphan girls suffering from trachoma were cared for on location. A physician paid periodic visits here and treated them. Serious cases were transferred to the Yedi-Kule Surp Prgich National Hospital Orphanage.

- h. The Arnavud-Kyugh [Arnavutköy] School of the Trades for Orphan Girls. Approximately 100 teenage girls—the majority of them emancipated from Turkish homes—were sheltered here in a building rented by the Trusteeship. These orphan girls learned dressmaking, embroidery, and hosiery.
- i. The Balat Girls' Orphanage. About 100 orphan girls were housed in one part of the neighborhood Armenian School and pursued their studies in the same school.
- j. The Kuru-Cheshmeh [Kurucheshmeh] Girls' Orphanage. About 50 young orphan girls received their kindergarten education in a church-owned building. This orphanage was part of the Arnavud-Kyugh School of the Trades.
- k. About 80 orphans—boys and girls—were accepted as boarding students at the Bezazian School of Makri-Kyugh [Bakirköy].
- l. The Immaculate Conception Orphanages. This Armenian-Catholic congregation had two orphanages, one in Péra and the other in Samatia. More than 500 orphan girls were sheltered in these two establishments, and the Trusteeship gave for their care exactly the same amount of money that the other Armenian orphanages were given. Toward the end of 1922, as the orphanages were being moved out of the country, I am not sure what happened to these orphans. I think that some of them were sent to Milan and placed in a nunnery.
- m. The Tëbrotsaser [Society] had hundreds of orphans under its care. Their room and board and educational expenses were met partially by the Trusteeship. To meet the rest of the budget, the volunteer ladies did fundraising in Constantinople and abroad. This group, too, was forced to leave the country in 1922; first they went to Thessaloniki [Greece], then continued on to Marseilles and Paris. The Tëbrotsaser [Society]—through the patriotism and diligence of its volunteer ladies—continues to shelter and educate Armenian orphan girls and presently has 100 of them under its responsibility.
- n. The Armash Agricultural School. The *Charkhapan* [Evil-Destroyer] Holy Mother of God Monastery at Armash was closed during the deportations of 1915. As related already, the seminarians were brought to Constantinople, and the Abbot, the monks, and the teachers were deported to Konia and elsewhere. During this time, the Monastery was robbed, and subsequently the government opened a district school on the premises. After the Armistice, the Turks abandoned the Monastery. The returning Armenians of Nicomedia and Armash expelled the Circassians settled in the village and repossessed the Monastery. Led by Priest Vosgi Bibiyan, they found the Evil-Destroyer's image in a nearby Greek village and brought it back to Armash. They found the goods and vestments of the Monastery in the government building in Nicomedia and reclaimed them, as well. During this period, the certified agronomist Sebu Sdepanian took with him about 60 orphan teenagers and arrived at the Monastery, intending to start an agricultural school there. The project did not succeed, and the orphans were forced to return to Constantinople after a few months.

In addition, an orphanage was run in Constantinople with money collected by the British Lord Mayor's Fund.²⁵⁴ Later, this orphanage was moved to Corfu and eventually dissolved. There was also an orphanage in Makri-Kyugh run by the Swiss-Armenian Society. This orphanage, with its 100 orphans, was moved to Switzerland in 1922 and eventually dissolved.

As it can be seen in the foregoing, the task of caring for the orphans had multiple dimensions and necessitated large budgets; superhuman efforts were made to meet these needs.

C. The Deportees' Stations

After the Armistice, the British made small incursions into the interior of Turkey, in the regions of Amasia and Marzëvan and especially from Constantinople toward Nicomedia and Konia. They took the Haydar Pasha [Train Station] under their control, and those [Armenian] deportees who wanted to return from their places of exile to Constantinople were transported free of charge from Aleppo by rail and sea. During this period and until the evacuation of Cilicia, approximately 35,000 deportees arrived in Constantinople and were entrusted to the care of the National Trusteeship. The Central Finance Commission's 1920 budget was raised to 544,000 pounds, which provided the needy people among the returned deportees with bread, milk, clothing, and medical care.

The part of the budget that was supplied from Constantinople was essentially provided by the taxes of the members of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Armenian Catholics and the Armenian Protestants participated only minimally.

D. Collection of Orphans

I had already heard that, during the general deportations, the governors of Trebizond and Kharpert had wanted to complete the extermination of the Armenians by having some orphans thrown into the Black Sea or the Euphrates River, but in general the government officials had encouraged the Turkish population to take the Armenian orphans and to raise them as Turks.

Armenian mothers too, witnessing the misery of the road to exile and the lack of transportation and food, handed their small children willingly to the Turks, ignoring their pathetic screams of hunger and preferring it to the death of their children in their arms. These mothers considering their own death a certainty and, wishing to save their children's lives, entrusted them to strangers, while managing to cling to the faint hope that they themselves would manage to survive and return to claim their children.

Later I heard from people who miraculously survived the deportations that Armenian infants and adolescent girls had been publicly exhibited in certain districts—much like slaves who used to be exhibited at the slave markets of ancient times—and Turks had taken freely whichever ones they wanted. In this fashion, thousands of Armenian infants had been spread in Turkish homes in the countryside, generally as servants, a few of them as adopted children, and the teenage girls as concubines.

A while later, certain of these started being brought to Constantinople, as well, as I learned from those 10 or 12 orphan girls whom I liberated before I was deported from Constantinople. After the Armistice, as Patriarch but also as a conscientious Armenian, I considered it one of my most important duties to gather and return to the Nation as many of these orphans as I could.

As I related earlier, when the British occupied Mosul, I not only cared for the deportees but I also gathered the orphans from the streets and from Muslims' homes. Armenian youths

helped me in this activity, and in just a few days my house was so full of orphans that I had to rent a building to be used as an orphanage.

In Constantinople, too, as soon as the Armistice was announced, young Armenian men and women set out to gather the orphans. In a short while, a *Vorpakhnam Marmin* [Orphan Care Agency] was established to tend to their needs. Certain of the Turks who had been keeping Armenian orphans in their homes—worried that they might be subjected to punishment by the Allies—immediately delivered these orphans to the Armenian church in their neighborhood or to Armenian neighbors. Certain other Turks assumed that [the Armenian orphans they were keeping] had already forgotten their mother tongue and all memories of their fatherland; they held on to these orphans and threatened them that, if they revealed their Armenian identity, they would be pitilessly murdered.

Fortunately, we found at the British High Commission a person motivated by kind and noble sentiments, who wanted to be of service to our suffering people. He was the first of several who extended us a helping hand. This person was Commander Smith, one of the functionaries at the British Embassy. He promised a patriotic young [Armenian], Mr. Arakel Chakërian, all the help he might need, and pushed him forward in his work.

Having finished his studies in Paris, Mr. Chakërian has assumed a post as a professor of chemistry at the Turkish university in Constantinople several years before. He came forward to help his nation, disregarding the risk this might create for his job and career.

In his 4th of April 1919 report, Mr. Chakërian said the following.

Toward the end of December, having met Commander Smith at the British Embassy, after various negotiations with him, I felt compelled to dedicate myself to the work of liberating the Armenian orphans who were being held in Turkish orphanages and homes. In the course of this work, the following activities became necessary, and I was left all alone to carry them out.

1. Liberating Armenian orphans from Turkish orphanages and homes;
2. Liberating Armenians who had been jailed for political or insignificant reasons;
3. Reclaiming the stolen goods of the Church;
4. Having the Turkish criminals arrested;
5. Drafting reports as part of our ongoing relationship with the British authorities and pursuing their implementation.

[The results obtained were as follows].

1. With the support of the British Embassy, 750 Armenian orphans were liberated from Turkish homes and orphanages;²⁵⁵
2. Application was made to liberate 35 prisoners; 18 of them were liberated;
3. The stolen goods recovered were as follows: three gold-embroidered chasubles and one spread, one gold-embroidered altar cover, one large parchment manuscript, one silver-coated parchment manuscript, 2 chasubles, 1 alb, stole[s]²⁵⁶; 1 table cloth, 1 silver belt, 1 cross, 2 silver hands containing relics, 2 silver crosses, 1 chasuble cover, 1 large curtain, manuscript prayer-book; also an altar spread, a chrism dish, a silver-coated whip with Armenian letters.²⁵⁷ In addition, I have reclaimed 17 church bells²⁵⁸ and 33 copper dishes, and 4 registry books from the *Kadënlar İslam Jemiyeti*,²⁵⁹ in which the names of Islamized Armenian infants are recorded. These books were recovered after

“corrections” had been made in them; the children’s parents’ Armenian names are still visible, but these have been partially erased and Turkish names written over them. I had to spend enormous efforts to capture these.

4. I have completed 120 operations so far. In addition, from the Chief Physician of the French Red Cross, Dr. Vouazas, I received 235 beds and 150 pillows and delivered them to the Armenian Red Cross. From the Red Crescent, I took one *étuve* [sterilizer], 350 underpants and the same amount of undershirts, foodstuffs, and medicines worth 2,000 pounds, all of which I delivered to the Deportees’ Commission. I requisitioned 4 buildings, two of which were delivered to the Orphan Care [Agency] and the other two to the Armenian Red Cross.

Messrs. Hagop, Sirak, and Mardig collaborated with me in the orphan collection work, and I paid them personal and travel expenses.

As remuneration for three-and-a-half months of my indefatigable and determined work and for my expenses, I received 170 pounds from the Orphan Care Agency and 40 pounds from His Eminence the Patriarch.

Upon receiving this report, a *Vorpahavak Marmin* [Orphan Collection Agency] was properly constituted with four orphan collection agents, having as their chief Mr. Arakel Chakërian. All of them were to receive monthly salaries, in addition to their expenses. The British Embassy gave each of our agents a letter of introduction addressed to the Allied police force, requesting their assistance in the event of need. In this way, the orphan collection activity gained new momentum. Armenian orphans started being taken by force from Turkish homes, with the support of Allied police and at times even the Turkish police.

Turkish households lodged complaints with the Turkish police to the effect that the orphans being taken from them were real Turks and that our claims as to their Armenian identity were false.

Upon this, the British Embassy gave us instructions to rent a house, where the orphans whose nationality was contested were to be kept until their nationality could be established. We rented a building and established a “Neutral House” for this purpose that had, in addition to its staff, a supervisory body of two, composed of one Armenian and one Turkish woman, whose responsibility was to try to determine the orphans’ nationality. The Armenian member of the supervisory body was Mrs. Zaruhi Hagop Bahri, and the Turkish member was Neziheh Hanëm. The Orphan Collection Agency continued its work until the Neutral House was shut down in August 1922 pursuant to the demands of the British High Commission.

The British Embassy and the British Police supported us to the end. The Italian [Embassy] initially adopted a very honest course, but remained neutral during the last year. The French [Embassy] helped us with the tips of its fingers initially, but soon changed [its stand], especially after the Greeks landed troops in Izmir and started to advance into Asia Minor. It was also unfortunate to see that the French officers and policemen very quickly softened and lost control of themselves when confronted with the Turkish women’s charms.

The Turkish Hanëm, the supervisor of the Neutral House, resigned when she saw that everything was not going to her satisfaction. After this, all the work was left in our hands, even though the building retained its name.

To give a picture of the gathering of orphans and the undertakings of the Neutral House, I consider it best to provide here an excerpt from the speech Parliamentary Commission

member Nerses Ohanian made at the [Armenian] National General Assembly's 16th of December [1922] session.

The Orphan Collection Agency liberated 84 orphans from May 1919 to the 10th of September 1919, 8 orphans from the 15th of September to the 15th of November, and 92 orphans from the 1st of January 1920 to the 31st of August 1921—a total of 184 orphans.

From the general accounts of the report, it can be seen that so far 598 Armenian orphans have been liberated, and, in addition, 12 Greek orphans and 18 orphans of other nationalities. Before the establishment of the Neutral House, 396 orphans were liberated and 184 during the time of its existence and through its work.

The Armenian nation has liberated from the Turks 3,000 of the 4,000 to 5,000 orphans in Constantinople.

So far, in other words, from the 16th of May 1919 to May 1920, we have paid the orphan collectors 7,617 pounds and 87 piasters in salaries, and, from the 19th of May to the 21st of August, we have paid them 6,152 pounds and 63.5 piasters in salaries; we have also paid them 2,031 pounds and 97 piasters for their expenses—altogether 15,810 pounds.

[Thus], at present, the Neutral House's administrative expenses are as follows. Directress's monthly salary 22.5 pounds, the cook's 10 pounds, the doorkeeper's 10 pounds, the temporary cellarist's 6 pounds—altogether 48.5 pounds per month.

3,000 orphans have been liberated, each one costing us 5 pounds, and to think that Der Movsesian and like-minded co-nationals found this expense excessive!

The Neutral House stayed connected with the Trusteeship for a while. Then it came under the control of Patriarchate. It received its own constitution and became part of the *Deghegadu Tivan* [Information Office], and its budget was paid by the Finance Commission. During its last year [of existence], a separate Commission was elected to run it, having as members Dr. Artinian, Mrs. Zaruhi Bahri, and Mrs. Daylarian, but the British Embassy did not recognize them and preferred to continue dealing through the Patriarchate.

Regretfully, the majority of the class of people involved in the Nation's affairs in Constantinople lacked political foresight. A dispute arose among the members of the Commission concerning the issue of the determination of a certain orphan's identity. As a result, Dr. Artinian—doubtless motivated by patriotism—wrote a newspaper piece in which he characterized the Commission as an "Inquisition Court." Through his friends, Dr. Artinian brought the matter of the Neutral House to the National General Assembly, through the intermediation of Chairman Tavit Der Movsesian.

At the 5th of August 1921 session of the National Assembly, Chairman Tavit Der Movsesian—instead of examining and disposing of the calumnies, rumors, and intentional fabrications, and disregarding the arguments raised at the All-National Assembly by the [Protestant] Nation Head Prof. Zenop Bezjian—treated in his speech all of these things as though they were based on the truth, thereby paving the way for arguments that were continued at the following sessions of the 19th and the 26th of August. Following my request, this matter was submitted to a Parliamentary Commission's examination.

The Commission's reporter, Nerses Ohanian, presented the report at the December 2nd

session, saying, “We worked for three months and convened three meetings every week to come up with these results.” We present in the following the Summary of this report.

Report of the Parliamentary Investigative Commission
on the Neutral House Issue
Summary:

Our Parliamentary Commission, having concluded its long investigation, hereby declares the following.

- a. The scandalous stories and bribery accusations concerning the abusive practices at the Neutral House and the sale of orphans to Turks are entirely unfounded and untrue. There may have been irregularities and errors in the examination of the orphans and certain undesirable situations accommodated, but it has not been possible to establish the staff’s responsibility for these. Consequently, our Commission refutes the accusations leveled on these grounds and considers them unjustified.
- b. While admitting that there have been irregularities and errors in the Neutral House’s administration and provisioning accounts records—which are still continuing—[we wish to point out that] it has so far not been possible to completely regulate the administration and provisioning. Likewise, [the Commission] finds unjustified the noise that is being raised on supposed abuse in the administration and provisioning, which not only was not proved but was refuted through the records and documents produced.
- c. Our Commission confirms that the administrators of the Neutral House have been formally deficient and negligent, but neither did we find nor were we presented with sufficient proof of abuse or illegality. Therefore, our Commission does not find any of the accusations well founded.
- d. Our Commission finds unfounded and unjustified Mr. H. Deruni’s accusation that Mr. Tavit Der Movsesian has been inclined to serve the viewpoint of the Turkish police. Likewise we reject the accusation by Mr. Srents about Mr. Der Movsesian’s favors and partiality toward one of his clients. We consider unproven and untrue the view that the administration of the Neutral House was taken away from the Nation as a consequence of Mr. Der Movsesian’s initiative, although we accept that the Chairman of the Political Assembly went to the British Embassy—quite in keeping with the protocol—to effect the transfer of the Neutral House to save on expenses.,

Our Commission finds worthy of criticism: a.) the mentioned decision of the All-National Assembly, b.) the Political Assembly’s agreement to this decision, and c.) the Political Assembly’s haste in implementing this decision—taking into account:

- a. The national, political and moral significance of the Neutral House;
- b. The advantages offered by the present organization of the Neutral House; and
- c. People at the head of the National Authority should not have been unaware of the likely consequences of a proposal to transfer the Neutral House; if they did not know or were not interested until that time, they should have made any proposals or modifications only after studying the matter in depth and becoming familiar with its past and present.

This is how the Political Assembly failed by giving its agreement to the All-National Assembly's decision.

16 November 1921

Bp. Mesrob Naroyan
Dr. K. Tavitian
Aram Halajian
N. Ohanian
R. Aprahamian

After this report was read and the deputies and [I,as] the Patriarch made speeches, on the 23rd of December 1921, the Political Assembly raised the issue of confidence, and the voting produced 29 ballots in favor, 27 opposed, 2 blank, and 1 destroyed.

At the following session (6th of January 1922), the Political Assembly was obliged to present its resignation, which was accepted with near unanimity.

Inasmuch as the summary of the report stated that Der Movsesian “had not been inclined to serve the viewpoint of the Turkish police,” he did nonetheless render this service with a lack of foresight—having as his accomplice the Protestant Armenian's Head, Zenop Bezjian—by raising this problem at the All-National Assembly to satisfy his vengefulness.

This [Bezjian's] vengefulness was caused by the fact he had not gone to Europe with the Patriarch, whereas the Armenian Catholic Vicar had. Bezjian had received this erroneous information from Mrs. Daylarian, who was a member of his community. Mrs. Daylarian, a member of the Neutral House's Commission, had gone to the British Embassy in the company of Dr. Artinian, to discuss a matter [related to the Neutral House] and was turned back with the comment, “We recognize the Patriarch but no other entities!”

Inasmuch as it is said that this matter led to the Neutral House being taken from the Nation's control, I refute this. Nevertheless, it is certain that Der Movsesian—incited by Bezjian—went to the [British] Embassy and created problems at the General Assembly, and these led not only to the closing down of the Neutral House but also to the complete stoppage of orphan collection, and Der Movsesian did all this not purposely but because of his shortsightedness.

This being the case, Der Movsesian still took up five or six sessions of the National General Assembly with this matter and revealed all the accusations of those who were provoking him at the General Assembly and the Parliamentary Commission formed by the Assembly. After the investigation, an unfavorable decision was issued and was accepted by the General Assembly, and Der Movsesian was condemned. It is amazing that, after all this, Der Movsesian insisted on dwelling at length on this issue in his book, published some 20 years later.²⁶⁰ From all this, it should be clear with the kind of person we were dealing.

Despite all this, we succeeded in liberating and returning to the Nation's bosom almost 3,000 of the 4,000 to 5,000 Armenian orphans being kept by Turkish households in Constantinople. Nevertheless, the same could not be done in the countryside, where it became possible to liberate very few of the hundreds of thousands of orphans. The reason for this was that, even after Turkey's defeat, the Allied armies did not penetrate the interior regions of the country.

During the deportations, the orphanage opened in Kharpert by Dr. Ehmann saved and housed about 1,000 orphans. Later, these orphans were transferred to the care of the

American [NE] Relief. The same humanitarian organization [i.e., the NER] had also opened another orphanage in Sepasdia that—together with the orphans of Kharpert—was later transferred to Syria. Likewise, the orphanages in Cilicia were transferred to Syria when the Kemalists became stronger.

Transferred with these were the orphans from the Diarbekir orphanage, which stayed open for a long time in Aleppo thanks to the assistance sent by *Diarbekirtsî* [Armenians] living in America. Similarly, the *Gesaratsineru Hayrenagtsagan Miutyun* [Compatriotic Society of Gesaria Armenians] in Constantinople supported the gathering and care of orphans in Gesaria, which were later moved to Constantinople and Aleppo. These orphanages helped gather many orphans, but the majority remained where they were, among Turks.

The late Rupen Herian,²⁶¹ on his own initiative and with the financial support of our conationals in Egypt, gathered in Egypt some orphans from the deserts of Syria. The Swiss humanitarian Miss [Karen] Eppe,²⁶² with assistance from the Swiss-Armenian Society, gathered many orphans from the southern regions of Turkey and from the deserts. These orphans were housed in orphanages already existing in Syria and Lebanon by the NER, which was joined by the AGBU.

In addition to Rupen Herian's orphan gathering project, in 1919 the Patriarchate sent an American-Armenian (whose name I cannot recall) to the regions of Angora and Kastemuni. This man gathered some orphans himself and also commissioned Dr. Emirzé to gather the orphans that were in the Kurdish and Arab villages from Edessa [Urfa] to Jazirah and Mosul. Unfortunately, just as Dr. Emirzé arrived in Edessa to undertake this work, he became caught up in the fighting with the Kemalists and could not continue.²⁶³

To give an idea of how many orphans there were in the interiors of Turkey, I should mention the two groups of [supposedly Turkish] orphans the Turkish government brought to Constantinople from Gesaria in 1919, with the intention of settling them in orphanages. Fortunately, British officers received news of these convoys, and British policemen met the groups at the Haydar Pasha train station and escorted them directly to the hall of the School of Trades located in the courtyard of the Holy Trinity Church of Péra.

Mr. Arakel Chakërian's²⁶⁴ report says the following on this incident.

The first group of 119 orphans from Gesaria reached Constantinople on the 20th of May 1919. They were examined in the presence of Haydar Bey, representing the Turkish government, and myself, representing the Patriarchate, and, with Haydar Bey's approval, it was determined that 69 of them were Turks and 50 were Armenians.

A second group of 220 orphans arrived on the 10th of June. Present [at the examination] were Neziheh Hanëm from the government, Mr. White and Miss Whiting from the Americans, Col. Benz and Commander Smith from the British Embassy, and Mrs. Z. Bahri and myself from the Patriarchate. Of these, 124 were revealed to be Armenians and 96 to be Turks.

The proportion of Armenians in this group of supposedly Turkish orphans from Gesaria should give us an idea as to the number of Armenian orphans who were lost in the interior regions of Turkey.

E. The *Hamazkayin* [All-Armenian] Organization

Because the Armenian nation in its entirety had fallen victim to the enemy's merciless blows, the pain and the Cause belonged indiscriminately to all Armenians. It was thought that, if each Armenian denomination functioned alone, this would quite likely lead to the dissipation of resources and frequent conflicts of interests. It was, therefore, thought to bring about an all-National collaborative enterprise including all three Armenian denominations.

At our initiative, representatives from the three denominations²⁶⁵ came together and—after long consultations—produced the following Agreement, which all three parties signed.

1. The necessity for all three denominations to work together harmoniously on problems having an all-Armenian nature was emphasized unanimously.
2. Problems having an all-Armenian nature are the following: communications, trusteeship (orphans, widows, and deportees), immigration, compensation for damages, the all-Armenian budget, and other similar issues.
3. The highest-level Armenian political issues will be left to the Armenian Delegation in Paris or to the [Armenian] government—if such is formed—or will be settled in consultation with them.
4. The All-Armenian Organization will be formed of the spiritual leaders of each of the denominations: four [Apostolic] Armenians, two Armenian Catholics, and two Armenian Protestants, each of them appointed by their authorized entities.
5. The All-Armenian Organization's duty is to make joint applications in communications matters, to present the National demands to the Ottoman and the Allied authorities, to hold consultations aimed at determining the attitude to be adopted on vital issues, to approve the charters of the Mixed Commissions, and to exercise general supervision on their activities.
6. The All-Armenian Organization's decisions shall be unanimous.
7. The All-Armenian Organization may temporarily entrust the supervision of the activities of the mixed entities that are under its authority—in whole or in part—to the Political Assembly of any of the three denominations, provided the Agency has first approved of their charters. Members of these mixed entities are elected by each denomination's Political Assembly. The immediate supervision of these entities' activities is conducted by the Executive Political Assembly.
8. The Executive Political Assembly must account for all of its undertakings to the All-Armenian Assembly and take into consideration all decisions and observations of the latter body.

Signatures,

Nation Head of the Armenian Protestants,

Z. Bezjian

Patriarchal Vicar of the Armenian Catholics in Constantinople,

Abp. Sayeghian

Patriarch of the [Apostolic] Armenians,

Abp. Zaven

Provisional Article: This Protocol must be approved by the Political Assemblies of all three denominations, then put into effect by the All-Armenian Assembly and

is subject to the Representative Assembly's inspection and verification. Before [these steps are completed], the executive authority may entrust it—on a provisional basis—to the Armenian Political Assembly.

The first session of the All-Armenian Assembly took place on the 8th of March 1919, with the participation of myself as the Patriarch of the Armenians, the Most Illustrious Bp. Okosdinos [Augustinos] Sayeghian of Aleppo as the Vicar of the Armenian Catholics, Prof. Z. Bezjian as the Nation Head of the Armenian Protestants, Dr. Krikor Tavitian, Dikran Chayian, Hëmayag Khosrovian, Hayg Khojasarian from the Armenian Patriarchate, Mikayel Nuriyan, Manug Marigian from the Armenian Catholics, Tovmas Tumajan, and the Rev. Hovsep Jezizian from the Armenian Protestants. The first decision of the Assembly was to call this entity the *Hamazkayin Khorhurt* [All-Armenian Council].

Also [at the same session] the Assembly decided,

... for the proper administration of the trusteeship projects, to designate the Armenian Patriarchate's Political Assembly to undertake the restructuring of the Trusteeship by establishing a direct supervision over it and by periodically accounting for and reporting on its activities.

This Assembly always met at our Patriarchate building in Péra and—in accordance with the Agreement—concerned itself with problems having “all-Armenian” significance.²⁶⁶ We met almost weekly until October 1922, when the Turks became stronger in Constantinople and the Allied states changed their policies. During this period [of the spiritual leaders], only Abp. Sayeghian was replaced; he resigned from the post of Vicar and returned to his prelacy seat in Aleppo. [His superiors] in Rome appointed Abp. Hovhannes Nazlian to replace him. (The Patriarch-Catholicos Terzian had already returned to Rome after causing much popular dissatisfaction.) The members of the All-Armenian [Council] were replaced every time the Political or Administrative Assemblies of the Patriarchate changed, because they were always appointed by these Assemblies from among their members.

F. The Information Bureau

During the War, financial difficulties had forced the Patriarchate's office staff to be reduced to a bare minimum. After the Armistice, the office barely had the resources for the Patriarchate's routine correspondence, but not [enough] for drafting the numerous texts the political situation required.

Thus it was decided that a new office, to be called the Information Bureau, should be set up to prepare the texts addressed to the Embassies, to compile the information required by them, and to provide secretarial services to the All-Armenian Council. The Information Bureau was constituted in accordance with the decision taken at the Political Assembly's 17th of August 1919 session.

Dr. Tavitian, who had conceived the idea of the Information Bureau, assumed its overall supervision. The Armenian language expert Arshag Alboyajian, who was already the Secretary of the All-Armenian Organization, was appointed Internal Director. Zora Zorayan, later Asadur Navarian, and finally Garabed Nurian joined the Bureau as secretaries responsible for correspondence in French and English and as assistants [to Alboyajian]. Later, Mr. A.

Chakërian also became connected with the Bureau as an agent and the head of the orphan gathering section. In June 1921, the Bureau's budget was 2,000 pounds monthly.

Seeing that, in the period following the Armistice, every state was pursuing its interests through every possible means, the Patriarchate also made some modest efforts in this area; it produced several minor publications and started publishing a newspaper with the title *Renaissance*, which unfortunately had a short life. This paper was edited by Messrs. Dikran Chayian and Garabed Nurian, and Dr. [Hagop] Topjian submitted news from various sources.

In this area, my principal regret is that our Nation, being inexperienced in political life, never took the initiative to carry out propaganda work in nations stronger than us. At a time when the Turks—in plain view of everyone—were using their women's honor to win over to their side the Allied diplomats and soldiers, our people were waiting with folded arms for the [Allied] states to make every sacrifice [just] “for the love of our black eyes.”

The Information Bureau, thanks to its two capable and intelligent staff members, Messrs. Alboyajian and Nurian, helped the Embassies by providing them with all the information they requested.

In the summer of 1938, I made a special excursion to Jerusalem to examine the Information Bureau's archives. These had been sent in November 1922 for safekeeping to Bp. Krikoris Balakian of Manchester then brought to Jerusalem through the efforts of Patriarch Torkom [Kushagian] and were being preserved there with care. I was greatly surprised to see there a complete collection of documents and records pertaining to all the significant events of the period from 1918 to 1922. Arshag Alboyajian's work in collecting and classifying these [documents] is commendable. Regrettably, I could stay only a few days to make use of these materials for my present work.

The charter drafted for the Information Bureau and approved by the Political Assembly stated that the Information Bureau was “constituted under the direct control and responsibility of a member of the Political Assembly's Communications Committee.”

According to its charter, the [Information Bureau] would house the following.

... all kinds of old and new statistics having to do with Armenia or the Armenian Cause, ... incidents and narratives about the persecutions, massacres, and deportations [suffered by] the Armenians; statistical descriptions about mobile and immobile goods belonging to the Nation or to individuals that have been robbed; in particular, as complete as possible information—including biographical data—on the principal Turkish culprits who were participants in the evil deeds committed during the recent deportations, including documents and testimonies attesting to their criminal acts; and statistical information about Islamized Armenians of both genders and kidnapped orphans....

Information about old and new organizations of various kinds— political parties, independent societies, and clubs; statistical information about the Nation's educational work; lists depicting the Nation's fortunes—in quantity as well as quality; writings, utterances, and statements by Europeans about our nation's Cause, the Armenian character, etc.; concise information about official and unofficial writings by Turks about the Armenians; reports in the Armenian as well as the non-Armenian press about us, etc., etc.

Garabed Nurian was a member of the National Assembly nominated by the Patriarch on the 29th of June 1920 and approved by the Political Assembly. He later submitted a report fully describing the Information Bureau's function. In the report, the activities of the Bureau are enumerated as follows.

1. *Turkey's attitude toward the Armenians ever since the Armistice*. These "constituted—necessarily—the larger portion of the Bureau's occupations.... Through some 300 reports, the High Commissions, the Republic [of Armenia], and the National Delegation learned about all the attacks the Turks committed against the Armenians since the Armistice. Compiled in 292 other reports are the necessary documents of proof about the authors of the deportations, that the Turks are trying to justify ..."
2. *Massacres and deportations*. "The Bureau compiles all the information about the massacres and the deportations that is based on truthful testimony and corroborated. Already one book on the massacre in Gesaria and another on the massacre in Diarbekir have been published. A third, valuable work on the martyred Armenian clergy will soon be submitted to the printer's."
3. *Statistics*. "The Bureau has undertaken preparations for a compilation depicting the true condition of each Diocese of the Patriarchate on the aftermath of the War—in other words, the numbers of churches, monasteries, schools, [other] National possessions, and inhabitants in each Prelacy."
4. *Information about Armenia*. "The Bureau collects all [printed?] works that are of interest to the Nation's propaganda work. It has already reproduced and distributed the agricultural report on Armenia.... The Bureau is studying the possibility of publishing a study on Armenia's mineral wealth. A series of interesting booklets on Armenians' contributions to Western civilization is in preparation. The first of this series, *Les Arméniens et l'imprimerie*, has already appeared."
5. *Document collection and library*. "The Bureau collects and classifies ... all documents having to do with the social and political life of the Armenians. So far, more than 600 reports and statistic[al works] produced by Armenian societies or official entities have been classified.... The Bureau has a library containing works about Armenians. The foregoing have been complemented with the addition of two rich [personal] libraries that have been entrusted to the Bureau: those of Mr. Hrand Asadur and Mr. Teotig. These two collections together constituted 7,800 volumes."

G. Our Relations with the Turkish Government After the Armistice

The Armenians had lived [in the Ottoman Empire] for centuries and performed fully all their citizenship obligations. During the war just concluded, Armenians living everywhere in Turkey had been considered outlaws, deported to distant places of exile like herds of sheep, and, during these supposed deportations, more than half of them perished by the sword or through hardship. The fragments of a people surviving such treatment could, naturally, not be expected to cultivate feelings of love or loyalty toward the State that had treated them this way.

As already explained, from the masses of deportees only the Cilician [Armenians]—encouraged by the French domination—had been able to return to their native lands, and mixed in with them there had been small numbers of surviving deportees from other Armenian-inhabited provinces. Of the Armenians deported from other regions, only small groups succeeded in returning to Diarbekir, Kharpert, and Gesaria, and no others could go back. To put it concretely, no Armenian was able to return to Trebizond, Garin, Erznga, Paghesh, Mush, Van, Sepasdia, or Tokat, because of their having been severely decimated, the unsafe conditions of the land, and the hostile attitudes of their Turkish and Kurdish neighbors. In every family, the men had been decimated, and the children had been abducted by Turks and Kurds or were dead of starvation. Only some of the deported women—those who had been able to withstand the suffering and the misery—had survived. These women, who were just starting to feel the pain of what they had lived through during the last four years, did not return to their native areas; they stayed where they were or came to Constantinople, awaiting the decision of the Great Powers, who they hoped would give them solace.

The Armenian population of Constantinople in the post-Armistice period consisted of these women survivors, other survivors from the many thousands who had been sent to their deaths, Armenians from abroad who had come to look for their relatives, numerous Armenians native to the provinces but established in Constantinople, who had now lost their families and property in their home areas, and the true *Bolsetsi* [Constantinopolitan] Armenians, who shared the pain and bitterness of all the foregoing in various ways.

It was these members of the Nation that were actively involved in steering the Nation's life in Constantinople; they participated in the Patriarchate's Assemblies, affiliated themselves with political parties and associations, and—not the least important—guided public opinion by publishing newspapers. There was not a single person whose heart was not full of bitterness toward the Turkish State, which had thrown them into this misery.

In 1915 the Ittihadist government had left the State's Armenian subjects outside the realm of laws, but without making any official pronouncement to this effect. The post-Armistice regime continued the same treatment, although without massacres or robbery.

The post-Armistice Turkish government did not make a single gesture to remedy the wound its predecessor had opened in the heart of the Armenian element. The government and the Turkish people watched the misery and suffering of their centuries-old compatriots with indifference and, one might say, inner satisfaction.

The [Armenian Apostolic] National Assemblies met regularly and even convened several General *Hamakumar nisder* [Assembly sessions] with the participation of the [Armenian] Catholic and [Armenian] Protestant General Assemblies. The All-National Assembly met almost weekly, with the attendance of Administrative Assembly representatives from all three communities.

All were intoxicated with the victorious European countries' promises and were self-assuredly counting the days, waiting for the realization of those promises. Under these circumstances, the Patriarch's and the Patriarchate's relations with the Turkish government were an important issue, because it was difficult to decide what position to adopt. We had assumed an accusatory stance toward [the Turkish government] and were acting against it by accusing it in front of the European states. This being the case, having relations with it was difficult, which made it harder to cultivate favorable relations. From the very early days after the Armistice, the administration of Dr. Tavitian put this matter on the table for discussion and even sought to determine the opinions of several "currents" outside the Assembly. To hear

various opinions, Dr. Tavitian called a meeting with their leaders, at which T. Der Movsesian, H. Khojasarian, and H. Khosrovian were also present.

Of those present, only Der Movsesian spoke in favor of not severing ties, and he later wrote about it in his book, *Kaghutahayutyan hamar yelits miag aghakē* [The Only Way Out for the Armenian Diaspora] (pp. 152–153). However, knowing that his opinion had not been accepted, why did he not once raise this matter and demand the resumption of ties during the sessions of the General Assembly, where he was the leader of the majority Central Faction or at the Political Assembly, of which he was a member from the 11th of July 1919 until the 21st of May 1920 and the President from the 25th of March 1921 until the 6th of January 1922? Is it not the case that almost every “current” had spoken against resuming relations with the Sublime Porte? Everyone was of the opinion that it was necessary to wait for the Allies’ decision about us.

After this [consultation], no official or unofficial proposals or remarks were made at the General Assembly or the Administrative Assemblies—not even a proposal by a single individual—about resuming our relations with the Turkish government. No comments were made to me, either, that I had failed as Patriarch in this area. Everyone was waiting for the final decision of the [Paris] Peace Conference about us [Armenians] and even about Turkish statehood, before deciding what position to take.

One day during Damad Ferid Pasha’s²⁶⁷ term as Prime Minister, Senator Manug Azarian came to the Patriarchate to see me and said that the Grand Vizier wished that the Patriarchate would continue its relations with the Imperial Palace and the Sublime Porte—much as before the War—that the Grand Vizier regretted that the Ittihadist government had committed acts that had damaged the Armenian element’s centuries-old relations with the State, and that the Sublime Porte had already constituted a commission—of which Azarian was a member—to solve the Armenian Question in a manner that satisfied the Armenians’ wishes. I said [to Azarian],

For centuries we have served the Ottoman State with loyalty, and the State knows very well that we have not failed in our duties as citizens. However, the Ittihadist government, with the pretext of punishing a few persons, punished our entire people very severely. I should not have to point it out; His Excellency [the Grand Vizier] knows very well what happened to our people. Today, thousands of survivors have come to Constantinople, robbed and wounded, almost half-dead. I understand that His Majesty the Sultan and His Excellency the Grand Vizier were not in agreement with this savage act of the Ittihadists, but, if the Sovereign is the people’s father and the government is its mother, what *did* they do for their homeless and wounded children? Did they set aside some facilities to shelter them, did they cover their nakedness, or did they make some slight sacrifice to satiate their hunger? Or did they—at least—say, “Woe to you, my children! May those who brought you to this state be damned!” Did they say anything of this sort or any other words of consolation? How do you want us to come and address with expressions of love and loyalty the throne and the government that mortally wounded us with a sword, which they still have not put back in its scabbard, and that still do not exhibit remorse for what they have done? It is natural that, under the present circumstances, we would wish to have such a condition that would take us out of this predicament and allow us to live comfortably. Please tell the sublime Grand Vizier that I barely have the time to wipe dry the

tears of these unfortunate children of the land and the State. If he wishes to play the role of a mother, then let him show some compassion toward them. As soon as I see him do it [the show of compassion], I will immediately rush to express my gratitude to him.

Manug Azarian left and did not come back until the 11th of June 1920, when he paid me a welcome visit upon my return from Europe. On that occasion, he informed me—as a member of the commission examining the Turkish treaty—that, so far, he had heard no opposition remarks concerning the Provinces that were to be joined to Armenia or the articles pertaining to the minorities. I suggested that he speak with Damad Ferid Pasha, that we would be very pleased if no opposition was raised toward us, and even more so if they expressed their agreement on the lands to be given to the Armenians in their very first reply. If the government would show at least this consideration toward the Armenian nation, we would immediately start our relations with it.

As the *Millî*²⁶⁸ [Nationalist] movement emerged, gathered strength and became dominant in Turkey, it became dominant in all of Asia Minor and relegated the Sublime Porte to a secondary role. In January 1922, the former *mebus* of Kozan, Madteos Nalbandian made another attempt at rapprochement, by bringing to meet with me the Constantinople representative of the Ankara government, Hamid Bey. Our conversation lasted for more than two hours. We spoke about the events before the War and the condition of the Armenians in Turkey. We exchanged opinions also about the deportations and the policies adopted toward the Armenians during the War. We also talked about the condition of the Armenians under Kemalist rule. I pointed out that massacres had taken place in Marzëvan, and Armenians had been deported anew in Amasia and Tokat. Indeed, this is why the Cilician Armenians had fled in terror from their native areas.

Hamid Bey wanted to make me understand that the Armenians should not appeal to Europe and make protests there. I said, “If you want us to shut up and not talk against you in front of the civilized world, then stop this persecution!” Hamid Bey promised to report on our meeting to Mustafa Kemal, but no positive result came of it.

In sum, no relations were cultivated with either the Constantinople or the Angora governments. This was a policy that had been adopted by the Nation and the Assemblies. It was not an individual initiative on my part, even though there are certain people who would like to present it that way now.

One of these people is Mr. H. Amaduni, one of whose articles, “From Transcaucasia to Constantinople,” (*Hayrenik* monthly, November 1942) I happened to see. It is amazing that H. Amaduni, who was a member of two post-Armistice Political Assemblies in Constantinople, did not have the courage to express his opinion at that time about the Patriarchate’s political course and 20 years later decided to criticize it! Mr. Amaduni should have taken an interest and learned that the Patriarchate was governed by the [Armenian National] Constitution and not the *Kanunu Esasîye* [Fundamental Law], which had nothing to do with it. He should also have learned that the Patriarch did not receive a monthly stipend from the “State Treasury”; only after his resignation did the state pay him a retirement stipend until the end of his life, [the amount of which] was in proportion to his years in office. He should also have known that the Patriarchs did not pursue their personal political agendas but were obliged to follow the Administrative Assemblies’ decisions; if the Patriarch did not agree with these, he could take the matter to the General Assembly, and if the Assembly confirmed

the Administration's decision, the Patriarch had a choice between implementing the decision or resigning.

Mr. Amaduni was a member of an Assembly that had the duty of conducting the Patriarchate's affairs. In the sessions he attended, he did not once make an objection or a comment about the Patriarchate severing its relations with the Turkish government. [Also], why didn't the party [Tashnagsutyun] he represented at the Administrative Assemblies, and which had sufficient votes, not make an issue of this? Mr. Amaduni would have done well to raise all these objections during that time, when he had a voice at the Patriarchate; now it is too late!

Mr. Amaduni also relates an incident, which he heard from Hovhan Vartabed (now defrocked), and he surmises that, because of his wrong conduct in the matter, the Patriarch brought serious damage to the Armenian cause. The incident is the following. After the Armistice, like the European great powers, the United States also sent a High Commissioner to Constantinople. This man was Admiral Bristol.²⁶⁹ Several days after his arrival in Constantinople, the Admiral paid a visit to the Patriarchate, during which there was a misunderstanding about his identity, and he was met coldly. The Admiral reciprocated by behaving distantly when the Patriarch visited him. Mr. Amaduni adds, "I am led to believe that the mentioned incident played a role in the Admiral's prejudicial attitude toward us at a time when the people and the government of the United States had boundless sympathy toward the Armenian cause."

Since this incident, 27 years have gone by, and I regret that I do not recall it well. Nevertheless, judging from Mr. Amaduni's version, I do not consider it unnatural that the Patriarch may not have recognized the Admiral on that first visit, because the Patriarch had not [yet] paid the Admiral the customary welcome visit, and the two of them had never met. In addition, from [the Admiral's] similarly cool behavior when he met with Khadisian, we could deduce that the United States government having declared itself neutral in this War, its official representative was obliged to behave in this way. During his stay in Constantinople, the Admiral remained a simple observer, without taking part in the High Commissioners' meetings or becoming involved in anything else. It is impossible to ignore efforts by high-ranking Turks to influence the Admiral and win him over to their side. These people often visited the Admiral, together with their family members, and received him warmly in their family circles. Mr. Amaduni has either forgotten or purposely does not remember that post-Armistice Constantinople was swarming with the representatives of the Allied states and their military allies, and our people fell very short in cultivating their friendship.

The following incident should not be out of place here. In July 1919, following the General Assembly's decision, I formed a Political Assembly, the members of which were Chairman Sde'pan Karayan, Dr. Tavitian, Tavit Der Movsesian, Hayg Khojasarian, Nerses Ohanian, Khachig Sëvajian, etc. Seeing the inadequacy of the Nation's revenues for meeting the ever-increasing needs of the refugees and the orphans, the Assembly decided to appeal to the Turkish government—which was, after all, the cause of their misery—for assistance, thinking that, like it had done in the aftermath of the Cilician tragedy of 1912, this time, too, the government might designate a significant sum. In response to our appeal, the government designated a single lump sum payment of 2,000 pounds, whereas after the Cilician tragedy it had designated 10,000 pounds per year for four years. The Political Assembly, seeing that the designated sum was only a small fraction of the [Armenian National] Trusteeship's monthly expenses of 30,000 to 35,000 pounds, did not claim the money but instead demanded the

revenues of the churches and monasteries located in cities and towns from which Armenians had been deported. According to the Law on Abandoned Properties, these revenues should have been kept in the State Treasury. It is pointless to say that this request did not receive any response, because the State Treasury did not contain any such sums of money. The government had treated the Abandoned Properties Law as a dead letter and had left these properties open to pillage.

H. Our Relations with the Greek Patriarchate

We had generally cordial relations with the Greek Patriarchate and never had any disputes or problems that would cool these down. During the war and during the deportations, their Metropolitans did not spare [any effort to] our people [in] the help they were capable of giving. In this regard, we have a particular debt of gratitude to the Metropolitans of Samson and Trebizond (Chrysanthos).

In addition to the official meetings, the Armenophone Metropolitan Iovakim often came to visit us and act as mediator in our [Armenian and Greek Patriarchate's] relationship. In addition, certain members of their Political Assembly were in constant communication with us. Especially during the administration of Dr. Tavitian, the two Patriarchates had frequent exchanges of opinion on issues that were of mutual interest.

These relations became more emphasized after the Armistice, and, even before my arrival in Constantinople, the two Patriarchates' Administrative Assemblies put their seals to a political agreement.

This agreement, which was put down in writing and sent to the Peace Conference shortly after my arrival [from exile] in Constantinople, was the following.

Greek-Armenian Agreement

Memorandum of the Peace Meeting Convened Between the Constantinople Universal Patriarchate and the Armenian Patriarchate

The Armenians and the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire have for many years lived in the same cities and villages. They have had continuous relations and form closely related adjacent communities. They feel that their fate lies in the same direction, and they will be able to fully develop by staying closely linked.

Both communities have the same purpose—to obtain their liberty—and the same plan—to live secure, civilized, and comfortable lives in the Near East. In the course of their long martyrdom, they have come to appreciate one another, and they are happy to affirm that they nurture sincere feelings of friendship and confidence toward one another. It is for this reason that the two peoples are jointly appealing for justice.

The Turks' behavior has not changed from the time they came and settled in Anatolia and Europe. Their militaristic and theocratic government has always used the same abominable and coarse methods, and done so with an extremely unforgiving fanaticism. No reforms, neither the Tanzimat²⁷⁰ nor the Constitution, have been able to change this fundamental characteristic of the Ottoman Government.

There is a very clear separating line between the two groups: on the one hand the dominant Turk, and on the other hand the Christian, who is a hated *giaour* [infidel]

and oppressed as a *rayah* [peasant]. Even today, the Turk considers himself the absolute master of the peoples he has vanquished, having the decision of life or death over their heads and prevented from completely annihilating them only because of his own interests.

Our peoples' history is the bloodiest and most terrible martyrdom in all of mankind's history. Dishonor, pillage, rape, forced apostasy, murder, and massacre have been the methods that the government has ceaselessly employed for governing us over the last five centuries.

In all of Turkey, from Constantinople to the tiniest villages, there is not a single place where plundering and pillage has not taken place. This is evidently the case even today, from St. Sophia—which still has the Crescent on its dome—to Armenian and Greek village huts that have been occupied and appropriated by Turks, with their legitimate owners exiled or massacred.

It is unheard of that crimes are forgiven and pillage legitimized at the very places where they are committed. In addition, the drama being played out in the Near East during the last few years supersedes in its terror even the blackest pages of Turkish historiography.

If our Nations are liberated, their numbers will reach tens of millions, even though, in today's Turkey, they have been reduced to only two-and-a-half million Greeks and one-and-a-half million Armenians.

It is through such savage crimes that a Muslim majority has come about in this or that place, and recognizing this majority would amount to approving and encouraging the annihilation methods that the Turks have used against us.

We have been the eternal inhabitants of this land and have irrigated its soil with our sweat and blood. No field of battle has taken more victims than what we have given in the course of five centuries of uninterrupted massacres.

Despite everything, we still remain the sole progressive and productive elements in this country. The Turk has been and remains until now a terrible parasite feeding on our body. He has not produced a single work of civilization, not founded a single city. Instead, he has spread death and destruction everywhere.

We demand that we not be forced to remain under the Turkish yoke any longer and declare that we shall not obey such a government, no matter what kind of controls are imposed upon it.

We request the reestablishment of our National domains. If it proves impossible for all Greeks and Armenians to live within their National states, then we sincerely wish that our people would at least live under a Greek or an Armenian government, as the circumstances may warrant.

We ask to have a great Armenia with free and wide access to the Black and Mediterranean Seas, and we Greeks declare that we will be happy to see Cilicia joined in its entirety to the six Armenian Provinces.

We request to have all those lands that legitimately belonged to Greece but forcibly taken from it to be returned to her, and we Armenians declare that our wish is to have Thrace, Constantinople, the Provinces of Aydén and Brusa, and the districts of Biga and Nicomedia joined to Greece.

Having realized their unification in this manner, our countries will be the strongest factors for peace in the Orient.

The granting of the requests made above will be a noble work of justice, and we are certain that this will serve not only our Nations' interests but those of all humanity.

Universal Patriarchate Vicar, Dorotheos
Constantinople, the 11th/24th of February 1919

Patriarch of Armenians, Zaven

A copy of this memorandum was sent to Prime Minister Venizelos,²⁷¹ who was then in Paris, with a letter stating that this was "prepared with the participation and agreement of the two sides," and requesting that he "kindly defend these requests of the two Nations." Abp. Dorotheos took the memorandum to Paris in person, to present it at the Great Powers Conference and to help Venizelos in his appeals, but he fell ill shortly after his arrival and died in Paris.

This agreement, in which we were requesting to have Thrace given to Greece, amounted to nothing, but the Bulgarians were upset about this request, as I came to learn later when I went to Bulgaria from Constantinople.

Trebizond was not mentioned by name in the memorandum, but there was allusion to it in the request for free and wide access to the Black Sea. Later, when I went to Paris, I heard that Venizelos agreed to this. The Greeks of Trebizond had formed a Special Commission and asked to have their Province joined to Mother Armenia or be made into a separate state.

When I was in Europe, I heard something that amazed me from Abp. Yeghishé Turian, who had gone to Paris as the delegate from Constantinople for the [Armenian National] Delegation's Second General Assembly. The Prelate of Trebizond, Bp. Karekin Khachadurian, had written a letter to Abp. Turian, to inform him that he had received a letter from the Armenian government, in which the Armenian government informed him that the Greek Metropolitan of Trebizond had gone to Yerevan and received a written announcement from the government, bearing Khadisian's signature, to the effect that Armenia had no demands on Trebizond, but then, on the 17th of January 1922, Mr. Tahtajian came and announced that [Avedis] Aharonian had written him a letter to suggest that the Pontic [Greeks] take the initiative to apply to the [European] States to demand that Trebizond be annexed to Armenia, and [Tahtajian] pleaded with me to do what I could about it through the Greek Patriarchate and its affiliates. This contradictory approach was incomprehensible to me, and I adopted a cautious attitude, especially because I was convinced during my time in Paris that the Pontic [Greeks] did not agree to be annexed by Armenia but instead preferred to remain under Turkey's sovereignty.

In discussing Armenian-Greek relations, it is worth mentioning here that these cordial relations moved for a moment beyond the political realm. On the 14th of July 1922, the Metropolitan of Ordu came and requested—in the name of the Greek Patriarchate—that we set up a Commission in charge of our relations with the Greek Church and [told me that] they had already set one up on their side. Such a proposition certainly needed to be presented to the Assemblies' consideration, but they were so busy during those days of crisis that they could not make any arrangements in this area, and the topic was ignored until the *Milli* forces entered Constantinople and everything was ruined.

I. The Issue of “Abandoned Properties”

Once the deportation of the Armenians began in 1915 and the scope gradually widened, the Turkish government passed a temporary Law on *Emval-i Metruke* [Abandoned Properties] in 1334 [1918] to deal with the Armenian people’s sanctuaries, churches, monasteries, and religious and philanthropic institutions. This law, which I regrettably do not have at hand, provided for the government to convert the movable goods to money and to administer the immovables, with the sums collected to be paid to the owners at a later date. For this purpose, bodies known as *Tasviye Komisioni* [Liquidation Commission] were constituted.

This law, however, was never implemented. In general, deported Armenians were given several days to prepare themselves for the trip to Mesopotamia. During those days, the deportees left any belongings that were impossible to transport or that they had entrusted others with, or they sold them cheaply to Muslim or Christian locals. Whatever they took with them, they were forced to give after two or three days on the road to Turkish *chetehs* or other highway robbers. If they had rented carts or beasts of burden, [their drivers] abandoned them on the road and returned; if they had their own pack animals, they were stolen, and whatever belongings they possessed were left behind, and they were forced to continue their march. In this manner, all the movable property of the deportees perished or, it would be more accurate to say, passed into Turks’ hands. Nowhere did the government show much diligence in collecting these goods or converting them to money.

The Armenians of Garin, for instance, gathered those movable goods that they could not take with them on the road and deposited them at their spacious church, in the hope of reclaiming them upon their return. The following year, when the Russians occupied the city, the Armenians who went to Garin found the church filled with these goods that the deported Armenian citizens of Garin had left [behind]. Mr. K. Apulian, the [former] Rector of the Sanasarian School, found precious church items in the portion of the church called “Dajar” [Temple]²⁷² by the *Garnetsi*, among them the pure gold chalice that [the philanthropist] Mgërdich Sanasarian had donated to the church. He took all of these things to Echmiadzin and delivered them to the Catholicos.

As for the immovable properties, they were handed over to Muslim refugees arriving early from the Caucasus or the Balkans and to Muslims fleeing the theaters of war.

The Armenians of Garin deposited some of their gold and jewelry at the Ottoman Bank branch in their city and left for exile with the deposit receipts. Certain other Armenians gave their valuables for safekeeping to the [American] Protestant missionary Stapleton. After the entire population had left Garin, Stapleton took all these valuables, fled to the United States by way of the Caucasus, and embezzled everything that had been entrusted to him. The government demanded that the Ottoman Bank hand over [to it] the deposited jewelry, and the bank complied.

After the Armistice, when members of the families that had deposited valuables at the Ottoman Bank arrived in Constantinople and went to the bank, they learned that these items had been transferred to the government’s deposit fund. They obtained certificates from the Patriarchate to establish their identity, applied to the government, and succeeded in retaining the portions of their deposited valuables that they were able to locate.

In our search for abandoned properties—as I related in the chapter on orphan collection—we found only about 20 church bells in Constantinople and some church ornaments that were being kept at the Imperial Museum as antiquities. Otherwise, we did not hear of

the presence in Constantinople of any abandoned property—not even in any official buildings.

Our clever [associate] Tavit Der Movsesian writes about a certain receipt in his above-mentioned book (on p. 156), but even if what he says is true, he is wrongly attributing this receipt to abandoned properties. Given the condition of the deported Armenians, I do not know from where Tavit Der Movsesian produced this myth, according to which Finance Minister Javid Bey, as he was resigning from office, is supposed to have sent word to the Patriarchate that a sum of 1,200,000 (one million two hundred thousand) pounds had been generated from the sale of abandoned properties and that this amount remained in the government treasury. Der Movsesian does not seem to have remembered when writing these that, when Javid was resigning from his ministerial post in October 1914, it would have been impossible to generate funds from the sale of abandoned properties and to register it in government records, because the deportations had not yet taken place, there were no abandoned properties, and no law on abandoned properties had been officially published. Javid Bey resigned from his position the day after Turkey entered the war, together with several other ministers.

Another part of the abandoned properties were the insurance policies taken out by Armenians. These policies were still in force, and the insurance companies had not made any payments to the Turkish government, despite the latter's demands.

There were three major insurance companies active in the interior regions: Union, Rossia,²⁷³ and New York. The first two had the Armenians Simon Kayserlian and Ardashes Hyurmyuz as their Constantinople representatives, and a Greek represented the third one. Many of the policy holders had perished during the deportations, leaving behind surviving beneficiaries who now had the insurance policies in their hands; upon [their] request, the Patriarchate began issuing death and inheritance certificates to the inheritors, much as it used to do in the pre-War period.

The Armenian representatives of Union and Rossia had the audacity to come to the Patriarchate one day to announce that, from then on, they would not honor the Patriarchate's death certificates. The Patriarchate had been issuing these certificates without a detailed investigation, they said, but it was probable that the policy holders had died not natural but violent deaths, in which case the inheritors would not be entitled to any payments. They said, "let [the inheritors] apply to the *mahkameh-i sheri* [Sharia court], and come to us with a verdict from them." All my objections and my appeals to their feelings of compatriotic solidarity were of no avail. Both of them knew that the widows and orphans would be unable to produce witnesses at the *mahkameh-i sheri* to prove the death of their insured relative, the place of his grave, and their being the deceased's sole inheritors.

The policy holders from these two insurance companies were in the hundreds if not the thousands, and only 10 or 20 of these had been able to preserve their policies and bring them to Constantinople. The unfortunate co-nationals of these gentlemen may have diverged somewhat from full legality, but did they not deserve compassion, given that so many insured had died with no trace left, often together with their inheritors, or they had lost their policies? In all these cases, these foreign insurance companies quietly appropriated all the premiums the Armenian insured had paid for years. While the Armenian insurance representative acted like Levites toward our own co-nationals, the role of the Canaanite was assumed by the Greek representative of the New York insurance company (regretfully I do not recall his name), who considered the Patriarchate's certificates sufficient to the very end, showed all

consideration even to those inheritors who did not have the policies, and made all the rightful payments.

When the Armistice was announced, the previously passed governmental law [on abandoned properties] was still in effect. [We] thought of having another law passed that would fully protect the Nation's interests. About that time, an outline was drafted in the British Embassy. Hëmayag Khosrovian and [the Patriarchate's new] Chargé d'Affaires Hagop Hamamjian took part in the preparation of a proposed law, which was to have been approved directly by the Council of Ministers, without being submitted to the State Council's examination.

Unfortunately, a few days later it was communicated that the Allies found the imposition of this law unfavorable, because the Sublime Porte was itself intending to prepare a law. At first, the Patriarchate did not want to take part in this Commission, but we were told that we should. Therefore, Messrs. S. Srents and H. Hamamjian took part in the Commission, but months passed, and nothing happened. During this time, the *Milli* movement started, and it was once again confirmed that, in Turkey, a law could be imposed, but this settled nothing as long as it could not be implemented. It was, therefore, considered essential to insert provisions into the Peace Treaty concerning the immovable properties. We were promised that this wish would be acted upon. On the 3rd of March 1920, we requested them [the Allies] to take our wishes into consideration. Later we heard that, indeed, there were provisions in the Peace Treaty on this issue.

Salih Pasha's cabinet²⁷⁴ published a new law, which was a transformation of the law earlier prepared in Constantinople. This law was supposedly put into practice, but, just like the provisions of the Sèvres Treaty, it produced no results or benefits.

The Patriarchate tried to pursue the recovery of immovable and movable goods belonging to the Nation and—through the help of the Allied police—tried to repossess whatever could be found. Unfortunately we ran into obstacles in Constantinople and in the countryside. We heard, for instance, that there were goods belonging to the Nation in certain stores and applied to the international police. A functionary named Agyah Bey was summoned. He admitted that these goods belonged to the Armenians but said that they had been entrusted to him, and therefore we would need to take the matter up with the Finance Ministry.

We reclaimed all the goods belonging to the Nation that were found, but it was impossible to claim all the goods belonging to individual Armenians. We could have claimed such goods in one of two ways: through the force of law or through the Allies. The laws did not allow us to do it, and the Allied States refused to help us recover goods belonging to individuals.

Not only did the Patriarchate tally up all of the Nation's goods that were recovered, but on the 3rd of January 1306 [1336/1920] it submitted a comprehensive memorandum to the government in which it described all the damage the deportations had caused to the Armenians and demanded all the properties belonging to 200 monasteries and close to 2,000 churches and the revenues of the Church-owned properties for the previous four years.

Salih Pasha's cabinet put this memorandum aside, and it was even said that they were thinking of returning it on account of its tone. But Damad Ferid Pasha's cabinet took it into consideration and decided to prepare an invoice in response. The Church-owned objects recovered were mainly silver items, as recorded in the various invoices, but it turned out to be impossible to save any property belonging to individuals. Work in this area could not proceed as we wished, because there were no laws.

J. The Armenian Question

During the Middle Ages, the Turk emerged from the depths of Asia, advanced to the West, and dominated Asia Minor with the might of his sword. After destroying the Byzantine State, he occupied the east of Europe and the north of Africa, subjugating by force the nations living in these places. The Turk ruled these vast lands for more than four centuries and managed to keep their peoples down with force, but these nations gradually advanced farther on the road to civilization than the force ruling over them, and, in the 19th century, they started throwing off the yoke imposed upon them and freeing themselves from Turkish despotism. The Turk ruled vast lands for more than four centuries, but he was unable to win the hearts of their inhabitants and attach them to himself, and thus gradually lost them.

After the European and African nations freed themselves from Turkish domination, nations living in [Turkey in] Asia—Arabs, Armenians, Kurds, Maronites,²⁷⁵ etc.—started showing similar tendencies. The Muslim nations were attached to Turkey and her Caliph-Sultan because of their religion and obeyed without complaints. The Christian peoples, however, were closer to European civilization; they could not tolerate living under the yoke of a nation less civilized than themselves, and continually sought the means to liberate themselves.

The Armenians were disillusioned with the Ittihad government that had come to power after the declaration of the 1908 Ottoman Constitution and the deposition of Sultan [Abdul] Hamid. Seeing this government's policy of persecution of the Armenians, and especially after the Cilician massacre,²⁷⁶ the Armenians started to work to improve conditions in the Armenian-inhabited provinces and to petition for the security of their lives.

The Armenian officials had already started to voice their complaints about the government's policies, which aimed at expelling, dispersing, and exterminating the Armenians from their ancestral lands by arming and abetting the Kurds, who were the Armenians' neighbors and shared the same living space with them, and secretly encouraging the blows the Kurds were dealing to the Armenians' lives, honor, and property.

The Prelates and the Patriarchs complained in vain, and the petitions and complaints of [foreign] States remained unheard, even though they were based on treaties. In the past, the European states—concerned about keeping Turkey's territorial integrity—had introduced provisions into treaties, the sincere implementation of which could have been a truly good thing for Turkey and the races constituting it, but the Turks were far from understanding this. On the contrary, they passionately hated the subject nations, considering them the reason for the country's ruin. They always cursed their ancestors—especially Sultan Muhammed Fatih²⁷⁷—for not having Islamized or annihilated the Christian peoples when they conquered those lands, and they tried to make amends for this error.

To reach this goal, first they used Muslim religious fanaticism and then chauvinism, which they had copied from the Western world, but this attempt on the part of the Turks produced the opposite outcome; it inflamed passions and led the subject nations to increased insubordination.

When the Ottoman Constitution was restored in 1908, the Nations constituting the Ottoman State at first took the Turks' pronouncements as sincere and gave their accord, but they were quickly disillusioned.

The Cilician massacre of 1909 shook the Armenians. It also let the inhabitants of European Turkey see that nothing had changed in the way the country was administered, that the *millet-i hakime* [ruling nation] mentality, according to which the Turks did not allow the

non-Muslim elements to have equal rights with them in the country, continued. This led to the Balkan War, which pushed Turkey completely out of Europe and left her weakened.

The Ittihad Party staged a coup d'état, overthrew Kyamil Pasha's cabinet, and took power for the second time.²⁷⁸ It pretended to save the country but could not do much else beyond retaking Edirne.

The Eastern Question²⁷⁹ and Turkey's future remained a major question for European diplomacy, and the Great Powers undertook projects to give Turkey a healthy structure, to avoid further complications in the future.

Russia demanded to have peace and calm in Turkey's bordering Eastern provinces, which gave the Armenians an opportunity. In 1912, Catholicos Kevork V, with the advice of patriotic personalities knowledgeable in diplomatic affairs—and naturally with the Russian government's approval—issued a decree to form a National Delegation headed by Boghos Pasha Nubar that would make entreaties to the European states. During the term of Patriarch Abp. Hovhannes Arsharuni (1911-1913), the Patriarchate and its Assemblies became involved in the issue of reforming Turkey's Armenian-inhabited provinces, thereby helping the National Delegation and transmitting to it documents, reports, and suggestions. On this occasion, the Prelates of various provinces were asked to submit reports that could be used for the necessary reforms. As the Prelate of Diarbekir, I submitted a long report in which I indicated the reforms that I considered necessary.

At about that time, I went to the government building in Diarbekir as a member of the *mejlis-i idare* [for a meeting]. The session not having yet started, I entered the Governor's office to discuss with him some matters having to do with my community. When I entered the room unannounced, I found the prosecutor Ali Ulvi and the *mektubji* [clerk] Mukhtar Bey, in conversation. When they noticed me, they immediately fell silent. The Governor, Ghalib Pasha, turned to me and asked, "*Murakhas Efendi* [Mr. Delegate], if you love your God, [please tell me] why you Armenians are always dissatisfied with the State! What is it that you people want?" During that time, a newspaper was published in every Province, having as its editor-in-chief the *mektubji* of the governorate and publishing the orders and instructions the Central Government in Constantinople sent to be implemented in that governorate.

The paper in our Province was called *Diarbekir*, and the mailman had delivered to me that morning's issue just as I was arriving for the meeting. After a cursory glance at the titles, I had put it in my pocket. I remembered one article about the Interior Ministry's instructions to the governorate on what they should do when foreigners or Christians petitioned the local government to build churches, schools, or other philanthropic institutions.

Upon the Governor's question, I took the paper out of my pocket and said, "When the Turkish nation arrived on this land, the Armenians were already here. The Armenians are the native people of this land, they are not newcomers. For 500 years, we have been under the rule of the Turkish nation, and we have not had any problems with it even for a single day. As subjects and citizens we have fulfilled our duties, participated in the government, paid taxes, and willingly sacrificed our children for the defense of the country.

"So I now ask you gentlemen, what right does the Central Government have to put us on the same footing as foreigners? This is the problem. We have been expressing our unhappiness about this all along." My three listeners looked at one another, and then the Governor said, "If this is the reason for your unhappiness, you are right!" Ghalib Pasha granted that we had the right to be dissatisfied, but the Turkish government never sincerely accepted this right, and because of this the State was shattered from the inside.

After the 1912 Balkan War, the Turks still clung to this mentality and did not honestly collaborate with the European States, which wanted the Turks to sincerely implement reforms and rise again. When European States made proposals regarding the six Governorates of Armenia, the Turks—instead of accepting these immediately—listened to them with ill-will and tried to prevent the implementation of the Armenian reforms by creating tensions between the camps of the two Great Powers, but when the two camps, or rather, the countries with a special interest in Armenia in the two camps—Germany and Russia—came to an agreement, the Sublime Porte had to go along against its will, and—as I related above—the two European Inspectors General had been chosen when I traveled from Diarbekir to Constantinople as the Patriarch-Elect.

The Nation was convinced that it had reached a promising new stage and was about to engage in productive work and restructuring efforts, but—as described already—the General War broke out, which upset everything, and the Armenian nation found itself in a serious crisis and fell into a terrifying agony.

The martyred people we gave and the services we performed during this war gave us the right to expect to be freed from the Turkish yoke, because the Allies considered us their “Little Ally” and lavished many promises upon us.

Boghos Pasha Nubar was still at the head of the National Delegation in Europe. The Republic of Armenia had another delegation, which was headed by Mr. [Avedis] Aharonian. These two delegations were more or less in harmony with one another, and together they pursued our cause. Boghos Pasha Nubar, as the representative of the Turkish-Armenians, was in constant communication with the Patriarchate.

As explained, immediately after the Armistice, Boghos Pasha Nubar had the idea of inviting me to join him, and he sent a telegram to Mosul to this effect, but I was unable to accept his invitation, because Constantinople was also asking for me. The British authorities wanted to take me to Constantinople, and this is what they did. After my arrival in Constantinople, our cause seemed to be running into difficulties in Europe, which circumstances compelled me to go to Europe—albeit for a short while—to give my support to the National and the Armenian Republic Delegations and to make a supreme and final effort to present our case to the European diplomats and European public opinion.

In December 1920, Boghos Pasha Nubar sent me a report full of despair and hopelessness, in which he related his meeting with the British Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon,²⁸⁰ during which Curzon announced that the Armenians should not get their hopes up about Cilicia, that it would not be possible to find a mandatory power for Armenia and therefore would not be possible to establish a Greater Armenia, that no Allied country could dedicate forces to occupy Armenia and deliver it to the Armenians, that the Armenians’ own forces were not adequate to establish a Greater Armenia, and that some simple adjustments to the frontiers of the Armenian Republic in Yerevan and the transfer of some small portions of land from Turkish territory would [have to be] enough for the Armenians.

This crushing report dashed our hopes in Constantinople. It became the object of numerous consultations in the Administration. It was thought that the presence of the Patriarch [in Europe]—as the head of the representative body of the Armenians living in Turkey—could provide moral support and help strengthen the work and efforts of the twin Delegations. The Administration debated this idea and decided that such a final attempt was necessary, but it was considered, in order not to spoil the National harmony, to request the National Delegation’s opinion.

A telegram was sent to Boghos Pasha Nubar with this in mind, and the opinions of the Constantinople representatives of the great powers were also sought. Boghos Pasha Nubar responded to the telegram by saying that he would be very glad to have the Patriarch's support. Certain of the European states' representatives were at first hesitant and they expressed reservations,²⁸¹ but, considering the prevailing circumstances and the endangerment of our cause, and especially the National Delegation's wish, we did not cease making entreaties to be allowed to go to Europe. After negotiations, we were given the requisite permission to travel, and even diplomatic passports. We considered that the purpose of my trip could be considered hostile by a certain circle, and, with the approval of the Political Assembly, I decided that I should leave for Europe without losing any time, quietly and without much publicity. But before my departure, on the 11th of February [1921], the Political Assembly invited certain of its members, the National Assembly's Chancery, and the Religious Assembly for consultations.

Bp. Hovhannes Arsharuni and Bp. Ghevont Turian expressed concern that my departure could provoke the Turks of the interior regions against the Armenians, whereas the others present considered my departure beneficial. The Tashnagsagans (H. Amaduni and Kevork Mesrob) expressed the wish that I try to accomplish [the following while abroad].

- a. Merge the [two Armenian] delegations;
- b. Abolish the distinction between "Turkish" and "Russian" Armenians, so that "people will support and stand behind the government of Armenia, as the state for all of Armenia";
- c. Secure France's [financial] assistance for the government of Armenia and provide [the Armenian government] with the help it needs for the success of the planned domestic bonds i to improve the financial credit [of the Armenian government];
- d. During his meetings, the Patriarch should convey the protests and the wishes being heard in all neighborhoods of Constantinople and emphasize in his individual and public appeals that the Armistice clauses dealing with the Armenian people have remained unenforced and that the physical security [of the Armenians] has not been assured.

These same arguments were later presented to me in writing, as well. The Ramgavar²⁸² Party representatives proposed [that the Patriarch work on] the following.

- a. As soon as the Patriarch reached Europe, he should make a declaration and protest before the Christian world on account of the Armenian massacres.
- b. The government of Armenia and her Delegation should be formed on the basis of coalition principles, in order not to let a single party's will dominate.
- c. Turkish Armenia should be recognized as the real Armenia, and the Armenian-inhabited provinces should be occupied by force and delivered to the Armenians.
- d. Insistent demands should be made for Cilicia so that [Armenia] would have access to the sea.
- e. Armenian-Greek fraternity should be reinforced.

After I listened to these wishes, my departure was decided on. On the following day (12th of February [1921]), the High Commissioner of Greece came to see me. After wishing me a

safe trip, he related how Venizelos had summoned the Metropolitan of Trebizond to a session of the Great Powers Assembly, so that the latter would defend the case of the Pontic Greeks. The Metropolitan had—as he had done previously—expressed their wish that Pontus be joined with Armenia in a federation. [The High Commissioner] also informed me that Bp. Mushegh's proposal to distribute arms to the Cilician Armenians had not been accepted by the U.S. government. The Greek Patriarchate's Vicar also came to see me. In the morning of the same day (12th of February [1921]) I paid leave-taking visits to the [other] High Commissioners, and in the afternoon I left Constantinople in the company of Mr. Dikran Chayian.

On the following day we reached Selanik. In the afternoon, I sent Mr. Chayian to see Governor Adonides, but he had left for Athens. Then Mr. Chayian visited the Mayor, Constantinos Anghelakis, and conveyed my greetings. The Mayor returned Mr. Chayian's visit. I expressed my satisfaction to him regarding the Armenians of Selanik and especially the kindness they had lavished on some Armenians who had left Russia and stayed in their city on their way to Constantinople. I asked him to convey my greetings and blessings to [Governor] Adonides upon his return. The Mayor expressed his thanks and good wishes, and, after a short visit, he left. Some Armenians of Selanik also came to see me.

From Selanik, our ship sailed for Marseilles, which we reached on the 19th of February [1921]. We hastened to Paris, which we reached on the 20th of February [1921]. The Supreme Council²⁸³ had already begun sessions in London, and the heads of the Delegations, Boghos Pasha Nubar and Mr. A. Aharonian, had gone there with their colleagues.

I received from Boghos Pasha an invitation telegram, which obliged me to leave after a short rest for London, where I arrived on the 23rd of February [1921]. [In London], jointly and in harmony with the National Delegation, I did all I could to obtain whatever was possible. There were almost daily consultations and meetings. Problems were examined that the Patriarchate had never taken into account until then.

We were confronted with problems on which we needed to make decisions the same day and issues on which the Delegation's members—unfamiliar with the details of what had happened in Turkey in the 1915-1919 period—had not reflected. The Delegations assimilated and presented to the Supreme Council the information we supplied on these problems, and the Council was kind enough to include them in the treaty drafts.

During the London consultations, I attended twice the sessions of the Commission charged with delineating the boundaries [of Armenia]. As a person well acquainted with the geography of the land, I had the opportunity to give some explanations. My first attendance at that Commission was on the 26th of February [1921], together with Boghos Pasha Nubar and Mr. Aharonian. [The Commission's members] asked us how many Armenians we had who would live from the outset on the land to be given to Armenia. "It is natural," they said, "that the more people you have, the more land you will get."

I gave explanations about the Armenians presently within Turkey's borders and others yet to arrive from other places. Then Mr. Aharonian read the report compiled the previous day, to which the Commission's members reacted with satisfaction and approval. Then we talked about our cordial relations with the Kurds, the Yezidis, and the Kizilbash. As for Turks, I said that we would have very few of them. When they asked about the Laz,²⁸⁴ I said that in the past we had not had any hostility with them; quite the opposite, we had lived cordially together. Then I stated that the land that I had heard we would be given was of low fertility, whereas it was necessary for Armenia's soil to feed the 800,000 to 1,000,000 inhabitants, as well as

the non-Armenian elements, some of which will—naturally—remain there. In the south, it was necessary for us to share a border with the regions under French occupation, so that we would be safe at least in that direction. I left the meeting with favorable impressions, persuaded that we would be given a seaport and that it was probable that all of Lazistan would be annexed to Armenia.

I went to the Commission for the second time on the 16th of March [1920], accompanied by Boghos Pasha, Aharonian, Ghorghanian,²⁸⁵ and [James] Malcolm.²⁸⁶ Present at the meeting were Kammerer as the French delegate, Vansittart²⁸⁷ as the British delegate, Casteldi as the Italian delegate, and an English military officer replacing Harrison. The Japanese delegate was absent.

Kammerer announced with a sour face that the League of Nations had accepted Armenia under its protection, and now they wanted to know what we needed. Boghos Pasha read the text we had prepared. They found it rather general in content and asked us to write another one with more specific information—what materials, how many officers and functionaries we needed, etc.—and to deliver it within two days. As we were leaving, we were told unofficially that we would have Garin but regrettably not Erznga.

In addition to the appeals I made to the Supreme Council and the work I conducted jointly with the National Delegation, my presence in Europe was also useful for preparing and using public opinion as a factor [in our work].

I consider it superfluous to mention in detail all the meetings that Armenophile personalities organized in honor of my presence, the sympathy and respect shown by foreigners. All of these expressions were, naturally, intended not only for my person but the centuries-long martyrdom of our Nation. Also during my trip to Europe, numerous articles appeared in the Allied press that presented the Armenian nation and the Armenian Church to the general public. At a time when the Armenian nation's fate was being decided by the Supreme Council, all these steps helped publicize [the Allies'] close interest in the Armenian Question.

My efforts were aimed principally at popularizing the Armenian Case and winning sympathizers to it. I therefore did not miss an opportunity to visit all the Armenophile personalities, and I find it unnecessary to list all their names here. The most senior and most sincere person among them was Lord James Bryce,²⁸⁸ and I shall report here on the visit I paid him on the 25th of February [1920] with Boghos Pasha Nubar and Mr. Dikran Chayian.

Our meeting lasted one hour. James Bryce reminisced about his meeting with Patriarch Nerses [Varzhabedian] in 1876 and his visit to Armenia 42 years earlier. To this old friend, whose name I had heard since my childhood and who had a place in our people's hearts, I expressed the Nation's gratitude. I then moved on to the Armenian Question and our demands; I explained that, in the matter of [Armenia having] a seaport, we preferred to have Rizé rather than Trebizond, we would only request passage through Trebizond for the coming few years. He agreed to this. Then [we said that] we considered the joining of [Armenia's] and Cilicia's frontiers essential, and we added that, if the French would evacuate the three *Vilayets* [Provinces], at least Kharpert should be given to us, so that we would have a passage through there to Cilicia and the Mediterranean. He agreed to this, too.

Then we expressed our fears that, if the decisions regarding the Armenians displeased the Turks, there could be more massacres against the Armenians who were still in Turkey; as a way of preventing this, we proposed that the decision to leave Constantinople in the hands of Turkey—announced a few days ago—be conditioned upon [Turkey's] sincere implementation of the Supreme Council's decisions. [Lord Bryce] found this a suitable idea and recommend-

ed that Boghos Pasha suggest this to the Chair of the Anglo-Armenian Committee,²⁸⁹ Aneurin Williams and to others. He showed us the pictures of Echmiadzin and Masis [Ararat] that were hanging in his office, and then we took leave of him. I also had meetings with various political personalities. The day after my arrival in Paris, on the 21st of February [1921], I had requested a meeting with Prime Minister [Alexandre] Millerand²⁹⁰ but was told that he was preparing to leave for London the next day and that I could not meet with him.

We succeeded in obtaining an appointment with Millerand at the French Embassy in London on the 26th of February [1920]. When Boghos Pasha, Mr. Aharonian, and I went to this appointment, [we learned that], during the night, Millerand had learned from a telegram sent from Paris that there was a strike, and that he had gone to see Lloyd George. He intended to leave directly for Paris from there, and it was once again impossible to see him.

We [therefore] had to meet with the French Ambassador to London, Jules Cambon.²⁹¹ We found him amenable to the idea of giving Armenia a seaport. When we asked him about a common frontier between Cilicia and Armenia, he stated, "Cilicia's frontiers are not clear yet." As for Cilicia's future administration, he said that it was probable that it would be left under Turkish sovereignty, like Izmir. "What do you want?" he said, "After a five-year-long war that claimed millions of victims and billions in expenditure, no state can or wants to undertake new military campaigns!" Cambon stated that he had received good reports on the Cilician Armenian Legion, and that they would certainly make use of the Armenian element for the militia and the gendarmerie, etc. We gave him a letter addressed to Millerand, asked him to do us the favor of delivering it, and left.

It was also important to meet with England's Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon. I requested an appointment, but, when we arrived for it on the 1st of March [1921], he could not receive me because of his engagements, and his assistant, Lord Hardinge, received me at the Foreign Office. First, I expressed my gratitude for the British government's precious assistance to our deportees since the beginning of the war in Mesopotamia and Egypt and even in Cilicia and Constantinople. He expressed his satisfaction [at meeting me] and said he was sorry that Lord Curzon, because of his engagements, could not find the time to [meet me and] express *his* satisfaction. Then I expressed hope that we would continue to enjoy [England's] century-old protection, especially now that—thanks to England and her Allies—we were going to have our fatherland. He responded by saying, "You may rest assured." I asked that henceforth they view Armenia as one of their protégés and requested that they draw our fatherland's boundaries in such a way that they might suffice to contain our people. He exhorted me to hearten the dispersed Armenians to immediately return and populate Armenia. I assured him that Armenians surviving the deportations [and now living in foreign lands] intended to return to the fatherland on the very first occasion and that they did not even try to improve the condition of their [temporary] homes.

He said, "Very well!" I begged him not to leave outside our fatherland those places that we cherished and venerated as holy lands, such as Erznga, where we had places of worship dating to the 4th century and the tombs of Armenian kings. "I shall keep this in mind," he said, and I thanked him. I then referred to decisions by the Conference on Cilicia that had appeared in recent days' papers, and asked them to take into consideration the fact that there were about 15,000 Armenian youths there who had military experience from the Ottoman or the French armies who, if armed, could defend the land and render services to the Allies. He said, "They are in the French army." "No," I responded, "only 1,500 of them are in the French army." Then I invited his attention to the 100,000 Armenians still in [the interior of] Turkey,

whom the Turkish government kept as hostages and did not even allow to come to Constantinople. I requested that their safety be provided, to which he said, "I will note this." I thanked him and left.

On the same day (1st of March [1920]), I had occasion to meet with the Prime Minister of Greece, Mr. Venizelos, by accepting his dinner invitation. I took with me to this meeting Boghos Pasha, Aharonian, Masehian,²⁹² and Malcolm.

Throughout the dinner, Venizelos discussed an entire range of political issues with me. I thanked him for his efforts on behalf of our cause. He confirmed to me that every time he had gone to the Supreme Council, he had brought up the issue of Armenia, not because he listened to his conscience or because of Christianity, but because both our nations had the same enemy, the same tribulations, and the same fate. He expressed his happiness at seeing the cordial relations between our two nations in Constantinople and his hope that this friendship would lead to a political alliance between them.

[Venizelos] related to me that, during the 140 years of Arab rule over Crete, the local Greeks were expelled or Islamized. When Emperor Phogas retook Crete, he had populations brought from various places to increase the Christian element. Among these there were numerous Armenians, who established their own villages, [several of] which are still known as Armenia or Armenkhorah.²⁹³ He asked me questions about the relative numbers of the populations in Constantinople, upon which I expressed my opinion that, if the Turkish officials and military were taken out of the city, the remaining Turkish population would barely equal the Christian population.

The issue of the citizenship of Armenians and Greeks remaining in a future Turkey came up, and Boghos Pasha mentioned my interview in that day's *Daily Telegraph*, in which I had said that [the Armenians in Turkey] should be free to be citizens of Armenia. [Venizelos] said that he had brought up this issue with a well-known British person, and the latter had objected that, in such case, the Turks living in Armenia should also be left free to take Turkish citizenship. In response, Venizelos had stated that the Sultan—inasmuch as they are Muslims—meddles in their affairs already, and if they were to remain Turkish citizens this would not be a problem, because in such case they would live in the country as foreign nationals, and they would not have the right to be involved in the country's affairs.

On the 5th of March [1920], I visited Lord Cecil²⁹⁴ and expressed my gratitude that, in his person, the Armenian nation had found a courageous champion of its cause. I spoke about Cilicia, commented on France's wrong policy of trying to endear herself to Turkey, and stated that, had Armenians been given arms at the proper time, they could have defended themselves, as well as France's honor.

He said, "Issuing arms to the Armenians could have provoked the Turks." To this I responded, "The Turks were armed anyway, and they had already disarmed the Armenians." Then I asked him to turn his attention to the Armenians in the interior regions and to use British influence on their behalf. "What do you think," he asked, "if the Turks are expelled from Constantinople, could they massacre the Armenians in the interior regions?" I responded, "Since the Turks have not so far been punished for the massacres they committed, naturally they could massacre the [remaining] Armenians, too, because they consider them to be sympathizers of the Allied states. We see the expulsion of the Turks from Constantinople as the demotion of the Turkish state to a secondary status, and especially as the disappearance of the Islamic danger. Naturally it is better for Armenia to have a weak Turkey as its neighbor, rather than a strong Turkey with Constantinople as its capital, but, for this, the [Allied] states

would have to wage a military campaign. They will have to do this sooner or later, if they want to implement the decisions of the [Peace] Conference. In such an event, we would wish that the Turks vacate Constantinople as soon as possible." He asked, "Was the Cilician massacre carried out with Mustafa Kemal's orders?" I responded, "Not only with Mustafa Kemal's orders, but [also] with the orders of the Turkish government in Constantinople. We have proof that the Turkish government is in constant communication with Mustafa Kemal and that he is the one directing these actions. We already communicated our proof to London through the British High Commission in Constantinople." Then [Lord Cecil] asked for information on Izzet Pasha, who—according to the telegrams received—had become Prime Minister in Constantinople. I gave information about Izzet Pasha's life and said that he was the true favorite of the millions, who had wanted to see him in that post ever since the Ottoman Parliament was inaugurated. Then I told [Lord Cecil] that I was following intently his fight on behalf of oppressed nations and that I wished him long life so that the Armenian nation could applaud his victories.

For me, the most significant of these meetings was the bestowal upon me of the honor of being received on the 8th of March by the King of England, His Majesty George V. Accompanying me to the audience were the spiritual pastor of London, Apel Vartabed Aprahamian, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had organized this meeting.

First, the King expressed his satisfaction at meeting me. I expressed my gratitude to him for having extended to me the honor of this audience, which would remain one of my life's cherished memories and a memorable event in my Nation's history. Then I expressed my thankfulness for the assistance the British Army had extended to our people during the War on various fronts, and I requested the continuation of this protection toward our Nation. The King said that he was pained to hear about the Cilician massacre and that he had immediately spoken with his Prime Minister so that the Peace Conference would take every possible measure to prevent [such a thing from happening again]. I thanked the King and requested that he extend his protection over the Armenians located in the interiors of Turkey. [The following exchange took place between us].

King—What is your opinion on the Turks staying in Constantinople?

Patriarch—With the Turks vacating Constantinople, the Islamic menace will be reduced.

King—Yes, but we have many Muslim subjects.

Patriarch—However, you are also responsible for the protection of the Christians.

King—If we remain in Constantinople, we can exert pressure on them.

Patriarch—You know it best.

King—What is your opinion about Russia? How will it all end?

Patriarch—Russia needs a strong hand [to guide her].

King—Such as the Trotsky²⁹⁵ and Lenin²⁹⁶ administration?

Patriarch—Certainly not!

King—They are murderers and thieves!... How were you exiled? Did you live through hardship during your exile?

Patriarch—The Turk considered me his opponent and exiled me. For one and a half years I stayed in Baghdad and Mosul, under constant surveillance.

King—Will you stay much longer in London? Did you already visit the city?

Patriarch—I will stay 10 more days. I already visited St. Paul's Cathedral, the fortifications, the university, and the museum.

King—You should also visit Westminster Cathedral.

Patriarch—Yes, I will.

I concluded my visit by saying, "May God protect Your Majesty, the Queen, The Crown Prince, and the entire English nation."²⁹⁷

On the 7th of April, I had a meeting at the Foreign Office building with Lord Curzon, accompanied by Boghos Pasha and Aharonian. First we talked about Cilicia and the surrounding Provinces. Lord [Curzon] stated that these were in the French zone of influence and that England could not intervene in these areas. "My responsibility," he said, "is limited to Northern Armenia." Upon this, we explained that we had made proposals regarding the settlement of the frontiers with Azerbaijan and Georgia and that these had been rejected, and we pleaded to have the Supreme Council settle the issue of these frontiers so that the fighting would cease. He took this opportunity to talk about the position taken by the [Armenian] Republic and showed us a telegram he had received two days before in which [the British Chief Commissioner] in Transcaucasia, [Oliver] Wardrop, stated that relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan were extremely strained and that the French High Commissioner and himself were trying to prevent a war, which would open the region to an incursion by the Bolshevik.

He showed us a list, which indicated that, from last December until the beginning of February, the Armenians had attacked the Tatars more than 15 times, killed numerous Tatars, and wrecked villages, whereas the Tatars had only staged one attack on Akulis. He stated that such behavior was going to have very bad consequences for the Armenians, that no state would want to assume a mandate over them, and that they would be lost. He added that Tashnagsutyun was guilty of provoking these incidents, and the principal agitators were Dro, Hamazasb, and Gyulkhandanian, who were restless people. Then he announced that England intended to give arms and military supplies to Armenia to be used against Turkey but not against the Tatars or the Georgians, but that, as long as he did not feel assured that the Armenians would stay calm, he would not allow the promised arms to be delivered. He urged us to telegraph what he had said to Yerevan immediately. The meeting lasted 40 minutes, and he concluded it by saying, "These problems prevented me from expressing my sympathies toward the Armenians."

After I left London for Paris, troubling news started arriving from Cilicia and I started applying everywhere to assure the physical safety of the Armenians of Cilicia. I tried again to have an audience with the French Prime Minister, [Alexandre] Millerand, and finally had the honor of meeting him on the 6th of May.

On that day, at 5:30 p.m., I went to my appointment on the Quai d'Orsay in the company of Boghos Pasha Nubar and Mr. Dikran Chayian. We waited for several minutes in a private room before the Prime Minister received us. Boghos Pasha introduced me to him. [The following conversation took place between us].

Patriarch—I express my thanks for the honor you have bestowed upon me by receiving me. You have given me the opportunity to express my people's gratitude toward France for the goodwill she has demonstrated toward our Nation. Our Nation knows France to be its old friend. Many of our leaders have received their education

in France and think of her as their second fatherland. I regret that I did not have the opportunity to express these feelings to you previously. For this reason, we have placed our hope in France, especially now that we will have our fatherland thanks to the Allied states. I consider this to be a good occasion to plead with you that, to gather our people who have been dispersed inside and outside Turkey, we will need sufficient land so that we may live in peace and prosper.

Millerand—Our sympathy for the Armenians goes back for centuries. You may be assured that I will pursue the same policies as my predecessors in this regard. Boghos Pasha is familiar with my goodwill toward your cause and my efforts on behalf of it, and you may be assured of them, too.

Patriarch—In the speech you gave to the Parliament upon your return from San Remo,²⁹⁸ you made no mention of Cilicia, and we deduced that you were no longer taking an interest in Cilicia. This certainly caused great distress to me and will do the same for my people. If possible, I would like you to correct me on this.

Millerand—Your suspicions about our lack of interest in Cilicia are entirely unfounded. We will keep our mandate in all of Syria and part of Cilicia. Cilicia will remain under Turkish sovereignty and we will have our advisors there.

Patriarch—Pardon me for asking, but has any thought been given to the security of the population after the withdrawal of your occupation forces? Have guaranties been received?

Millerand—General Gouraud has been given the necessary instructions. The population has been given arms and are receiving more. The rights of minorities are protected by the treaty.

Patriarch—The Armenians have declared themselves for France, they fought and are still fighting on the French side. They are thus considered the enemies of Turkey. What will happen to them?

Millerand—Regrettably, I cannot send 100,000 troops to that area.

Patriarch—The war was waged jointly by the forces of all the Allied states. Would it not be possible now to appeal for your allies' support?

Millerand—Italy does not wish to send even a single battalion there, and the same is true for England.

Patriarch—If it will not be possible to take the entire population elsewhere, would it not be possible to, at least, take away those who are presently engaged in the fighting?

Millerand—If I knew what their numbers were, I would give the necessary orders to General Gouraud.

Patriarch—General Gouraud²⁹⁹ and Colonel Brémont³⁰⁰ certainly know them well. They will not be able to resist their enemies for very many months, and they will eventually be massacred.

Millerand—(He did not answer, but made a gesture as though to say, "What can I do?")

Boghos Pasha—Now the Bolsheviks are advancing in the Caucasus, and the [Armenian] Republic, too, is in danger. Couldn't something be done?

Millerand—Yes. (Then he made a gesture to mean, "I do not know.")

Patriarch—(Getting up) Once again I ask you to give instructions so as to save as many people as possible from there.

Millerand—Very well.

We all left in sad spirits.³⁰¹

On the 10th of May, Millerand summoned Noradungian and asked for his opinion regarding Cilicia. Noradungian spoke for about an hour on France's wrong policies there, the manner of fighting of the troops, the behavior of local officials, the tone of Paris newspapers, etc. Millerand was satisfied and promised to take under consideration all that had been said.

Four days after our meeting with Millerand, on the 10th of May 1920—the day when Millerand summoned Noradungian—Boghos Pasha, Dikran Chayian, and I went to the Elysée Palace for an audience with the President of the French Republic, [Paul] Deschanel.³⁰²

I thanked Deschanel for receiving me and said that my people and I had been consoled and encouraged during our exile in the deserts by receiving news about speeches made about us by French statesmen and especially by Deschanel himself. I said that I was happy to greet him in person as a friend and the head of a friendly nation, and I asked for [France's] goodwill to continue toward us.

Deschanel responded by saying that he had always been a friend of our Nation, he would continue to be our friend, and he would not spare [any effort in] what he would do for the Armenians. Then I expressed my sorrow about their decision to evacuate Cilicia and stated that this would be a heavy blow for us. He said, "What can we do? We have many colonies, and it is too much for us!" [Our conversation continued as follows].

Patriarch—But in Cilicia the Armenians fought against the Turks side by side with the French, and the Turks consider them their enemies. What will happen to them if the French troops withdraw?

Deschanel—It is true that we are grateful for what the Armenians did for us in Cilicia, but, alas, I am obliged to continue my predecessors' policies.

Boghos Pasha—If only our people's lives could be secured before the French troops withdrew!

Deschanel—We will do whatever we can. Have you been to see Millerand and Paléologue?³⁰³ They are the ones who can settle this problem.

Boghos Pasha—Yes, we have seen them and spoken to them. We ask you, too, to do what you can.

Deschanel—Very well, I shall not spare [any effort to do] whatever I can.

As we were leaving, I wished for France's continued friendship toward us and for our love toward her to remain unchanged.

The officials of the Anglican and the Free Churches showed an emphasized interest in me, considering me an official of one of the martyred Eastern churches. They honored me with unprecedented goodwill and put their entire influence into play so that our appeals would be taken into consideration. Especially after the terrifying reports began to arrive from Cilicia, the Anglican Church officials played a great role in stirring up the British public opinion.

I visited the Archbishop of Canterbury—who is considered to be the head of the Anglican Church—for the first time on the 27th of February and expressed my thanks to him for his activities on behalf of our Nation. He spoke about Armenia's condition and said that we should have a fatherland but asked whether I found a mandate suitable.

I said that a mandate was a necessity, and that, furthermore, I considered a British mandate beneficial for our people. To his question of whether I considered a French mandate in Cilicia also a necessity, I responded, "We wish to have a strong state that can protect our people against the barbarians. The French could not protect us." I explained the issue of a sea-port, described the massacres currently happening in Cilicia, and asked him to raise his voice. He expressed his willingness.

On the 13th of March [1920], a reception was held at Lambeth Palace in my honor hosted by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Present were Venizelos and numerous lay persons, also the Metropolitan of Trebizond and Sërma Khatun, the sister of the Nestorian Patriarch, Mar Shimun. The Archbishop of Canterbury, I, Bp. Chrysanthos, Venizelos, and Sërma Khatun made speeches.

On the 1st of March, I visited and dined with the Bishop of London, having with me Apel Vartabed. On this occasion, I expressed my thanks to the Bishop for his having participated earlier in the announcement demanding [assistance] from the [British] government in liberating [Western] Armenia. Then I asked for his collaboration with the Archbishop of Canterbury on all the measures the latter intended to implement in relation to the Cilician massacres. I said, "If the Turks are not punished this time, they will certainly do the same things later at a different place. We are Christians. Christianity is forgiving and it respects every religious sentiment, but we demand that the Turks be punished, not because they are Muslims but because they reconcile Islam with barbarism. This is exactly the same reason [European] states punished Germany for having reconciled Christianity with barbarism." The Bishop of London requested my permission to quote me at the House of Lords, and I consented for him to do so.

The Archbishop of Canterbury put great amenities at our disposal during our stay in England, demonstrated exceptional goodwill, and kindly guided and accompanied us when His Majesty the King of England and the Emperor of India, George V, honored us with an audience at Buckingham Palace on the 8th of March. During this meeting, we expressed our appreciation and gratitude—in the name of the Armenian Nation—to the supreme head of the great English nation and its government.

Another proof of the clergy's interest in us was the exceptional and special honor the annual meeting of the English Free Church extended to us by inviting me to be present at one of its ceremonial sessions, which was attended by thousands of clergy and professors from every corner of England.

I also attended the ceremonial mass the Archbishop of Canterbury offered on the 8th of March 1920 at the Saint Saviour Church in Southwark in memory of the martyred Christians of the Orient. Prayers were offered for Christian brothers living under Turkish domination, that they be liberated from Turkish persecution, deathly terror, and danger to their lives. Also present at this mass were the Metropolitan of Trebizond, Chrysanthos; the Patriarch of the Assyrians, Yeprem Barsum; Lord Bryce (as the representative of Lloyd George); Venizelos; Boghos Pasha; and others. The mass was followed by a sermon by the Very Rev. Douglas; it was a very moving event that lasted two hours.

During this impressive ceremony, a mention of the Armenian martyrs was not overlooked. My attendance encouraged and relieved me, inasmuch as I was touring Europe in my capacity as the spiritual leader of my terribly suffering and decimated people and for the purpose of awakening the conscience of European Christianity and requesting its assistance and support.

The great attention of the clerical classes of the great English nation was deeply impressive and raised my hopes, but these beautiful impressions were clouded over and shaken up during a visit by special invitation I paid to Westminster Abbey on the 12th of March. After touring the grounds, I went to the Jerusalem Chamber—a simple but renowned room, where deceased kings are placed until their burial and where the new king dresses before his coronation. Gathered there were the Greek Bishop of Trebizond, Chrysanthos; the Assyrian Bishop, Yeprem Barsum; numerous Anglican bishops; and the Dean of the Abbey.

Dean Gore was presiding. After the session was opened, I explained our Church's viewpoint on the Universal Councils. Numerous questions were addressed to me, such as, "Why don't you accept the Councils after the third? Why don't you accept the Council of Chalcedon? What is your viewpoint on the 'dual nature'?"³⁰⁴

I explained the Armenian Church's viewpoint on these. The Assyrian Bishop and the Greek Metropolitan did likewise. The Assyrian Bishop said, "We are in agreement with the Armenians." We were also questioned on the relations between our churches, and in particular, "Are you able to take communion in one another's churches?" It was a strange meeting, especially when one of those present asked me, "If there were a General Council including all of Christendom, is it likely that your Church might accept the other Councils, as well?" To this I answered, "Should those who do not accept the other Councils not be recognized as Christians?" I did not come away from this meeting with good impressions.

In addition, I attended by invitation the meetings of various lay societies. Everywhere I went, I tried to present our cause and to interest people in it. Regretfully, it was not possible to limit my activity in the National Delegation to this. While I was working to have favorable clauses included in the Treaty, the sad news reaching us from Cilicia—and the reality of the terrifying massacres and murders happening there—put me under the unpostponable obligation of concerning myself with our people's salvation.

While I was thinking of the Nation's future, the terrifying massacre in Marash, the encirclement of Hajën, and the troubled and unsafe situation created all over Cilicia forced me to think about the present, to stir public opinion, and to urge governments to take measures immediately against the danger that was threatening the physical existence of the Armenians in these regions.

As can be seen in the foregoing, on the eve of the Supreme Council in London undertaken to deal with the Armenian Question, nothing had yet been decided or fixed, except for the accepted principle that there would be an independent Armenia. This principle, of course, could be implemented in many different ways, and this is not the place to elaborate on these.

After the convening of the Assembly, Lord Curzon's statements showed the real intentions of the participants.

The Armenian Delegations made every effort in London to obtain for Armenia access to the sea and a territory larger than previously planned. These efforts were successful in part, because the Supreme Council decided to supplement Armenia's lands with the former Turkish Province of Van (except Hakkiari), the Province of Paghesh (except the Sghert district), the Province of Garin (except Erznga), the Palu district from Diarbekir Province, and lastly—for access to the sea—all of Lazistan from the Trebizond Governorate.

The Delegation did not deem it suitable to insist on Armenia being given Trebizond as its access to the sea, because doing so would include many foreign elements in the Armenian state, and also they were wary of upsetting the Greeks, because the latter were categorically opposed to the city being given to Armenia.

On the 10th of March, I visited the Metropolitan of Trebizond, Chrysanthos, from whom I learned that [the Pontic Greeks] had despaired of having their own state. He said,

When Armenia was to spread all the way to Sepasdia, our intention was to form a confederation with the Armenians, but, now that Armenia will be a compact entity in the interior, we do not want only a part of our land (which stretches from Rizé to Sinob) to join with Armenia and the rest to stay outside. Our demand had been that either Armenia and Pontus should be independent states, or that they should—as distinct states—join in a confederation. Now we are seeing that this is not possible, because the Supreme Council is not in favor of a Pontic state. Thus, we shall remain within Turkey, taking advantage of the conditions that are to be granted to the minorities, and also leaning on Greece, which is now entering Asia from Izmir and reaching the Black Sea by way of Thrace.

The [Armenian] Delegation was satisfied to have Lazistan as Armenia's access to the sea. Its two ports—Rizé and Athina [Pazar]—could become available in short order to serve as Armenia's stations for foreign maritime commerce. The Delegation insisted on having the Treaty state that Armenia could also use Trebizond, and this was included. At the same time, considering that the construction of railways from Trebizond or Lazistan [to Armenia] would require considerable expense and time, the Delegation endeavored to make the port of Batum available too.

In this way, we considered that Batum would be international, albeit under Georgian rule. Armenia would have rights in the area; a railway from the South of Batum would follow the left bank of the Jorokh river and connect this port directly with Kars. It is obvious that such a railway would be of great economic and military significance.

These were the things we thought we had accomplished in London; we were under the illusion that everything was decided and that our cause had reached the final stage. When the San Remo sessions started on the 19th of April 1920, we hoped that the decisions taken in London were to be written down and formalized and that the Turkish Treaty would be drafted and presented. Regrettably, this is not what happened. There, the Armenian Question was once again made a subject of debate, and the decisions of the London Conference were subjected to reexamination. In particular, the issue of Garin was debated. Certain of the powers wanted to leave Garin outside the boundaries decided for Armenia in London, casting doubt upon the Armenians' ability to capture it. Despite the evidence and the guarantees proffered by the heads of the two Armenian Delegations, the powers preferred the views and opinions of their own military experts, and these were unfortunately not favorable to us.

In this regard, the following account, which Boghos Pasha related to me in Paris on the 29th of April 1920, upon his return from San Remo, is quite significant. One day he was sent word that the Premier of Italy, Mr. Nitti, wished to see him. Boghos Pasha quickly went to the meeting site, where he was invited to join the Supreme Council, where present were Lloyd George, [Lord] Curzon, Vansittart, Nitti,³⁰⁵ Chaillolat, Millerand, Berthelot,³⁰⁶ Kammerer, and the Japanese. Nitti, as the Chair of the session, addressed him and said, "Garin is a fortified city. The Allies cannot devote any troops. Can you take it?" The Pasha responded, "We do not need troops. If we are only given military supplies, we can take it. Our troops are courageous, and we can raise their numbers up to 40,000. Mr. Millerand knows very well that it is our sons who fought under the [French] flag, and they merited congratulations. Now, as

I indicted to Mr. Millerand, the Armenians in the United States have telegraphed to say that they are ready to send about 10,000 volunteers to Cilicia or elsewhere." Nitti said, "You have many Armenians under Turkish rule. Are you not afraid that they could be decimated?" To this Boghos Pasha responded, "More than one million of our people were massacred. Let another 10,000 be massacred for our nation's salvation!"

Lloyd George also spoke, and, in a milder tone, he said, "You have to suppose that you do not have help from anywhere else. I want to know how many Armenians you have within the borders of Garin." Boghos Pasha said that he would submit detailed statistics about that the next day.

Boghos Pasha's comments, based on a certain Englishman's suggestions, gave great satisfaction to the Englishmen present and saddened the Italians. That same evening, the English and the French congratulated him and said, "You scored a great victory!"

Aharonian, who had not been invited on that day, approached Calli and had himself invited on the following day. He, too, gave the same explanations, dwelling on the statistics. That evening, he prepared a statistical [note] and sent it to Lloyd George.

As Boghos Pasha was leaving the meeting, Lloyd George followed him and said to him by the door, "I shall ask Wilson to look into this matter." Wilson was their [British] military expert. Nevertheless, when Commander Foch³⁰⁷ and Commander Wilson were asked for their opinions the following day, they said, "To capture those areas of Armenia, it is necessary to fight a war against Mustafa Kemal, and this would require 300,000 soldiers." Upon hearing this, the [Supreme] Council again hesitated about giving us Garin. The Italians were particularly insistent on this, and the French to some extent. (By now the Italians were acting completely in favor of Turkey, and it is thought that they had already signed a treaty with them.)

The British were on our side and they worked well. Eventually the Supreme Council decided to apply to President Wilson of the United States with the following.

- a. The Americans are kindly requested to accept the mandate over Armenia;
- b. [If they will not accept the mandate], they are to help Armenia militarily and economically;
- c. [President Wilson] should, at the very least, accept to be the arbitrator for fixing Armenia's borders.

Boghos Pasha immediately sent a telegram to President Wilson, asking him to add Erznga and Kharpert to Van, Paghesh, and Garin and to arrange for an Armenian-friendly administration in Cilicia. A similar message was telegraphed to Prof. Apraham Der Hagopian.³⁰⁸

As a way of resolving the disagreement thus produced, it was decided to leave to President Wilson's arbitration the issue of the lands to be taken from Turkey and joined to Armenia. This is why the Treaty was drafted the way it was, with the borders undefined.

President Wilson was a sympathizer of the Armenian Cause. He had already demonstrated his interest in the issue at the San Remo Conference, where he had proposed to pay attention to the Armenians' demands. He accepted the duty that was presented to him, and we were certain that his decision would be favorable to us.

I joined the National Delegation in requesting—in the name of the Nation—that Armenia be given not only the borders decided at the London Conference, but also Kharpert and Erznga, and that [the President] use all his influence to have an autonomous

administration in Cilicia. As is known, President Wilson drew Armenia's borders in a manner that was more or less satisfactory for Armenia.³⁰⁹

The Sublime Porte had been willing to turn over to Armenia the lands indicated by Wilson's arbitration, but the reader knows well that the Porte ceased to exist, and Mustafa Kemal's government that had been formed in Anatolia refused the treaty the Sublime Porte had sealed and did not wish to conform to it. Force was required to occupy the lands [allotted to Armenia], and no state could be found willing to commit force.

At all the sessions, the Allies stated that we should not put our hope in them, because they were not disposed to making sacrifices on our behalf. At the San Remo Conference, Foch was asked how many soldiers would be needed to empty the Turks from the lands that were to be annexed to Armenia. He said that at least 100,000 men would be needed, and, because no state would commit so many soldiers, the matter was left to arbitration.

According to a letter from Malcolm to Boghos Pasha dated the 17th of April 1920, a high-level British Foreign Office official told Malcolm that, faced with this situation, leaving these three Provinces under Turkish sovereignty was being considered, as had been the case for Eastern Rumelia, with administration left in Armenian hands. But the element of comparison was all wrong here, because the Russians had occupied Eastern Rumelia,³¹⁰ whereas [the Allies] had not occupied Armenia.

It was evident that the great powers were unwilling and indisposed to compel the Turks with the power of their arms. As a result, and despite the Sublime Porte's willingness to leave them to the Armenians, these provisions of the Sèvres Treaty³¹¹ remained impossible to execute, and it never became possible [for Armenia] to occupy those Provinces.

[It seemed that,] if the Young Turks—despite all their hostility toward the Armenians—had remained in power, some arbitration might have been possible. Noradungian was convinced of this. He told me in Paris that the Young Turks had convened a meeting in Lausanne, in which Talaat had come from Berlin to participate. After this meeting, Noradungian had met with Javid, Necmeddin Mollah, and several others and heard from them that they all agreed to satisfy the Armenians by giving them the Provinces of Garin, Paghesh, and Van. Noradungian had asked, "But how will Turkey get on her feet again?" To this, Javid had answered, "Cilicia and Izmir are indispensable for that." Halajian also had met with Talaat, and the latter had told him, "We committed an error by treating the Armenians in that way," and it was impossible to tell whether he was sincere when saying this.

All these come to show that the Sublime Porte and the Ittihad leaders agreed to satisfy the Armenians to some extent. But the leaders of the *Milli* movement were totally opposed to it. It is well known how the latter became the masters of the situation and rendered the Sèvres Treaty unexecutable. When the Sèvres Treaty is examined, it will be seen that, even though it did not satisfy all the wishes of the Armenians, it had several very favorable clauses that, if applied, could have greatly benefited the Nation.

The Sèvres Treaty recognized not only Armenia's independence, but, de facto, its very existence. Armenia was mentioned in it as an Allied state, as one of the contracting parties, and as a member of the compelling side. According to Art. 36, if Turkey did not implement the Treaty's conditions, Armenia would also have a voice in the [Allied] states' decision on the fate of Constantinople. Article 82 gave an important assurance on the determination of Armenia's borders with the [other] Caucasian states, because, if an agreement could not be reached, the Allied states themselves would perform the arbitration. Through Art. 105, the Armenians living in Egypt received the right to become citizens of Armenia; in Articles

137–138, the same right was assured for Armenians living within Turkey's borders; and Art. 139 stated that no Armenian subject of the Ottoman Empire would be taken to court because of his actions during the War.

It is also significant to note that, according to the Sèvres Treaty, Turkey would have no authority or influence over the Muslims living in Armenia, whereas Art. 140-151 of the Treaty contained significant advantages for the Christians of Turkey, among them the Armenians. Also, Armenia, as an Allied state, received the right to demand [the extradition] and prosecution of Turkey's [war?] criminals (Art. 226-231).

The Sèvres Treaty made up a thick volume and contained complex provisions needing careful study. Not only did the National Delegation subject it to the examination of a general assembly of its own members, but it also presented it to competent jurists and diplomats, to uncover any points that might be disadvantageous for the Armenians and to raise these with the [signatory] states.

I left London and arrived in Paris under the illusion of having obtained a fairly successful outcome. I stayed in Paris to do what I could to improve the condition of the endangered Armenians of Cilicia. The [National] Delegation was continuing its efforts to ensure that a special regime would be created in Cilicia—different from Turkey's other regions—that would guarantee the area's future development. A stream of telegrams was arriving in Paris from Constantinople and Cilicia, informing me on the prevailing crisis. To do what I could, I had audiences with President Paul Deschanel of the French Republic and Prime Minister Millerand and requested their support. Regretfully, the [Allied] states, tired and overwhelmed by their debt, were unwilling to engage themselves in military and financial sacrifices—even for the sake of guaranteeing their victory. In 1916, France had signed a treaty with England and Italy³¹² that gave France not only Cilicia but an extensive interior zone consisting of Sepasdia, Diarbekir, and Kharpert, but, in her post-war exhausted state, France was now abandoning the larger part of this claim and even part of Cilicia. This was the reason all our appeals in England and France were futile; it proved impossible to prompt the [Allied] states into action and, in particular, to persuade France not to abandon Cilicia. The French merely told us that in the parts of Cilicia to be returned to Turkey, they would reserve to themselves economic interests and the right to administrative controls. Likewise, they reassured and promised us that they would not evacuate these lands without receiving guarantees for the safety and peaceful development of the Christians.

I was full of hope and expectations that the Nation's long-delayed wishes would find at least partial satisfaction. I left Paris for Constantinople on the 27th of May [1920], after attending for the last time the Delegation's meeting. At this meeting, I asked what the Delegation wanted me to transmit to the Nation's officials in Constantinople as to the policy they should adopt toward the Turks. I was told,

You know well the present condition of the [Armenian] case and [the Delegation's] efforts. It is necessary to indirectly adopt a peaceable policy toward Turkey, so that [its government] will not oppose the occupation of the Provinces that are to be given to Armenia. You know our intentions regarding Cilicia, and we would be much indebted to you if you could make its realization easier.

When I asked whether it was essential for the Cilician [Armenians] not to operate against the Turks, those present said that [the Cilicians] could not abandon self-defense, but that they

should avoid going on the offensive. I then thanked the members of the Delegation for their committed work for the National Cause and wished them success. Boghos Pasha responded by thanking me for having supported the Delegation during the last three to four months and added, "If your presence in Constantinople were not essential, we would have begged you to stay and work with us until the resolution of the problem."

Boghos Pasha took me to the train station in his automobile. On the way, he expressed his sorrow at my departure from Paris, because this would leave him all alone. He had considered my presence very beneficial and a great help to his work. During this time, he also confessed that he was thinking of resigning, because he was extremely tired. I praised him for his work (which the Nation will not forget) and begged him to leave aside these thoughts for a few more months and stay until the treaties were signed.

On the 28th of May [1920], I reached Marseilles. On the 31st of May [1920], I left Marseilles and arrived in Constantinople at midnight on the 5th of June [1920] on board a steam tug from the Allied naval base.

In high spirits, I presented a summary of my trip at the 11th of June 1920 session of the National Assembly. We were thinking that an Independent and United Armenia, spread over a considerable territory, was already at hand. Alas! Once again we were destined to be thrown into terrible disillusionment and to see the collapse of the attractive edifice we had constructed in our imagination.

K. Armenia's Caucasian Frontiers

The issue of Armenia's frontiers consisted of two facets. The first was the Turkish frontier, on which I have dwelled at some length already. The other was the question of settling the borders with Georgia and Azerbaijan, which had become a kind of stumbling block to the relations among the three South Caucasian republics to such an extent that it had led to wars among the three nations. The Armenian Delegation had wanted all along for the Allied states to become involved and to draw these frontiers. Regrettably, this had not led to any solutions, because Georgia and Azerbaijan had not agreed to it.

During the time I was in Europe, the issue had taken on an urgent nature, and efforts were being made to come to a consensus. The Armenian Delegation was ready to enter into direct agreements with the neighboring republics, but the latter were not willing. It was clear that each of the Allies had its own intentions. To give an idea of Britain's desire to set up the Caucasian Republics as a barrier to Russia and of her true intentions, it is sufficient to relate the following.

When I left London to return to Paris, at a joint meeting of the two [Armenian] Delegations, Aharonian related that he had gone to Vansittart (the British Delegate and the Chair of the Frontiers Commission) with some business and that the latter had spoken to him of the need for Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan to be united in a confederation or some other structure. On the same day, when Aharonian returned to see Vansittart, he found there the representatives of Georgia and Azerbaijan. Vansittart stated that, with the Bolsheviks approaching the Caucasus, all three Republics were in danger and that it was necessary for them to unite so that they would be able to resist the Bolsheviks and save themselves. After a lengthy exchange, it was revealed that Azerbaijan's representative, Topchibashev, had made a written request to the Supreme Council for Batum and Kars to be joined in a neutral state

under the supervision of all three Republics. Mr. Aharonian objected to the proposal of detaching Kars from Armenia, refuted the claim that there was a Muslim majority there, and insisted that—quite to the contrary—the Armenians were in the majority. As for Batum, he had explained that a separate state could not be formed there.

The Georgians proposed that Batum remain in their hands, because it was a Georgian land, and the majority of its inhabitants were Georgians. Vansittart responded that the majority of Batum's residents actually wanted Turkish rule. As for the proposal for settling the frontier issue through arbitration, he advised those present to bring together their entire delegations to formulate and present their opinions, and then a just solution would be considered. The Azerbaijanis were not in agreement with this. In this manner, the matter dragged on for some time, until Mustafa Kemal felt himself sufficiently strong to attack Armenia from the direction of Sarë Ghamësh [Sarıkamış], advanced all the way to Kars, and occupied the city on the 5th of November [1920]. The Armenians were forced to petition for a cease-fire, which was signed on the 7th of November [1920].

As a result of this defeat, Armenia lost the Province of Kars. At the same time, the Russian Bolshevik Army entered Armenia from Dilijan, and the government in Yerevan capitulated.

Azerbaijan had already accepted communism. Shortly after Armenia, Georgia was also subjected to the communist regime. Moscow resolved all the internal disagreements in an imperious manner and using strong-arm methods. Armenia became smaller instead of bigger, and some of her lands were annexed by Turkey.

L. The Evacuation of Cilicia and the Tragedy of Hajën

After the Armistice, the French settled in Cilicia and wanted to have the support of the Armenian element. Therefore, they extended all kinds of help to the Armenians who had returned from exile and wanted to settle on their ancestors' lands.

Alongside the true *Giligetsi*, numerous Armenians from other Armenian-inhabited areas came to settle in Cilicia, because their native areas, being under Turkish domination, were unsafe for them. The French brought to Cilicia the Armenian volunteers they had armed. To win the Armenians over, they started calling Cilicia "Little Armenia," and assigned a large share in the region's administration to Armenians.

The National Delegation, which had nurtured great hopes immediately after the Armistice for a Great Armenia extending from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean under an American mandate, appointed as its representative Mihran Damadian³¹³ in Adana.

As time went by, the Armenians adjusted their expectations and agreed to Cilicia remaining under a French mandate, but the French gradually abandoned their initial plan, and, instead of the Armenians, they started relying on the Turkish element, especially after the Greeks occupied Izmir (16th of May 1919) with England's encouragement.

The conflicts and disagreements among the Allies led the Italians to support the *Milli* movement, which was entirely opposed to Allied occupation. The Italians supplied Mustafa Kemal with arms and other kinds of help, came to an agreement with him and emptied the lands designated for them, stretching from Adalia to Konia, perhaps having already come to a secret agreement with Mustafa Kemal. The French, in turn, started seeking the Turks' friendship; they gave their silent consent to Mustafa Kemal's rebellion and turned a blind eye to it.

Mustafa Kemal started armed operations for the purpose of expelling the Greeks from Izmir and the French from Cilicia. Groups of *Milli* guerrillas started operating with great audacity, even inflicting heavy losses on the French.

The Armenians were troubled to see these developments. Because the Turkish guerrillas considered the Armenians to be the allies of the French, they were intent on expelling the Armenians from Cilicia, as well. The Armenians had no choice but to engage in skirmishes with the Turks, by themselves or jointly with the French. The Armenians started congregating and putting up resistance in the principal cities. They did this in Hajën,³¹⁴ Sis, Aintab, Marash, Urfa, etc. The Patriarchate held consultations concerning the events in Cilicia. After long deliberations, the Political Assembly announced its decision.

Considering that our co-nationals in several cities of Cilicia do not wish to abandon their fatherland to the Turks and go away and that they are engaged in fighting the Turks, the Political Assembly, being far from the region and inadequately informed on all the circumstances, has decided that it shall not impart any instructions or make recommendations to them, but instead it shall leave these co-nationals to act according to their own will [and to decide] whether to continue fighting, surrender, or make peace.

[Earlier], when I was leaving for Europe, the situation in Cilicia was already unsatisfactory, and we had information on the undesirable state of affairs. After my arrival [in Europe], Patriarchal Vicar Bp. Mesrob Naroyan and the Political Assembly communicated to me through a stream of telegrams and letters that the Cilician crisis was acquiring an increasingly worrisome appearance. Thus, after reaching Paris, Dr. Tavitian lamented in his letter of the 1st of March 1920 the massacre at Marash, where possibly more than 15,000 Armenians were annihilated, including the Armenian population of the surrounding area. They informed the National Delegation through three successive telegrams about this (dated the 5th, 21st, and 24th of February [1920]), in which they described in detail France's inglorious retreat from Marash on the 10th of February. Dr. Tavitian made the following recommendation.

[We] should raise some noise around this issue and not cede before the polite words and promises of the French. In my opinion, You should address an appeal—in unanimous agreement with your advisors there—a touching and effective call, addressed to Christendom generally, an appeal to the public's conscience—if it still exists—a protest against diplomacy's indifference, greed, and slowness and for the encouragement that is being given to Turkey's classic mass murderers. The position of Your Eminence should make it possible to go beyond diplomats' bland and sneaky "formulas" and to make the courageous words of a spiritual leader be heard by that class in Europe that believes that flocks of humans cannot be driven purely by the force of death and gold, that the highest human ideals are also necessary for peace and happiness.

In another report dated the 8th of March [1920], Dr. Tavitian wrote as follows.

The situation has become more difficult. [The Armenian] people are in immediate danger here (Constantinople) and in the regions. Delegations have arrived from

Rodosto, Izmid, and Bursa, described to us how they are under imminent danger of massacres, and begged for assistance. Just this morning, petitions and delegations from Sgyudar, Kartal, and Yeni-Kapu arrived; they described how the local Turks are preparing to conduct massacres and begged for help. The [Armenians] of Sgyudar are preparing to migrate to Péra and do not wish to assume responsibility for the orphan-ages. They will send the orphans to the center [of Constantinople]. We received a similar letter from Armash, in which we were being requested to transfer the orphans to Constantinople immediately. The situation has started to look very menacing; the people are under the threat of massacres that can erupt any moment—in Constantinople, Cilicia, or the regions. We are very anxious.

I was aware of the condition of the Armenians in the interior regions even before these reports arrived. As related already, during all my meetings, I requested the protection of the Allied states. The Turkish government responded to the noise being raised and the newspaper articles on this issue through an official refutation dated the 6th of March 1920:

Rumors have circulated recently about Armenians having again been subjected to massacres in Anatolia. The Armenian newspapers and the *Journal d'Orient* echoed these rumors.

Apart from the incident between Armenians and Turks in the regions of Marash, and the skirmishes *caused by the Armenians* who threatened the lives and the honor of the Muslim inhabitants, nowhere in Anatolia there have been any attacks. We declare that such rumors are being circulated in the Peace Conference circles at a time when the fate of the Ottoman government is being decided with the malicious intent of creating a movement against Turkey.

The Turkish government applied its old and familiar methods by issuing refutations and obtaining attestations of satisfaction under duress. A sad example of these is the following, which the spiritual leaders of the Armenians of Marash sent to the Patriarchate.

To the Armenian Patriarchate:

Marash 687 71

Thousands of Armenians were killed as a consequence of the annihilation incident. After the withdrawal of the French, we were taken under protection thanks to the efforts of the Ottoman government. The Mutesarif Bey is making supreme efforts to maintain the peace. The return of the French would put our lives in danger, and, in the name of humanity, we beseech you to undertake the political processes necessary to eliminate this possibility."

5 March 1336 [1920]

Armenian [Apostolic] Prelate
D. Ghazarian
Prelate of the Armenian [Catholics]
Arpiarian
Spiritual Leader of the [Armenian] Protestants
Apraham Haronian

Bp. Mesrob Naroyan wrote to me a personal letter dated the 25th of March 1920, in which he dwelled on the situation in Cilicia and wrote,

Certain persons considered this a suitable opportunity to attack the [National] Administration for its style of work and its slowness. The newspaper *Verchin lur* [Latest News] and the party papers echoed these voices of discontentment, and a Parliamentary Committee was formed, its task being to make recommendations to the Central Administration.

When we assess these events for their true significance, it is easy to comprehend that they are mere formal gestures resulting from the Cilician tragedy, at a time when great and small nations are holding their leaders responsible for the failures.

Despite all this, the Central Administration is confident that it has not failed in its duties, and it is functioning seriously, competently, and energetically, keeping its vigor and calm.

As its reaction to the *Milli* movement, on the 17th of March 1920, the English military announced Constantinople militarily occupied. This helped scatter the clouds of danger and terror that had blackened the sky over the city, but the condition of the Armenians in the countryside did not cease to be worrisome, because the Allied forces were unable to penetrate the interiors, and their inadequate troops were withdrawing from Konia and Esgishehir toward Constantinople.

There was no definite news from the regions, and mysterious silence prevailed in the areas controlled by the *Milli* forces. Later, we found out that this was because [the *Milli* forces] were fomenting agitation in those areas.

A month later, on the 8th of April [1920], Dr. Tavitian wrote the following.

The situation in Cilicia is becoming worse. The information that has reached us reveals fully the complex and dangerous nature of the problem.... We received a letter dated March 26th from Smyrna, which describes the *cheteh* activities, and yesterday Mr. Crathern,³¹⁵ an eyewitness to the events in Marash,... arrived directly from Smyrna. He left Marash after the French withdrew, went to Aleppo by way of Islahiyeh, then to Adana and Mersin. Because it was impossible for him to return to Marash, he arrived here by way of Izmir. He is, therefore, intimately familiar with all that has transpired. He finds the situation in Cilicia hopeless. French officers are sending their families to France. The *chetehs* are attacking from all sides with increased numbers. Attempts have been made to cut the railroad near Tarsus, which would have truly endangered the French positions. Mr. Crathern says that, if all these predictions come true, the French may even be forced to evacuate the city of Adana. You can imagine the situation our co-nationals would face in such an eventuality; a general massacre would be almost unavoidable. Our unfortunate exiled people, who came to settle in Cilicia through the encouragement of the English and the French, are today faced, unprotected, with the Turkish threat. Mr. Crathern says that the Armenians of Cilicia sent a delegate to the English authority in Cyprus to obtain their agreement to transfer the Cilician Armenians there—at least the orphans, women, and infants. Unfortunately, Russian refugees were brought to Cyprus recently and many of them are sick with typhus. As a result, we do not know whether our

co-nationals' request will be granted. Mr. Crathern said, "It might be possible to settle many Armenians in a different part of the island."

In the same letter, Dr. Tavitian wrote the following about the political situation.

Unfortunately [the situation] does not appear to be in our favor.... Our friends have abandoned us, and this fact is encouraging our enemies to continue more impetuously their work of destruction and murder. The League of Nations is something like our National Administration; it has neither an army nor any money. How will it undertake to defend the Armenians? All along, it was the Great Powers that were to supply the means needed for our defense; now that they are refusing to assume this responsibility, [how] could the League of Nations take the work upon itself? Anyway, so many hopes were already dashed that this one, too, may well join their ranks. In my opinion, we should not hope for anything from the Great Powers any longer. It is clear that they do not wish to increase the load they have already taken upon their shoulders, especially because they do not see any interest in it for themselves. Under these circumstances, the only way out is to build and strengthen the Armenian Republic. If they put money and arms at our disposition, it might be possible to put the self-defense on firmer ground—provided that there is harmony among us. As it is, the Turks do not seem to intend to put up much resistance to the formation of an Armenia. Izzet Pasha, who is a cordial sympathizer and advocate of the *Millijis*,³¹⁶ in a recent issue of the daily *Tan*, said that he was disposed to promise at least as much land—if not more—for the formation of an Armenia as the Conference decided. Under these circumstances, the Turks will probably not create difficulties in vacating the lands that are designated for us—especially if they know that the Armenian state has sufficient force to defend itself. Lastly, I think that the upcoming General Assembly [of Armenians] should make an unequivocal statement and prepare a platform so that the Western Armenians scattered here and there pursue a single policy. Regrettably, until now, we in Constantinople had no opportunity to deal with this matter, and we did not develop any direction, because, naturally, the [National] Delegation in Paris was supposed to deal with the issue of the Armenian Cause.

In the face of this sad situation, the National Administration even stopped church services on Easter Day 1920. Still quoting from Dr. Tavitian's 27th of April [1920] letter:

There was popular support among many people for such an action. The meaning behind it was that, at a time when our [co-nationals] were being massacred in Cilicia and the interior regions, it would have been unbecoming for us to carry on the ceremonies here as though nothing had happened. It was desired to show the outside world that, while the Christian nations—winners and losers—joyfully celebrated the feast of the Holy Resurrection, our Nation of a handful of Christians dispersed in the interiors of Asia—despite being the protégés of the victorious nations—were continuing to be persecuted and massacred, and we were not in the mood to celebrate the Holy Resurrection. On the other hand, we wanted to make our own people also understand that, while our brothers were in danger in the countryside, being

persecuted and massacred, they should feel this and be shaken, they should deprive themselves of the customary festivities and luxury and rush to their aid. These were the principal ideas around which discussions took place, and it was decided to stop the church services. I do not know to what extent you consider appropriate the Joint Assembly's said decision, but it is something that has already been done. It would be desirable that in Europe [the National Delegation] would think about reaping the maximum benefit from this issue, to advertise it to the Christian world, to bring out in the open once more the difficulty of the situation and to engage people's minds with it.

As explained, during my stay in Europe, I considered it my duty to publicize the problem of Cilicia, inasmuch as this was an integral part of the problem of Turkish Armenia, and I made numerous appeals on this issue in England and in France. Unfortunately the French government had not adopted a sincere approach toward this issue. It was as though the French wanted to deceive the Armenians and leave them face to face with a surprise, and they found tools to resist my attempts. Thus, the French government brought Bp. Terzian from Rome and Catholicos Sahag from Adana to weaken the effect of my efforts.

While I was still in England, Catholicos Sahag left Adana on the 13th of March 1920 and arrived in Paris. A little later, Catholicos Terzian arrived in Paris, despite the fact that the spiritual leader of the Armenian Catholics of Constantinople, His Grace Nazlian, had arrived in Paris very shortly after myself and was taking an active part in the work of the National Delegation. On the 30th of April [1920], His Grace Nazlian told me that Catholicos Terzian had been invited to Paris by the French Ambassador in Rome, Barrère. This invitation definitely had a purpose behind it, for Terzian did not at all approach the National Delegation circles in Paris, and no one knew what he was doing. He appeared among us only once, on the 4th of May, on the occasion of the opening of the [Armenian] General Assembly.

Catholicos Sahag also came to France on the suggestion of the French authorities. It is worth noting that the French authorities, who had opposed my trip by presenting everything optimistically and finding it unnecessary for me to trouble myself in the winter, were so ready and willing to give a passport to the venerable old Catholicos and did not think much of troubling him.

Catholicos Sahag arrived in Paris while I was still in London. He, too, behaved to a certain extent like Catholicos Terzian by not participating in the appeals the Delegation was undertaking. Hearing that he was in Paris, on the [20th?] of March, I sent him copies of the telegrams received from Cilicia and the petitions made and asked whether he was in agreement with the position we had taken.

In Paris, Catholicos Sahag had meetings with Deschanel and Millerand and was influenced by their mellifluous words.

On the 4th of April, he responded to my letter, urging me to stop my appeals, relating how Deschanel and Millerand had expressed their sympathy toward the Armenians during their meetings and how the [French] Asian Affairs official Mr. Bargerton had said, that France's policy was, "*to raise once again the Turkish flag ... to keep Turkish sovereignty at least in name, in order to give an opportunity to all the races for self-development while respecting one others' customs.*"

[Catholicos Sahag continued] that it was his "*personal opinion, as well as that of many others, that the spoiled Turks will not be satisfied with the acquiescence intended; the French will be*

unable to defend their prestige with the present level of forces, and they will pick up and leave. What will be the Armenians' predicament then? It would be extreme folly to believe the Turks and come to an agreement with them. On the other hand, the reality of the situation and the precipitous recent events do not inspire us with confidence for trusting chivalrous France."

These conflicting lines presented a dilemma, because he was not proposing a way out and condemning both directions. For this reason, when I returned from London, I exchanged visits with the Catholicos (on April 14th and 15th) and proposed having a joint meeting with the Delegation's members on April 16th to decide what to do about Cilicia, because the succession of telegrams from the Patriarchate and Cilicia informed us that the Armenians were in danger and that it was necessary to transfer them and the orphans to Cyprus.

Rather than accepting my proposal and contributing his opinion at the meeting, [the Catholicos] replied, "You can have a meeting, but I cannot come." He explained that, the same day, he had met with Bargerton and the Minister of War, and they had explained that it was folly to think that France would leave Adana and the environs, that Sis was still in our hands, and that there was no imminent danger in those parts. "Therefore," said the Catholicos, "the reports and telegrams from Adana are exaggerating," and he further added, "*since there is a Prelate in the area, while I am here, why doesn't he send me a telegram about all this?... I see absolutely no reason to transfer the population elsewhere!*"

I communicated several other troubling reports that I had received from Adana, and I found it even more unusual that the Catholicos was indifferent to them. On the 25th of April [1920], I communicated to his secretary, Mr. Bëzdigian, the letter and other information Mrs. Zabel Yesayan³¹⁷ had sent from Adana and copies of the letters Brémoud had sent to [Mrs. Yesayan?] and Kentery. Mr. Bëzdigian listened to me unperturbed, did not consider the situation serious, and stated that these were simply precautionary measures being undertaken for the transportation of the orphans. He attested that, three days before, he had heard from Mr. Bargerton that Cilicia was calm and that he had received a letter dated the 7th of April [1920] from Beirut, which reported that there was nothing disturbing in Adana. I was surprised to learn from him that the Catholicos was preparing his passport for a visit to Venice—at such a moment when both here and in Constantinople we were at our wit's end because of seeing the Cilicians' lives in imminent danger! The Catholicos and the Cilician [representatives?] were sitting calm and undisturbed, busy satisfying their own curiosity! Bëzdigian also stated that he had met with Patriarch Terzian, who had told him about his initiatives to provide for the Cilician people's safety.

On the 27th of April, when Catholicos Sahag visited me, I informed him about the newly received telegrams, which were mainly requests for transfer elsewhere. He said, "Where will they go? Let them die where they are instead of dying elsewhere!" Then I spoke to him about the official pronouncement in that day's papers about the incident at Urfa, in which the Armenians had been accused of having stopped supplying the French forces with food and thereby having compelled the French to evacuate the city. I asked whether we should not protest against such an accusation, and he said, "That is the Delegation's work. I have set my course from the first day, and that is how I shall continue." It was clear that the Catholicos—due to some special considerations—did not want to take steps against the French. He demonstrated the same caution when he said to Noradungian on the 3rd of May, "[we] should come to an accommodation with the Turks," but that he could not propose it so as not to be called a traitor! He also did not want to come to the [Armenian] General Assembly on the 5th of May, for fear that the French government would be upset at him.

This indifference was emphasized even more on the 4th of May, when Boghos Pasha and Noradungian, having discussed the Cilician situation with Undersecretary of State Mr. Paléologue, went in a very sad and depressed state to inform the Catholicos of the developments. Paléologue had explained to them that the French were probably going to evacuate Adana and stop 20 kilometers from the city. He had said very clearly that France did not have troops to station everywhere and that she could not ignore the German frontier [with France], because a referendum was planned to take place there shortly. He said that the Governor of Morocco was asking for troops, warning that, “otherwise a great revolt will break out!” He also said that a single battalion was needed for Batum, but that he had difficulty finding it. On the other hand, there were 40,000 troops in Syria and Cilicia—including the ones bearing arms—and he could not increase their numbers any more.

Boghos Pasha reported all this to the Catholicos and explained to him the terrible impression and anxiety that they [Noradungian’s and Boghos Nubar] had. After hearing all this, the Catholicos stated that he had met the same day with the Chief of the Second Asiatic [Section] at the Foreign Ministry, Mr. Bargerton,³¹⁸ who had plainly stated that France would evacuate Adana. Upon this, the Pasha asked, “What should be done?” The Catholicos answered, “I have no idea,” then he added, “tomorrow I will leave for Venice to visit Surp Ghazar³¹⁹ for three days, then I will be back.” The Pasha was deeply astonished by this. Just as the French newspapers were writing about the French [forces’ planned] evacuation of Adana, the Catholicos, completely indifferent, was thinking about taking a recreational trip to Venice!

I also called on the Catholicos, to ask him about the rumors that were circulating [with regard to the planned French evacuation]. His secretary, Mr. Khubesian, told me that he, too, had heard these, that they would ask for confirmation from the government and keep me informed. On the following day (the 5th of May [1920]), Bēzdigian came to see me, and I expressed to him, too, my sorrow about the Catholicos having left for Venice the previous day, even though he knew that the French were about to evacuate Adana and that the Armenians of Cilicia were living a mortal crisis. As justification, Bēzdigian said that the Catholicos had purchased his tickets before meeting with Bargerton, also confirming that Bargerton had plainly told them that France would evacuate all of Cilicia, keeping only Iskenderun [Alexandretta] and possibly Payas.

During these momentous days, the Catholicos went to Venice and returned and still did not participate in our undertakings. Quite to the contrary, we heard that he intended to go to London and Manchester and to plead for the English government to provide for Cilician Armenians’ defense, now that France was preparing to evacuate Cilicia.

In this situation, Boghos Pasha Nubar recommended to Catholicos Sahag that he should return to Cilicia, and the Catholicos promised that he would return as soon as he found a ship. Nevertheless, when I visited him (on the 17th of May), the Catholicos announced his plan to leave for London and Manchester in a few days.

On the 18th of May [1920], Catholicos Sahag was present at the Delegation’s meeting and—probably with the French government’s prompting—said, “In order not to work at cross-purposes, it would be good that I take charge of handling Cilicia’s affairs with the French government, because I have been presenting myself as the representative of the Armenians of Cilicia ever since I arrived here.” Upon this announcement, it was decided that the Catholicos should be the one to present to the French Foreign Affairs Ministry [Mihran] Damadian’s telegram on the crisis situation in Cilicia. We do not know whether or not he actually presented it.

Three days later, on the 20th of May, the Catholicos left for London and Manchester, but nobody understood for what reason. On the day after his departure, Arshag Chobanian informed us that Catholicos Sahag had prepared a note of protest—addressed to the [Allied] states—against Cilicia being divided into two. He proposed that the Delegation, too, support this protest with a special announcement. The Assembly was already disillusioned with Europe and considering a rapprochement with the Turks so as to place Cilicia under Turkish sovereignty but with a special administrative structure and did not feel it was suitable to take part in this project.

During this meeting, I commented that the Catholicos did not have the right to take the initiative on such political acts, that he should have consulted with the Delegation, and that I found it altogether surprising that he was informing the Delegation after he had already taken these steps. Later, it was revealed that the Catholicos had been encouraged in this initiative by Chobanian and others around him, but the initiative led to nothing.

Catholicos Sahag returned to Cilicia after visiting London and Manchester. Naturally, he never made any declarations or protests, because [presumably] he was afraid that the French might get upset.

I returned to Constantinople, where the situation in Cilicia remained one of our preoccupations, and the crisis was becoming worse with every passing day.

After Marash, Aintab was evacuated, and finally Hajën was under siege. All initiatives by Cilician Armenian officials—especially by Damadian and the [Armenian] National Union—for the French to come and save the besieged town were doomed to failure. The French military authorities even prevented Armenian volunteers from coming to the rescue of besieged Hajën. Cilicia was in this dire situation, and the Political Assembly had let the local Armenians act in accordance with the circumstances, when a letter arrived at the Patriarchate from the Prelacy Vicar of Sepasdia, Sarkis Vartabed Ajemian, who was proposing to go personally to Hajën to find a peaceful manner of saving the besieged Armenians.

When [Ajemian's] letter came, the All-National Assembly was in session. The letter was read there. The deputies voiced their agreement with Sarkis Vartabed's proposition, but, considering that the Political Assembly had made a clear decision [on the issue of Cilicia], I placed the letter on the following day's agenda. The Political Assembly had a mixed composition, containing members from all the political parties. Among them was Dr. Terzian, a native *Hajëntsi*, who had numerous relatives in the city.

Dr. Terzian demanded that the proposition of Sarkis Vartabed be accepted and the Vartabed be given instructions to go to Hajën, but the Assembly stayed with its previous decision and severely reprimanded Dr. Terzian, saying, "If the besieged people of Hajën receive Sarkis Vartabed as someone sent by the Patriarchate and put their arms down, what assurance do we have that they will not be massacred? There are close to 11,000 Armenians in Hajën, and about 300 Turks, who have come from various places.

The city was the administrative center of a *kaza* [district], and it was defended by approximately 1,000 armed Armenians. These were led by a Tashnagtsagan, Sarkis Jebejian. After Jebejian was wounded, he was succeeded by another Tashnagtsagan, Aram Gaydzag,³²⁰ whose first act of bravado was to thoughtlessly massacre the 300 Turks who were in Hajën—mostly unarmed and pathetic men—and even the Muslim judge of the city, together with his family.

When the Turks heard about this massacre, they intensified their attacks, took the city (in early November 1920), and, as their revenge, mercilessly massacred as many of the Armenian

inhabitants of the city as they could. Aram Gaydzag managed to flee with 300 people and arrived in Adana.

Dr. S. Terzian, upset at his proposal being rejected at the Political Assembly, presented a note of accusation at the 4th of December 1920 session of the National Assembly—when I was absent because of illness—in which he had shown me as the cause for the Hajën massacre.

The debate continued during several sessions and, finally, on the 18th of March 1921, the note of accusation was formally presented to the *Adenabedats Tivan* [Chairmen's Office]. The Chairmen's Office started preparing a report, but the report was still not finished when I left Constantinople, and, after that, it was not read at the Assembly. Here I excerpt the conclusion of this report purely in the interest of history.

Having investigated Dr. Terzian's accusations against His Eminence the Patriarch Father, the Chairmen's Office concluded that there are no grounds for pursuing them. Consequently, our Office hereby concludes refusal, in accordance with Article 84, Part 4 of our internal regulation.

Péra, the 26th of May 1922

(Signatures):

Main Chancery Chairman	Apraham Der Hagopian
Jurisprudence Office Chairman	S[depan] Karayan
Accounting Office Chairman	(illegible)
Education Office Chairman	M. Natanian
Properties Office Chairman	A.B. Aghasian
Publishing Office Chairman	K. Simkeshian
Competence Office Chairman	(no signature)
Communications Office Chairman	Dr. Tavitian

Even without this report, history had already given its verdict. Despite French statesmen's assurances to us, France had followed the example of Italy and signed a treaty with the *Milli* government, and her forces were set to evacuate Cilicia. Against this decision, the Armenians wanted to assume the administration of Cilicia themselves, with the help of local elements; on the 4th of August 1921—in defiance of France's decision—they declared Cilicia to be independent, but the French opposed this, too. With force of arms they forced the head of the Armenian Republic, Mihran Damadian, out of the government building, and exiled his associates to Constantinople. By delivering Cilicia to the Turks, France fulfilled its promise to the Angora government.

Beginning in October 1921, Cilicia began to be emptied of Armenians, and, by December 1921, France's delivery of Cilicia to the Turks was a fait accompli.

During the evacuation, the terrified migrants were denied even transportation means. On this account, we made numerous very strong appeals. On the 14th of November 1921, I went as a member of a delegation of three [Armenian] spiritual leaders to the French High Commissioner, to request that the fleeing population be taken to Syria using governmental means and that they be given the necessary assistance in view of the approaching winter. The following day, on the 15th of November [1921], once again the three spiritual leaders went to the Greek Commissioner, Kutsis, to request means for carrying the [Armenians] of Cilicia

elsewhere. [The Commissioner] informed us that, pursuant to a request received from the Prelate of Izmir, the Athens government had authorized three ships to carry the refugees from Mersin to Cyprus. We expressed our thanks to him and beseeched him to send telegrams to Premier Kunaris (then in London) and to the Ministers in Athens so that even greater assistance would be given. During this time, we applied unceasingly to all the governments and requested their assistance for carrying the refugees.

On the 28th of November 1921, the British High Commissioner invited the three spiritual leaders to a meeting, and we went. He informed us that the High Commissioners had met to discuss our petitions and they decided on the following.

1. A request is to be made to General Gouraud to admit into Syria those Armenians of Cilicia [whose future] is uncertain. No refugees are to be accepted into Constantinople;
2. A warship is to be docked at Mersin so as to protect the Armenians on shore.
3. We expressed our sorrow at hearing that Constantinople would be off-limits to Armenians, who are the children of this land, whereas it was open to Russians, of whom already 100,000 had been accepted.

The British High Commissioner said that no state would undertake sending ships for the Armenians, and no country would accept them, because this would mean providing for their sustenance. We proposed to send three ships but requested that the refugees carried on them be allowed into Constantinople. We also asked for the [Armenians] of Deort-Yol [Dörtöyl] to be allowed into Syria, because trouble was feared in that area, too. We also spoke about the property Armenians had left behind and asked for reparations. The High Commissioner tersely said, "This has to be raised with the French." We were left in despair.

Three days later, on the 30th of November 1921, His Grace Nazlian and I visited the representative of Rumania and petitioned verbally and in writing for a portion of the Cilician refugees to be accepted into Rumania. He promised to present our request to his government and asked for instructions by telegram.

On the following day, the three spiritual leaders visited Commander Pellé and requested the following:

1. That the Cilician refugees be accepted into Constantinople;
2. That the [Armenians] of Deort-Yol be transported to Syria; and
3. Assuming that the French authorities would no longer take care of the Adana orphanage after the evacuation, that we be able to transfer it elsewhere.

The Commander promised to send telegrams on the Deort-Yol and orphanage issues, but he persisted to the end in refusing to allow refugees into Constantinople. We had already arranged for a loan of 600 pounds from the Péra Property Trusteeship to hire a ship to bring the refugees to Constantinople, but we could not go through with this plan, because the British refused to accept Armenian refugees into Constantinople.

By December 1921, Cilicia had been emptied, mainly through the support of the Hellenic government. Four months after that, on the 22nd of April 1922, [two notables of Adana,] Hafëz Mahmud Effendi and Avedis Gyulbengian came to see me to talk about the administrative structure of Cilicia. They had come with the simple-minded belief that

provisions for this would be part of the Lausanne Treaty, but we know well what the Lausanne Treaty gave us.³²¹

M. The Merging of the Delegations

After the Armistice, there were two delegations in Paris defending the Armenian Cause in European diplomatic circles. One was the National Delegation presided over by Boghos Pasha Nubar, and the other was the [Armenian] Republic Delegation, headed by Mr. Avedis Aharonian.

Despite the fact that both Delegations had the same purpose and in appearance functioned in harmony and collaboration, they were nonetheless not in complete harmony because of political party consideration, personal vainglory, and other frivolous reasons. As a result, public opinion perceived the presence of two delegations unfavorably. It was for this reason that, at the consultative meeting convened before my departure for Europe, both the Tashnagsagan and the Ramgavar representatives proposed and requested that I help merge the two delegations in Paris.

Regrettably, my efforts in this direction—like those of numerous others—remained fruitless. When I reached Europe, the issue of Armenia's frontiers was the principal problem for both delegations. There were no differences of opinion, and the two delegations worked in harmony and agreement, and so there was no need to make an immediate initiative, because there was no dissension at all.

Before the frontiers issue could find its supposed resolution at San Remo, the Cilician crisis had already started. This was a burning issue of immediate significance, and it required “full-steam” work. As a result, I did not have the time to act on the wish [to merge the delegations] that had been expressed to me before my departure.

Nevertheless, the issue was not completely forgotten, and I had to deal with it, too. On the 18th of March [1920], Bp. Khoren Muradpekian (later Catholicos) came to London from Yerevan and stayed with us for several days. On the 21st of March, he announced to us that he had received a mandate from Khadisian³²² to talk to Boghos Pasha about merging the Delegations.

On the 25th of January, Boghos Pasha received a letter from Khadisian in which Khadisian presented various counter-proposals in response to Boghos Pasha's earlier proposals on the merging of the Delegations and the structure of the Yerevan government. The Pasha liked Khadisian's proposals and telegraphed him to have them implemented, but, on the 18th of March, he received a telegram from Khadisian to the effect that Khadisian would respond to his telegram after Dr. Ohanjanian's³²³ [first] arrival [in Yerevan].

According to the information received, unreservedly and sincerely Boghos Pasha had shown Khadisian's letter to Aharonian. Aharonian, who had become upset at the conditions being proposed, sent Dr. Ohanjanian to Yerevan and telegraphed Khadisian to postpone his proposals' implementation until the Doctor's arrival [in Yerevan]. In this way, the negotiations started, which we expected and hoped would yield some results. It was supposed that Khadisian had made his propositions to Bp. Khoren Muradpekian before these negotiations. Regrettably, Mr. Aharonian did not agree with Khadisian, and the agreement was disrupted. I tried to do some things for the merging of the Delegations and [the formation of] a coalition government [in Yerevan], and, on the 22nd of March, I had an exchange of opinions with

Chobanian on these issues. On the 23rd of March, I had another consultation with Boghos Pasha, this time with the participation of Bp. Khoren Muradpekyan, Arshag Chobanian, Arshag Safrasdian, etc.

Bp. Khoren, who had spoken with Aharonian, proposed to Boghos Pasha Nubar a united government, its Council and Parliament formed on a coalition basis, exactly as Khadisian had described in his recent communication to Boghos Pasha. The Pasha had telegraphed his acceptance of these proposals and recommended that they be implemented immediately, but Aharonian put up stiff resistance to the idea of merging the two Delegations, by telegram and by sending Dr. Ohanjanian to Yerevan. As a result, Khadisian sent another telegram to Boghos Pasha that he needed to wait for Dr. Ohanjanian's arrival in Yerevan before he could give a definite answer.

Bp. Khoren suggested leaving aside the merging of the Delegations for the time being and forming the Council and the Parliament with a mixed system. Boghos Pasha objected and said that the merging of the Delegations should be done at the same time. Bp. Khoren explained that Aharonian accepted that members of the [National] Delegation—Tekeyan, Chobanian, and Dr. Nevruz (upon Pastërmajian's resignation)—could remain as advisors but that the true and responsible Delegation should consist of only Boghos Pasha and himself; Aharonian and Boghos Pasha would sign all the papers to be sent to the Yerevan government, and the Pasha would be assigned to foreign relations and sign the papers to be sent to foreign states, provided that Aharonian also signed the drafts. Boghos Pasha said that he did not have the authority to assign the Delegation's members to such positions and that he considered it necessary for the members to agree or for the General Assembly to decide. Bp. Khoren said that this issue could wait for a day or two until Simon Hagopian—who was then in Paris and who shared the same views—returned to London and the two of them together could try to convince Aharonian. At the same time, Bp. Khoren announced that the Tashnagtsagan members would not participate in this General Assembly. When the Pasha asked for my opinion, I said that I do not know what the limits of Your authority are. You have been authorized to defend Turkish-Armenians' rights before the European states. Would organizing a government be Your job or that of the National Assembly in Constantinople, which is legally approved by the people as the true representative of the Turkish-Armenians? If it was necessary last year to convene a General Assembly, the members of which had been elected illegally, and Constantinople did not protest, this was because the National Assemblies of Constantinople had ceased to function. In view of this, and because I myself do not have a mandate to negotiate on this issue, I have to abstain.

The issue had come to this point, and an answer from Yerevan was awaited, when a grave incident took place, the significance of which revealed the two Delegations' relations and attitudes toward one another.

I described above our 7th of April 1920 meeting with the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, [Lord] Curzon, his severe pronouncements on Armenia's Tashnagtsagan government, and his recommendation to remove Dro, Hamazasb, and Gyulkhandanian from their positions. After our meeting with him, we met and drafted a telegram along the lines of his [Curzon's] recommendations, to be sent to Yerevan the following day, but, later, Aharonian modified the drafted text [on his own initiative] and submitted it to the Foreign Office to be transmitted to Yerevan.

After my return to Paris, on the 13th of April, I attended a session organized by the two Delegations. During this session, Boghos Pasha stated that, after his audience with Lord

Curzon in London, he and Aharonian had drafted a telegram to be delivered to Khadisian. Aharonian undertook to send it via the British Foreign Office, but, before sending it, he made significant modifications to the text and sent it with the Pasha's signature. Aharonian said that he had been obliged to change the last part of that telegram, because he could not have addressed his own government with onerous words such as, "Your present course is making our work difficult.[...] You should remove from office Dro, Hamazasb and Gyulkhandanian." He said that his intention in doing this had not been to insult Boghos Pasha, but the Pasha was not satisfied with this and said that Aharonian did not have the right to change a telegram that had been drafted jointly and send instead another telegram without obtaining his consent and that [Aharonian's] behavior had been incorrect. Aharonian protested the use of this word, and debate continued, until the Pasha stated that he had even showed the telegram he had drafted to Vansittart. Aharonian got incensed and shouted, "This is treachery, this is betrayal!" and other words of a similar nature. He got up and left the room and continued shouting in the hallway outside, occasionally reentering the room and saying to the Pasha's face, "Traitor! [...] Betrayer! [...] This was a state secret, which should not have been revealed to a stranger!" etc.

[Aharonian] even showed the audacity of shouting at everyone present, "You all crawl under the feet of the Pashas! [...] You are all traitors!" I went out and insisted that he come inside and debate calmly with us, but he stubbornly refused and left. The Pasha said that he had not actually let Vansittart read the telegram.

In the evening, I invited Aharonian, Nevruz, and Chayian to my room. I spoke to Aharonian and said that this dispute was inappropriate at this time, when the Nation's fate was about to be decided, that it was necessary to forget these things and continue the work in harmony, etc. Aharonian insisted that he could not continue to collaborate with the Pasha and expressed regret for having uttered strong words. I acknowledged that the situation came about because of the tensions among us, explained that Boghos Pasha had wanted to make sure that, in the drafted text of the telegram, the true sense of Curzon's words would be conveyed, that the Tashnagtsutyun was responsible for the present situation, and added,

You, Aharonian, are one of them. They are aiding and abetting Dro, Hamazasb, Gyulkhandanian, etc. The English government is expressing its lack of confidence in the party leading the Armenian Republic. Naturally, this is a terrible thing for us, too. If, for whatever reasons, the Tashnagtsutyun does not today enjoy the confidence of the outside world or a significant portion of the Nation—and that portion consists of the wealthy classes, who will not consider settling in Armenia—shouldn't the Tashnagtsutyun, if it is a patriotic organization, think about this situation and undertake measures to repair it? Conditions had been proposed to Boghos Pasha, and he had accepted them. Why are they not being implemented so that this internal dispute could come to an end?"

[Aharonian] said that the Pasha was committing errors, that he could not agree to have the Delegation entirely entrusted to him, and that, if Pasha became its President, he would be obliged to resign and leave, but, [he continued], only a few weeks were left; the work could be continued in the same manner, with two Delegations, and, when the treaty was signed, the Delegations would dissolve automatically, and others would take charge of things, assuming that there was anything remaining to take charge of. As for the issue of admitting non-

Tashnagtsagan ministers [into the Armenian cabinet], he agreed to it. Let it be decided immediately [who these persons were], and he was ready to communicate their names to the government and have them appointed.

I proposed Avedis Terzibashian's name, but he objected that Babajian and Terzibashian were [Ramgavar] party members and unsuitable. The conversation continued in this manner for quite a while, and finally I recommended that the two [Delegations] collaborate.

On the 15th of April, Boghos Pasha proposed—with Noradungian's concurrence—that I sign the telegram that he and Aharonian had drafted together in London (but that Aharonian had not sent, which thereby caused the argument) and that we send it essentially unaltered to Yerevan, so that [people in Yerevan] would know what was in that telegram (which Aharonian found so onerous and called Boghos Pasha a traitor for having related to Vansittart). We sent [one copy to the government of Armenia] and another to the Catholicos in Echmiadzin.

[Boghos] Pasha received a letter from Malcolm dated the 17th of April [1920], stating that Aharonian's telegram had made a bad impression on the [British] Foreign Office and that it was decided as a result that arms and supplies were to be given in equal measure to all three [Transcaucasian] Republics and not only to Armenia.

On the 24th of April [1920], a letter arrived [for Boghos Nubar] in Paris from Yerevan from which we learned that Khadisian had been approached about forming a coalition government, but he had stated that Dr. Ohanjanian's arrival was awaited; when Khadisian was approached again after [Ohanjanian's] arrival, he said, "The Central Committee of Tashnagtsutyun felt that it was necessary to review the conditions sent from Paris."

Thus, the project of unifying [the Delegations] ran into obstacles and did not succeed until Armenia became Bolshevik. After that, naturally the issue of unifying the Delegations became more complicated, because the new government in Yerevan did not recognize Aharonian's delegation, and the basis for the existence of the [Armenian] Republic Delegation ceased to exist.

I should mention here an interesting incident. On the 30th of December 1920, Prof. Asdvadzadur Khachadrian came to Constantinople from Paris and visited me. Among other things, he said that the government [of Armenia] had already issued instructions for the Armenian Republic Delegation to be dissolved, and he suggested that a new, single Delegation be formed, presided over by Boghos Pasha, and that Gyulkhandanian and Khadisian be invited from Tiflis to join it, but Aharonian left out.

This news was so unbelievable that I communicated it to Hayg Khojasarian, who also expressed doubts about it.

Subsequent events, however, showed that persons supporting the Armenian [Republic] Delegation were not willing to take such a step. Despite the new government in Yerevan not recognizing them as its representatives, and despite the administrative bodies of the Armenians of Turkey—among them the All-National Organization—having issued a declaration that only the National Delegation was authorized to pursue the Armenian Case, [the Armenian Republic Delegation] insisted on pretending that they pursue the cause of Caucasian Armenians and Turkish Armenians. Thus, on the 17th of June 1922, the Constantinople representative of the Armenian Republic, Mr. Tahtajian, came to see me and stated that he had received a letter from the Armenian Republic Delegation, in which he had been instructed to let us know that [the Delegation] had not received—directly or via the National Delegation—the All-National Organization's pronouncement to the effect that only the National Delegation was authorized to pursue the Turkish Armenians' cause, but that,

nevertheless, it considered this pronouncement invalid, because it had received its authority from the Armenian Parliament through the Sèvres Treaty and that, if it did not pursue [the cause], it could be held responsible.

To think that this was happening on the eve of the Lausanne Treaty, which annulled the Sèvres Treaty, and that the Parliament authorizing Aharonian's Delegation no longer existed! Still, the Armenian Republic Delegation tried to prolong its existence with this mentality, without having a legal foundation, and how things ended is well known.

N. The Patriarchate and Armenia

The Patriarchate's relationship with the governments of Armenia was always correct and straightforward. Despite the occasional conflicts between the Armenian National Delegation and the Armenian Republic Delegation on various issues, the Patriarchate always maintained a friendly and correct attitude toward the Constantinople representative of the Armenian Republic and was in constant communication with him. The Patriarchate constantly tried to have some land detached from Turkey, in whatever manner, so that it might be possible, at a later date, to join it with the Yerevan Republic—much as Eastern Rumelia had been joined to Bulgaria.

Every time the Armenian Republic's representatives passed through Constantinople, the Patriarchate did not fail in its duty [to extend] respect and civility toward them. Also, when I was in Europe, even though I had gone there to pursue the National Delegation's goals, both in London and Paris I was present at the meetings of both Delegations, and we discussed important matters together.

The Nation would be grateful if Boghos Nubar's sons print his memoirs, which, I am sure, he has written, for I urged him to do so [publish the memoirs] while he was alive, but he declined.

The All-National Assembly that the Patriarchate formed was in constant communication with the National Delegation. Nevertheless, the communication between the two does not contain all the intricacies of the issues that were pursued, and for this reason it is important for Boghos Pasha Nubar's memoirs to be printed. Together with the correspondence and records of the All-National Assembly—now kept and preserved at the St. James Monastery of Jerusalem—they would give a complete picture of the history of those tempestuous days. Historians in the future will certainly need to make use of them [the documents] to assess and evaluate the personalities and their activities.

I do not wish to dwell on the events in Armenia during the Tashnagtsagan government, the conflicts between the natives and the outsiders, the acts of vengeance, the disputes, the people's widespread misery, the contagious diseases, the difficult economic conditions, the multitudes of orphans and beggars, etc. Armenian eyewitnesses and foreign neutral observers brought reports about all these to us in Constantinople. Armenia was indeed in a pathetic and disorganized state, toward which our foreign friends reacted with sympathy and our enemies with mockery and sarcasm.

The American [Near East] Relief officials, when they arrived in Constantinople from Armenia, talked about the Yerevan Republic's leaders with pity, half sorrow, and half sarcasm, and Mustafa Kemal's representative in Constantinople said to me, with a smile, that even the statesmen did not have proper suits in Armenia, and he added maliciously, "When the

country is in such a state with its one million inhabitants, I do not know with what logic they were asking for *independence!*"

During those fateful days, while Tashnagtsutyun pretended to be solely in charge of the Nation's destiny, it did not have persons knowledgeable in diplomatic affairs in its ranks. All its statesmen were writers or former teachers, with the exception of A. Khadisian, who had been the Mayor of Tiflis for many years and had a statesman's qualifications.

[Apart from Khadisian], Tashnagtsutyun did not have experienced and skillful people. The members of the party were mostly ideological people, unfamiliar with diplomacy and diplomatic subtleties, skills that were impossible to acquire at an Armenian schoolteacher's lectern. Diplomacy could certainly not be based on dreamy speculation.

The February Uprising alone—which inflicted such a high cost in fratricide—should be enough to show how immature the minds of the Yerevan Tashnag Republic's leaders were.³²⁴ This catastrophic adventure, too, presented a subject for the sarcasm of the above-mentioned Kemalist representative, Hamid Bey; he sent me word so that I would "prepare lodgings for Armenia's statesmen, because they should be arriving in Constantinople in just a few days."

During the Tashnag government, the Patriarchate also had relations with Yerevan concerning relief issues. In particular, American [Near East] Relief maintained orphanages in Armenia, which cared for large numbers of children from Turkish-Armenian refugee families. These orphanages performed services that the government was unable to carry out, yet the government got into conflicts with the Americans on issues to do with the orphanages, as well.

Despite all the shortcomings and incompetence the Tashnag Party displayed during its time in government, it has to be acknowledged that this was a strong revolutionary organization established in the midst of our Nation. It can be said that this party was a concrete expression of the Armenian people's heartfelt rebellion against their centuries-long suffering and present state of enslavement. For this reason, it was able to function for many years, always enjoying the people's solidarity. The spirit of discipline it inculcated in our leaderless and unruly people deserves appreciation.

When the Tashnag government was replaced by the Bolsheviks at the head of the Yerevan Republic, we tried to maintain our relations with the new administration in Yerevan, adhering to the principle that, for us, the regime did not matter and was still an Armenian government. Very shortly after the change of the regime, we started hearing rumors that the American orphanages were being closed and that the [Near East] Relief staff were leaving Armenia. Even orphans started emigrating from Armenia and arriving in Constantinople, at a time when [the Armenians'] position was endangered because of the strengthening of the *Milli* movement.

For this reason, the National Administration decided to send a delegate to Yerevan to negotiate with the Armenian government about the transfer of some of the [Near East] Relief orphanages from Anatolia—which had to be evacuated—to Armenia.

The National Administration decided to send to Yerevan the Chairman of the National Assembly, Prof. Apraham Der Hagopian, who had already been a member of the National Delegation and had been sent earlier to the United States by them. He would have been accompanied by the Secretary of the All-National Assembly, Arshag Alboyajian, who, as the Director of the Information Bureau, was privy to all the concerns and thoughts of the All-National Assembly and could act as the delegate's counselor and advisor.

We succeeded in obtaining the U.S. High Commissioner's consent to have the delegate travel to Batum and back on a U.S. torpedo boat. Regretfully, Prof. Apraham Der Hagopian had just had an absence from his post at Robert College and did not want to take another leave. Before the Patriarchate could find another suitable person, events intervened, and the Armenian government itself blocked our attempt and instead sent us a *Hay Oknutyan Gazmagerbutyun* [Armenian Relief Organization]³²⁵ delegation, headed by the poet Hovhannes Tumanian.³²⁶ The Patriarchate had very cordial relations with this delegation and helped it in all possible ways.

Shortly thereafter [the Armenian government] sent a new representative, Tanush Shahverdian,³²⁷ and the Patriarchate had very good relations with him, too. He often visited the Patriarchate and gave us information about Armenia, which was of great interest to us, because there was no regular mail service between Constantinople and Armenia until the end of 1922.

In 1921, Ardashes Garinian³²⁸ came to Constantinople as the representative of Soviet Armenia, intending to continue on to Europe to make purchases. On the day after his arrival, the French police searched his hotel room in Péra and confiscated all the money he had. Garinian and Shahverdian went together to the Patriarchate to ask for help. Dr. Tavitian, the head of the Information Bureau, succeeded in reclaiming the money and returned it to [Garinian]. Our relations were cordial with Soviet Armenia's representatives, as they had been with the representatives of the Tashnag government, based on the principle that the regime in Armenia was not the Patriarchate's business. [For the Patriarchate], Armenia was every Armenian's true fatherland [*mayr hayrenik*]; every Armenian's heart should be bound to it, and changes in the regime could in no way affect a true patriot's feelings, because there was only one fatherland and the regimes were not unchangeable. From the same point of view, when the Turks took Izmir, Constantinople became endangered, and the condition of the Armenians in Turkey became increasingly strained; during this period of crisis, the Political Assembly once again thought of sending a delegate to Yerevan. This time, the person chosen was Avedis Terzibashian, a member of the Political Assembly. Terzibashian went to Yerevan to have consultations with Miasnikian,³²⁹ but neither I nor the Administration commissioning him could stay in Constantinople until his return. Thus, it was not possible to derive any benefit from his mission. Events were occurring at a precipitous pace by then, and everything was being radically transformed.

I think it should be said that the [Soviet] regime in Armenia proved to be more redeeming for the Nation. It is true that Armenia lost something of her independence, but, by affiliating herself with a great and mighty state [Russia] as a member of a confederation, the country benefited from every opportunity for progress and development.

Armenia enjoyed significant advantages by joining the stronger of its two neighbors [Russia and Turkey], without losing its internal autonomy. Had the country remained a weak and impotent little state, she would have been her neighbors' plaything, and, at the first opportunity, one of her neighbors would have swallowed her up.

Those who had met the Armenians native to the now deserted and ruined provinces of Asiatic Turkey knew well that the Armenians in the northern regions of Asia Minor and Armenia were sincere Russophiles and had waited impatiently for their *keri* [uncle] to come to their aid, although neither the Patriarchate or the leaders of the Armenians in Turkey pursued such a policy, nor had the Tsarist regime in Russia adopted a course that would bring forth sympathy toward Russia. As evidence of Tsarist Russia's direction, I would like to relate

a conversation that I heard in 1904 during my term of office as Prelate of Garin. The [Ottoman] Governor and the Consul General of Russia in Garin were consulting on the issue of Armenian refugees. As is known, the Armenian working class living on the Black Sea coast and as far inland as Garin preferred to go to Russia for a year or two of work and then return, instead of going to Constantinople or other foreign countries.

During the 1895 massacres, some Armenians living near the border had fled to the Caucasus. Turkey used to give proper passports to migrant workers and did not wish to allow the return of these refugees to their native lands. The Russian government often rounded up these refugees, brought them to the frontier and demanded that the Turkish authorities accept them. The same thing was happening during those days, and the Russian Consul General was requesting from the Turkish Governor of Garin that the [Ottoman] subjects who were waiting on the Russian side of the frontier be allowed in. The Governor mildly answered that Russia was a great Christian country and asked whether she could not settle these few thousand Armenian Christians somewhere on her land. Quite straightforwardly, the Consul answered, “*We already have more Armenians than we need!*”

This was the Russian government’s mentality under the Tsars, and this is how they treated the Armenians, whereas today, we are seeing that Soviet Armenia—with Moscow’s goodwill—is organizing the magnificent project of repatriation³³⁰ and has opened wide her land to the dispersed Armenians. Such a big contrast there is between the past and the present!

O. My Withdrawal from the Patriarchate

The Greek-Turkish war restarted with renewed vigor after the 28th of August 1922. The Greeks were defeated and gradually evacuated those parts of Asia Minor that they had occupied. The Armenians of the regions of Yalova, Bandërma, and Brusa joined the Armenians and Greeks of Afion Karahisar, Keotahya, and Esgishehir [in emigration]. Some of them came to Constantinople, but most of them went to Eastern Thrace, Greece, and Izmir. The Turks entered Izmir on the 9th of September [1922], set the Armenian and Greek neighborhoods on fire and massacred the Armenian and Greek inhabitants of the city.

After 15,000 Armenians had already been massacred, at the end of September, through the request of the European States, the remaining ones [were given the means to] leave the country and go to Greece and other lands. Shortly afterward, the armistice signed in Mudania on the 11th of October gave Eastern Thrace to the Turks; consequently, the native Armenians and the Armenian refugees living in the area migrated to Western Thrace, Macedonia, and Bulgaria.

These events spread terror among the National [Administration] circles and among the Armenians of Constantinople, especially when the Kemalist government sent a representative to Constantinople (on the 9th of October 1922), supposedly to conduct the administration of Eastern Thrace, but, shortly after his arrival, the ministers in Constantinople resigned (on the 4th of November) and he [the Kemalist representative, Refet] took charge of the Constantinople administration.

On the 17th of November 1922, Sultan Mehmed Vahdeddin left the city under English protection and went abroad on a warship. The Allied countries’ representatives, despite having occupation armies in the city, started to submit to the *Milli* and withdrew on every front.

After the consultations in Mudania, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey issued an announcement (4th of October 1922), in which it proposed to convene a Council in Izmir to sign a final treaty. The [Allied] States proposed to convene this Council in Lausanne, starting on the 13th of November 1922.

Although there was no hope left, the National and Armenian Republic Delegations made every attempt to salvage as much as possible of the Sèvres Treaty's provisions for the Armenians.

We in Constantinople, seeing the successes of the *Milli* and the abject condition of the Allied countries, were altogether incapable of taking any steps. Despite this, when the opportunity presented itself, we did not deny our support, with great caution, in an indirect manner and without inviting responsibility upon ourselves. Thus, in early November 1922, Prof. Apraham Der Hagopian came to me to say that the U.S. High Commissioner, Admiral Bristol, had called for him and asked that I go to a meeting with him two days later.

On the date decided, I went to see the Admiral in the company of Prof. Der Hagopian. Admiral Bristol explained that he was preparing to leave for the Lausanne Conference, and, because it was probable that the Armenian Question would be discussed there, he wanted to know how he could be of service to us.

I outlined for him the various transformations the Armenian Question had gone through since its beginnings, the new forms it had lately acquired, and our people's unfortunate condition at present, and—thinking that he would have received instructions from his government in this regard—I also laid out our hopes and expectations from America.

The Admiral asked, "Given that it is impossible to resettle the Armenian people in its native lands, which part of the country do you see suitable to designate as a home for the Armenians?"

I indicated Thrace and beseeched him not to spare any efforts to put an end to our people's misery. Without expressing any opinions of his own, Admiral Bristol took leave of us to continue his departure preparations, and this is how our meeting ended.

I reported this mysterious and interesting meeting—which may well have been called in the interests of the Turkish government—to the National Delegation in its entirety. The Delegation was still making efforts in Lausanne, although without nurturing any great hopes. This can be seen in Noradungian's letter of the 6th of February 1923 to me from Lausanne, which was penned on the day after the Lausanne Conference was inconclusively disrupted on the 5th of February 1923. Noradungian said the following.

[What happened] is not a disruption but a postponement, caused by the incompatibility of opinions. It seems probable that an agreement could be reached through private negotiations, and at that time the Conference may be reconvened in Paris or elsewhere for the purpose of signing the Peace Treaty. There are people who suppose that if the Turk[ish Nationalists] try to cross over to Thrace, the situation might once again become very strained and things might even lead to a resumption of hostilities. It is evident that the European States have adopted a bizarre stance at Lausanne; they sacrificed us and could not defend their own interests, either.[...] After we go back to Paris, we will continue our contacts, not for the Armenians to go back to Turkey in large numbers—this appears impossible under the present circumstances—but to try to have the Allied States give satisfaction to us in other ways, [such as] by settling our refugees and assuring their future. Just about this time, we received Russia's

proposal, which is doubtless familiar to Your Holiness; this consists of setting aside a territory between the Don and Kuban rivers for one or two hundred thousand Armenians. To study the problem on the ground, we immediately sent off the Director of the American-Armenian Society, Mr. Montgomery, who was then in Lausanne. First he will see whether it might not be possible to settle some of the refugees in the Yerevan Republic by increasing the productivity of the lands through the newest [agricultural] methods and irrigation work. Then he will go to Kuban to study the climate and the agricultural and economic conditions that this land offers. If these preliminary inspections prove favorable, then he will go to Moscow, together with one of our representatives, to work on the remaining issues.

It should be considered that Russia prefers that most of the refugees transferred to Kuban be farmers. A preliminary study should therefore be completed to determine to which classes our refugees belong.

It is unnecessary to say that all these were dreams. The Lausanne Conference resumed on the 24th of April, and the Peace Treaty was signed on the 24th of July [1922], ruining all our hopes. [Turkey's representative], Ismet Pasha,³³¹ resolutely refused to allow even the mention of the word "Armenian" in the text of the Treaty, which many people considered the tombstone of the Armenian Cause.

The Turkish Armenians heard of the signing of the Lausanne Treaty in an indifferent and discouraged condition. After October 1922, masses of our people were leaving Turkey in a state of terror. These people, bewildered in their struggle for physical and economic survival, were unable to do anything, and almost the entire Nation scattered to various parts of the world, like dust carried by the wind. The Constantinople Patriarchate could not be spared from this destructive and deathly whirlwind, and indeed it was not.

As stated, in November 1922, a terrified flight started out of the country. The Armenians of Constantinople, who had been spared the deportation, were now caught up in a wave of terror, and they started emigrating abroad, even daring to go to entirely unfamiliar countries like South America. The Allies [in Constantinople] were also caught up in the terror and started moving out of the country the orphanages under their care.

Orphanages in Kharpert, Sepasdia, etc. that were kept by [Near East] Relief, the orphanage in Gesaria supported by the Compatriotic Society of Armenians from Gesaria, and the one in Diarbekir supported by the Compatriotic Society of Armenians from Diarbekir were moved to Syria, and the orphanages in Constantinople to the Mediterranean islands and elsewhere. The orphanage under the care of the English (Lord Mayor's Fund) was moved to Corfu. The Swiss took the Swiss-Armenian orphanage to their country, and the [Armenian Catholic] Immaculate Conception orphanages were transferred to Italy and Rhodes.

There were numerous sessions of the Religious and Political Assemblies and the Parliamentary Commission (Kevork Vartabed Aslanian, Prof. A. Khachadrian, Vahan Tekeyan, and Dr. Tavitian), at times by themselves and at other times jointly with the All-National Assembly, and consultations were held on the day's issues.

Certain people were proposing that I resign, leaving only a Vicar in Constantinople, that the National Assembly be dissolved, etc. Others proposed to wait and to gradually approach the [Turkish] Nationalists. It was evident and everyone agreed that we were in a crisis and that we needed to alter our course. Almost all hope was lost, and Armenians within Turkey's borders were in imminent danger, but opinions as to how to alter our course differed.

Certain people considered my person an obstacle to the change of course, whereas others wondered if it was possible to alter [the Nation's] policies without me. To make an attempt at approaching the Nationalist government and to test its mood, after the Nationalist government was established in Constantinople, I went to congratulate Refet Pasha.³³² I congratulated their new government, expressed the Armenians' loyalty toward it, and wished it success. The Turkish newspapers did not react unfavorably to this visit.

Toward the end of November, Refet Pasha called our Chargé d'Affaires, Hagop Hamamjian, and demanded to have the Muslim orphans we were supposedly keeping. We asked the Director of the Turkish Trusteeship, Hamdi Bey, to give us a list of these orphans. They gave us a list of 15 orphans, but it was not possible to locate them, because only their Islamic names were indicated. We requested that Hamdi, the orphanage director Selaheddin, Hamamjian, and our Trusteeship's bookkeeper, Father Garabed Vartabed Baduhasian, jointly search for these orphans in our orphanages. They went to several orphanages and drew up a list of about 15 orphans.

It was decided that the American Auxiliary should not send these children abroad until they could be examined in the presence of a special commission.

While we were busy with this, on the 29th of November [1922], the Turkish newspapers published a telegram sent to them by the Anatolia Telegraphic Agency. This text announced that [Avedis] Aharonian, Boghos Pasha's secretary, General Antranig, Levon Pashalian,³³³ and Arshag Chobanian had convened a meeting at an Italian city and decided that Levon Pashalian would take several persons (whose names and addresses the telegram supplied) to Constantinople, under English and Italian passports, to assassinate several Kemalist personalities. A telegram from Angora was included, to the effect that, if this conspiracy took place, all Armenians [in Turkey] would be massacred.

The very same day, we obtained an appointment with Refet Pasha, and I went to see him with Harutyun Mosdichian and Hamamjian. For about one and a half hours we explained that the contents of this telegram were unfounded and requested that he issue a refutation.

While we were there, Mosdichian dug up old issues, declared the Nation's loyalty, and threw the blame on Tashnagsutyun. Refet Pasha said, "You have a National Delegation in Europe that is making demands of us. Naturally we cannot consider your expressions sincere." I stated that already too much had been said about [the Delegation] and our demands [, and the conversation continued as follows].

Patriarch—The Turkish government looks upon us with suspicion and is bothered by our presence. We, in turn, are troubled by [the government's] suspicions and its resultant attitude toward us. We wish that a corner of this country would be designated for us, naturally with a somewhat different administrative structure than the rest. After all, we are not Greeks, and we could not be exchanged against the Muslims of Greece; no European country wants to receive us, and they are under no obligation to do so.

Refet Pasha—Where do you want [to be assigned to live]?

Patriarch—It is not for us to decide. Let the state decide where.

Refet Pasha—If, for example, we were to choose the Province of Brusa.... Aren't there Muslims there, too?

Patriarch—For six centuries we have lived with Muslims, and we are still living with them. We would never demand that they be removed.



A panoramic view of Constantinople (Istanbul) during the early 1900s.

Refet—This is a complicated problem.

Hamamjian—It is possible to expand Armenia's borders to give these people a place to live.

Refet—You can go all the way to Moscow and settle there!

After this we left, having received a promise that the telegram on the conspiracy was to be refuted the following day.

Harutyun Mosdichian regretted not having come with me during my first visit [to Refet Pasha], because he wished to be seen by the Turks and to prove baseless the doubts they had about him. I took him along on this second visit, but it was an unfortunate decision, because he stirred up numerous old political issues and caused the meeting to last more than one and a half hours. A refutation did appear in the following day's papers, but it was very feeble and insufficient. On the same day, I also issued refutations to various Turkish journalists.

On Friday, the 1st of December [1922], Mosdichian came to see me quite late in the day and informed me that, the day before, Refet Pasha had summoned Berj Kerestegian of the Ottoman Bank, talked to him at some length about the relations between Turks and Armenians, stated that, for a rapprochement between the two groups to come about, he considered it essential for the Patriarch to resign and for his successor to annul the National Delegation, and recommended that [Kerestegian] call several merchants to a meeting, communicate this order to them, and encourage them to implement it.

Kerestegian spoke about this to Arshag Esayan, Levon Topalian, Sarkis Karageozian, Kerovpé Damadian,³³⁴ and others. Earlier the same day, Mosdichian had been invited to Damadian's office (Hagop Hamamjian was also invited, but did not go) and from there went, together with Sarkis Karageozian, to Kerestegian's office at the Ottoman Bank. The meeting lasted about two hours, and Mosdichian was instructed to communicate the decision to me; they were demanding that I resign from the Patriarch's office the very next day.

Mosdichian communicated this to me in utmost seriousness, without realizing that the men taking this decision held no office and had no authority [to make such a decision]. I said to him, "I have long contemplated resigning from the Patriarch's office and talked about it at Assembly sessions, but, under the present circumstances, I cannot assume the responsibility of doing it, because the Nation could rightly condemn me for it. Still, I will give this some thought until tomorrow."

On the following day, I communicated [the issue] to the British Embassy through Hamamjian and invited the first and second Chairmen of the National General Assembly, Prof. Apraham Der Hagopian and Dr. Tavitian, to a meeting that evening. We consulted for a long time and arrived at the conclusion that I should resign (Tavitian insisted the most on it), but that I should drag it out as much as possible, to let the Lausanne Conference say whatever it had to say on our National problem. So that the three of us would not bear the total responsibility for the step being planned, they advised me to call a National General Assembly session and inform the delegates of the situation.

On the same day, Mosdichian came to see me and learned that I had decided to solicit the National General Assembly's opinion.

On Tuesday, the 5th of December [1922], the invitations were sent, and my initiative was announced in the newspapers. On the same day, I obtained a copy of the following invitation, which was—in most probability—prepared and printed by P. Kechian and his clique.

Péra, 4 Dec. 1922

Honorable Sir,

A consultation concerning the issue of a change in the Patriarchate being considered essential, it is requested that you kindly be present at a meeting that will be held tomorrow, Tuesday, the 5th of December 1922, at 4:30 [p.m.], at the former Armenian Club (above Singer in Péra).

The following persons had been invited to this meeting:

His Grace Abp. Kapriel Jevahirjian, Archpriest Khoren, Messrs. H. Mosdichian, Madteos Nalbandian, Levon Topalian, Ker. Damadian, P. Kechian, A. (Arshag) Surenian, Ye. Karageozian, M. Eblighatian, S. Karageozian, A. Maghakian, K. Torkomian, O. Chifte-Saraf, A. Halajian, M. Natanian, Gh. Bezazian, Dr. Khanjian, and A. (Aram) Fëndëklian.

To the extent that I was able to find out, Nalbandian and Chifte-Saraf were away from Constantinople, and Mosdichian, [Eblighatian], Torkomian, and Halajian did not attend. On the other hand, Dr. Jevahirjian and Sdepan Gurdigian were among those present, even though their names were not among those invited.

The meeting took place as announced, and, toward 9 p.m. that evening, a delegation from those present came to see me. These were the following:

Pyuzant Kechian³³⁵, Sarkis Karageozian, Ghazaros Bezazian, Aram Fëndëklian, Arshag Surenian, and Kerovpé Damadian.

They informed me (P. Kechian did most of the talking) that earlier in the day a meeting attended by 12 people had taken place at the Armenian Club and that they had decided to come and request that I resign to save the Armenians of Constantinople, and they related Refet Pasha's words to Kerestejian in this regard.

I responded to them by saying that they had no authority whatsoever to present to me such a request, that their meeting had no official status, and that therefore I could only consider them as non-official persons. As for the Armenians of Constantinople, I would undertake every sacrifice to save them, but, when Refet Pasha demanded this sacrifice, he did not even give a verbal promise with regard [to the safety of the Armenians in Constantinople].

[I reminded them that] I had convened the National General Assembly to a session and that I would take my decision only after receiving its opinion. They beseeched me and insisted in saying that, instead of seeking the National Assembly's opinion, I should simply submit my letter of resignation to it, considering that the session would probably not have a quorum, due to some members not being in the city and some not wishing to be present out of fear, but I stood by my decision, and they left, visibly dejected.

On the following day, the Turkish newspaper *Aksham* attacked me, and I found Kechian had encouraged them to do this.

Later that day, Aram Halajian came to see me and said that he had not attended the recent meeting, despite having been invited, but that, in conversations with several people that day, he had come to the conclusion that my resignation would be an honorable thing for me and the Nation, and that Damadian—furious at having been dismissed by me the previous day—had declared that, if I did not resign, he would put together a mob, attack the Patriarchate, and expel me from there. I told [Halajian] that I would definitely withdraw from my office after receiving the Assemblymen's opinions.

The National General Assembly met the following day, Friday, the 8th of December [1922], at 12:00 [noon], at the Galatia library. Because of my absence, the session was presided over by Bp. Mesrob Naroyan and chaired by Prof. Apraham Der Hagopian, and the

role of secretary was assumed by Onnig Minasian because of the absence of three more senior secretaries. The following deputies, who were present in Constantinople, had been invited:³³⁶ Abp. Hovhannes Arsharuni, Bp. Mesrob Naroyan,* Bp. Knel Kalemkyarian, Sēmpad Supreme Vartabed Kazazian, Hēmayag Vartabed Bakhtiarian,* Priests Khoren Harutyunian,* Sahag Papazian,* Partogh Takēmjian,* Mesrob Der Mesrobian,* Apel Yeretsian,* Arisdages Varzhabedian,* Arisdages Hisarlian,* Dajad Pashayan,* and Zarmayr Geozyurian, Prof. Apraham Der Hagopian,* Sdepan Karayan* Aram Halajian,* Dr. Sdepan Terzian, Kevork Simkeshian,* Levon Saatjian,* Yetvart Karageozian,* Zareh Khorasanjian, Mgērdich Barsamian, Madteos Eblighatian, Asdvadzadur Khachadrian, Hovhannes Deruni,* Bedros Khorasanjian, Hagop Minasian,* Onnig Minasian,* Misak Narlian,* Yervant Khorasan,* Bedros Adruni,* Hagop Boyajian, Levon Kevonian, Rupen Papazian, Karekin Demirjibashian, Dr. Tūlian,* Artaki Sarajian,* Lutfig Kuyumjian, Takvor Arevian, Hovhannes Isakulian, Khachig Sēvajian, Khoren Jamjian, Hovhannes Babigian, Margos Natanian,* Barkev Papazian,* Gobernig Khachadurian,* Sebuḥ Ütūjian, Aghasi Aghasian, Levon Babonian, Kasbar Nemtsé,* Dr. K. Tavitian, Dikran Nakashian, and Hayg Andonian

There was no quorum, because only 28 members were in attendance. My letter was read and a response prepared. The letter I sent them was the following:

5 Dec. 1922

Honorable Mr. Chairman of the National General Assembly,

I have convened the National Assembly to a session for next Friday.

Given that certain persons are considering inadequate the resumption of our relations with the government and the steps we have taken since, and that they wish to be linked with the government with ties of closer friendship and devotion and create a rapprochement, and that they see my person as an obstacle for these, I request that you present for the Representative Assembly's consultation and possible decision the following [question]: Under the present political circumstances, is my resignation from the office of Patriarch considered beneficial for the Nation, or not?

I request that you communicate the result of the Representative Assembly's consultation and possible decision to me in writing.

Yours Prayerfully,

Abp. Zaven
Patriarch of the Armenians

The Assembly sent me the following reply:

5 Dec. 1922

His Beatitude Archbishop Zaven,
Patriarch of the Armenians and President of the National Assembly

Your High Eminence communicated to us through Your 5th of December letter that You have convened a session of the National Representative Assembly in order to present to its consultation and possible decision [the question]: "Under the present political circumstances, is my resignation from the office of Patriarch considered beneficial for the Nation, or not?"

Regrettably, only 28 of the 53 [*szc*] representatives being present, in accordance with the provisions of the law, they did not give themselves the right to take a decision, and they decided to close the official session and convert the session to a consultative assembly.

With our deep respects,

Natl. Assembly Secretary, O. Minasian

Natl. Assembly Chairman, A. Der Hagopian

Barely five minutes after this letter had reached me, Bp. Mesrob Naroyan and Barkev Papazian came to see me. They informed me that the Representative Assembly, not having formed quorum, had not been able to hold a session, but that the deputies present, after lengthy consultation and debate, had given the two of them the duty of announcing to me that, while appreciating my services to the Nation and accepting that the policies I had conducted until now had been policies adopted by the Nation and even the Assembly, they were compelled, regretfully, to recommend that I resign, because of the present circumstances.

In responding to them I said that, even though this recommendation was not official, nevertheless it came from the Nation's deputies, and, considering this, I would comply with it and resign immediately. It was now up to them to think about a Vicar, and to elect this person quickly, because I intended to leave Constantinople as soon as I resigned.

They took leave of me, promising to convene the Religious Assembly and the Mosdichian Administration the next day in order to have a Vicar elected, but this did not succeed, because there was no quorum at the session. I spread the news on Saturday that I had resigned and withdrawn from office. The newspapers reported it in their Saturday evening and Sunday morning editions.

The deputies present had taken part in the consultation, with the exception of the following, who had left before the consultation started: Prof. Apraham Der Hagopian, Hëmayag Vartabed Bakhtiarian, Priests Dajad Pashayan, Sahag Papazian, and Arisdages Hisarlian, Kasbar Nemtsé, Artaki Sarajian,³³⁷ and Harutyun Mosdichian Hovhannes Babigian had joined the deputies only for the consultation phase.

Mosdichian met with Kerestegian then came to see me and proposed that I resign immediately. Upon this, late in the evening, I sent the Director of the National Trusteeship, Harutyun Khachadurian, to the British Embassy. The [Dragoman] Ryan having gone to Lausanne, Khachadurian met with the Deputy Dragoman Matthews, whom he informed what had transpired and then—acting upon my instructions—asked whether the Embassy would protect me in the event of need. Matthews, not knowing Khachadurian, gave a vague answer.

On the following day, I sent Hamamjian [to the Embassy], so that he could deliver a copy of the invitation to the meeting at the Armenian Club and supply details on how things had happened. Upon this, Matthews promised me the Embassy's protection. On Wednesday, Hamamjian went again and furnished additional details. On Thursday morning, Matthews came to see me and explained that Acting High Commissioner Henderson (the High Commissioner, Horace Humboldt, had gone to Lausanne) did not want to give me a passport without obtaining a visa from the Turkish government, and that he [Matthews] was ready to apply to Refet Pasha in person to obtain my visa.

This development caused me great disappointment and anxiety, because it endangered everything. I let them know that if Refet Pasha heard about it, he would use every means to

prevent my departure. In particular, my intention of leaving without resigning would have put me in danger. After talking for about half an hour, we agreed that I would apply in writing to be permitted to leave Constantinople, on a warship, if necessary.

The same afternoon, Hamamjian and I wrote an informal letter to Mr. Henderson, in which we explained the danger we would face if Refet Pasha were approached in connection with my departure, because the Turks had always considered me their enemy and exiled me, and even after my return I had always had contacts with the Allies—especially with the British High Commission.

The Turkish government looked upon me as an undesirable person, it was demanding my resignation, and if I ever submitted my resignation, it would certainly put pressure on the Armenians to give up the idea of applying to the Lausanne Conference and presenting their demands. In the letter, I said that I was thinking of going to Bulgaria and continuing my appeals and petitions from there, until such time as the Nation would be able to express itself freely. Therefore, I asked that my departure be arranged on a British warship, without involving the Turkish authorities.

I had Hamamjian deliver this hastily written letter later that afternoon, and I received a response to the effect that arrangements would be made for me to leave for Varna on the ship *Praga*, belonging to the Italian company Lloyd Trestino. Our passports were ready on Saturday, and the details of our flight were communicated to us through Hamamjian and a British Embassy employee, Mr. Hamies. The week before, I had sent my brother's daughter to Varna with some of our belongings.³³⁸

As we had arranged, on Sunday, the 10th of December [1922], at 1:30 p.m., Hagop Hamamjian came to our house in two automobiles, having with him his daughter Verzhin [Vergine] and his daughter-in-law's brother Ara Ayjian. I joined them in a third car, having with me my brother's children, Dzaghig, Azniv, and Setrag, and our suitcases. In these three cars, we arrived at the English [customs] office, which was situated next to the Customs House at the port of Galatia.

Mr. Helm from the Embassy was waiting for us there. The departure of the ship was delayed. At 4:30 p.m. we boarded a steam tug, which took us to our ship, *Praga*, which was anchored in front of the Këz-Kulesi.³³⁹ Mr. Helm and four English policemen accompanied us in the tug. We boarded the ship without encountering any problems. The steam tug followed our ship until we left the [Bosphorus] Strait.

We found on board the ship Dr. K. Tavitian, who was traveling to Rumania on Turkish and Allied passports, to negotiate and make preparations for moving the Howard Karageozian orphanage³⁴⁰ there.

Also in the ship were National Deputy Hovhannes Babigian, who was going to Bulgaria on a legitimate Turkish passport; Madteos Eblighatian and his nephew, who had come on board clandestinely—himself destined for Rumania and his nephew for Bulgaria; and other Armenians, some traveling clandestinely and others with legitimate passports.

Before I left, I sent the following letter to the Chairman of the National Assembly:

I have been compelled to withdraw from office because of the events of the last few days, and the outcome of the delegates' consultation who were present at yesterday's National General Assembly session, which was communicated to me by a special delegation. Because I must leave the city [i.e., Constantinople] immediately, soon I shall communicate the reasons for my present behavior to the National General

Assembly, which will, naturally, be subject to its assessment and decision.

Prayerfully,

Abp. Zaven

9 Dec. 1923 [1922]

I had withdrawn from the Patriarchate without resigning from the office of Patriarch, fearing that my resignation and the legitimate election of a Vicar—as Refet Pasha had demanded—could compel the [new] representative of the Armenians of Turkey into demanding the resignation of the National Delegation or the annulment of its authority, exactly at the [critical] moment that the Lausanne Conference was meeting and the Delegation was making a final, hopeless, and supreme attempt for obtaining a more or less favorable settlement to the Armenian Question.

It was also clear to me that—judging from Refet Pasha’s declarations—I could not hope for a rapprochement by staying. Especially after my trip to Europe, my person had become the object of Turks’ hatred. Striking proof of this were Mustafa Kemal’s comments about me in a speech he gave to the Halk Party conference in 1927. In that speech, the *Milli* chief spoke about the cooperation between the Greek and the Armenian Patriarchs in the post-Armistice period. After saying that the Patriarchate at Fener³⁴¹ had organized bandit gangs, made speeches, and collected funds, he touched upon the Armenian Patriarchate, too:

Another unforgettable disastrous hero for us was the Armenian Patriarch Zaven. Forgetting their old quarrels with the Greek Patriarchate, this Patriarch, too, committed all kinds of accursed acts for the purpose of ruining the Turkish Fatherland.³⁴²

These lines should be enough to show what was awaiting me had I not left.

Our suspicions were confirmed when the Greek Patriarch was forcibly expelled by the police a short time later. Through my departure, my defenseless Nation was at least spared this humility.

Together with this, in order not to take a step against the Nation’s general interests, and especially in order not to jeopardize the efforts of the [National] Delegation, the very day of my arrival in Varna (the 12th of December 1922) I telegraphed the National Delegation in Lausanne, “*Arrivé sans demission*” [Arrived without having resigned], and, the following day, I wrote a comprehensive letter with a detailed report on all the incidents in Constantinople.

On this issue, I had already written another comprehensive letter on the 5th of December, before leaving Constantinople. Seeing that the response was late in coming, on the 20th of December, I telegraphed Paris for a second time and reminded them that I was waiting for a response.

On the 27th of December, I received Noradungian’s letter of the 21st of December, sent from Lausanne:

His Beatitude [and] Eminence Patriarch Zaven—Varna

His Beatitude [and] Eminence, Our Patriarch Father,

I have received the telegram You sent to Mr. Babayan in Geneva and Your letter of the 13th of December, and I was saddened to learn from them about the recent developments. It would perhaps have been better to designate a Vicar before leaving

Constantinople and entrusted the Patriarchate's affairs to him during your temporary absence, in order not to allow an interruption. In any event, the present circumstances are forcing us to wait for events to develop. In all likelihood, the Lausanne Conference will end on the 15th of January, by then the fate of Turkey's Armenians will certainly be determined, and we will determine our course in accordance with it.

Your Eminence is naturally aware that our case has been submitted to a sub-committee of the Conference's First Committee (Chaired by Lord Curzon). A favorable atmosphere has been created there around our case, and we are making every effort to have our demands satisfied. On the other hand, we are working to bring about a rapprochement with the Turkish Delegation, and we have taken measures to come to an agreement with them.

Attentions are generally focused on Cilicia, and the setting up of a distinct territory there is considered the most probable. As soon as the issue takes on a more favorable appearance, I shall immediately communicate to Your Eminence the results obtained.

With filial profound respect,

K. Noradungian

The issue of leading active duty as Patriarch was in a sense over for me, when rumors started reaching me that the Vicar and the Administration in Constantinople were nurturing suspicions about my wishing to function abroad as Patriarch and making preparations for this. I had no such intentions; I had simply withdrawn from office and was waiting for the Turkish treaty to be signed so that the status of the minorities in Turkey would be defined, and this was also the stance of the National Delegation, which worked toward this end.

Especially when the Constantinople newspapers reported that the Political Assembly had decided to apply to His Holiness the Catholicos, I wrote the following letter:

Varna, 24 February 1923

His Grace Bp. Kevork Aslanian

Patriarchal Vicar for the Armenians of Turkey—Constantinople

His Grace, My Brother,

It has been two and a half months since I left Constantinople because of circumstances, and I have secluded myself in Varna. During this time, I wished to live an insular and silent life, and I did not wish to make any declarations or to write to you, hoping that you would be able to appreciate the direction I have taken, and that you would consider it beneficial to the Nation and would not attempt anything to disturb it. However, having learned that the Representative Political Assembly has provoked an issue and decided to apply to His Holiness the Catholicos, I decided to address this letter to you, because I am seeing in this decision a silent or covert antagonism toward myself.

Without resigning from the Patriarch's office, I have withdrawn from the active duties of the Patriarch and left Constantinople, for two purposes: (1) to save the National Delegation in Europe and (2) to save the Constantinople Patriarchate.

I have considered it essential for the National Delegation to continue its duties, both to follow the political events and make applications on behalf of our

unfortunate people and to act in its relations with political and philanthropic organizations as a fully authorized entity representing our Nation.

On the other hand, the Turkish press and official and unofficial Turkish circles were demanding its annulment. These people could have brought pressure upon the National institutions in Constantinople for this purpose, and [it is evident that] if [the Delegation] is annulled, the Constantinople center will not be able to play any role in the political arena.

The Turkish government's intention in regard to the Patriarchate is clear. Its having exiled or annulled the Patriarchate from Constantinople during the World War convincingly shows this ... and it is also evident that the *Milliji* are more nationalistic and radical than the *Ittihadji*.³⁴³ The debates at the Lausanne Conference concerning the issue of the minorities and the Greek Patriarchate and the impossibility so far of receiving approval for the Patriarchal Vicar indicate to us the spirit in which [the *Milli* movement] views the Christian community's spiritual organizations and the attitude it will adopt toward them. If they are demonstrating such severity toward the Greek Patriarchate, which is a throne established [in Constantinople] much before [the start of] Turkish sovereignty and which has so many supporters among foreign governments, then [one can imagine] how much more severity they will demonstrate toward our Patriarchate seat, which is, after all, a privilege they themselves had granted to an unfortunate nation.³⁴⁴ Will they even allow such an institution to continue under the same name, and, if they do, what will be the limits of its authority? These things will remain uncertain until Turkey signs the peace treaty, at which time the government will have a free hand in arranging these internal affairs as it wills.

I am very satisfied that Your Grace and the [Administrative] Assemblies avoided so far making any statements that could harm the National Delegation, and you were able to escape the pressure being put on you by giving the pretext that your appointment was unapproved, but we should not yet consider everything over; what did not happen yesterday may well happen tomorrow. The matters of both the Patriarchate and the Delegation still remain uncertain.

As I said above, I left the center and informed the National General Assembly of this. Since my departure I have lived in isolation, having left the public venues to those who think that with my departure and political sacrifice they will be able to save the Patriarchate and the remaining Armenians in Turkey. I stayed silent until now and did not wish to make their work more difficult by creating problems around myself. I did all this for the sake of that purpose, for which they are aiming and that I, too, sincerely desire. However, events until now showed that all this does not depend on the orientation of the Constantinople center, but on the overall policies of the Allied states; the recent change at the Patriarchate could neither assure the approval of the Vicar—despite earlier promises—nor put an end to the forced migration of our co-nationals from the countryside, nor provide for their comfort in Constantinople. In such a situation, where the present is pathetic and the future uncertain, I do not know what possible benefit could be expected by raising authority and competence issues. Our scattered emigrant communities and I have our attention fixed on developments in Constantinople, and we are making every effort not to make the lives of the scattered fragments of our people still living in Turkey

even more difficult and bitter. I think that our position deserves appreciation and not criticism. It should be remembered that I have stayed here until now, still keeping the title of the Patriarch of Constantinople; I have completely stayed away from all initiatives and conflicts that might weaken the Patriarchal Throne of Constantinople. I conducted the duties of the Patriarch for several years and had the misfortune of witnessing the Nation's most bitter and most difficult days during my term; it would not cross my mind to cling to my title, as those around me know that [on several occasions] I have talked about resigning but not done it so as not to be thought of as a deserter from duty. No one should think that I am writing this letter for the love of office. I would, therefore, request that Your Grace and the Patriarchate's Joint Assembly not hurry to raise the issue with His Holiness the Catholicos, because [the Catholicos] is far away and does not have close connections with the external world in order to judge the present situation accurately. If the Patriarchate ever receives the blow of annulment, my intention has been—and it still is—not to leave our scattered communities without leaders until His Holiness the Catholicos makes a [new] arrangement, being assured that, if the Patriarchate keeps its existence and receives the right from Turkey to conduct the spiritual affairs of the Armenians outside of Turkey, then both I and the communities would obey, and I would immediately submit my definitive resignation. However, if you write to His Holiness the Catholicos despite my present request, receive orders from Him, and stir the communities by publicizing such orders, then you will be assuming the entire responsibility.

In the assurance that You will give serious consideration to this letter, prayerfully I remain,

Abp. Zaven

I had not received a response to this letter when I read in the newspapers published in Constantinople that allegedly I had given the authority to the Prelate of Thrace, Bishop Yervant, to assume additionally the pastorate of the Armenians in Old Greece. This compelled me to write a second letter, with the following content:

Varna, 9 March 1923

His Grace Bp. Kevork Aslanian
Patriarchal Vicar for the Armenians of Turkey—Constantinople

His Grace and My Brother,

I read in the Constantinople newspapers about my having given to the Prelate of Thrace, Bp. Yervant, the new duty of assuming the pastorate of the Armenians in Old Greece. This report, [apparently] emanating from the Patriarchate, was considered reliable and it led to various interpretations and comments. The Patriarchate appears to have considered this as an act aimed at weakening its authority, and it felt the need to make decisions and [give] orders to remove the mentioned Bishop from Athens and to replace him with Bp. Garabed.

I do not know on what basis the Patriarchate issued this report, which surprised me. Had the Patriarchate's administrators taken the trouble of looking at the records of past meetings, they would have seen that, in 1920, Bp. Yervant was appointed Prelacy Vicar for the unified Prelacies of A[driano]ple and Rodosto [Tekirdagh], with

pastoral rights over the Armenian refugees in Old Greece. This appointment was communicated to the Greek government and approved by them. [The appointee] traveled to Echmiadzin, where he was ordained a Bishop; he has been conducting his duties with this rank, frequently visiting Selanik and Athens, and had audiences with the Greek government and the Greek king.

So, what new authority *could* I have given to a Prelate who had been appointed three years ago to this post? After the tragic incident in Izmir, Bp. Ghevont took refuge in Athens, where he approached the country's government and was recognized by them as the spiritual leader of the Armenian refugees—who are by and large *Izmirtsis*—and communicated this to the Patriarchate. Nevertheless, no decision was taken in regard to him, inasmuch as the fate of the Armenians taking refuge there was not yet decided, and a church organization could not yet be set up for them. [Until recently], Bp. Yervant was responsible for the refugees in Western Thrace and Macedonia, and Bp. Ghevont for the Armenians in and around Athens. I intended to separate Athens and the [Aegean] Islands and make them into a separate Prelacy. I corresponded with Bp. Ghevont, but no decision was taken and no initiatives were made.

This being the situation, I regret very much that those in charge of the Patriarchate's affairs—instead of behaving in a lawful manner—mixed my name up in this affair and did so publicly, because they seem to consider me an opponent, and apparently this is the dominant mentality at the Patriarchate at present.

I earnestly plead with You and the Assemblies to dedicate yourselves to the job of mitigating the Nation's boundless pain and not to be inclined to stir worthless disputes. I already wrote to you about these in my letter of the 24th of February, and I am repeating it now. I inform you that, if new occasions are created that harm my prestige, I shall be obliged to respond to you publicly and to leave all responsibility upon you.

Abp. Zaven

Bp. Kevork Aslanian answered my two letters with a letter of his own, dated the 21st of March 1923 and having the following content:

Your Beatitude Abp. Zaven Yeghiayan [*sic*]—Varna

We have received Your Beatitude's February 24 and March [9] letters, and presented them to the consideration of the National Central Administration's Joint Assembly.

The Assembly made these letters the object of its consultations and observed the following: upon the desire expressed by all classes for the resignation of Your Eminence from the office of Patriarch, Your Beatitude convoked a session of the National Representative Assembly on the 8th of December [1922], at which all 28 members present—without exception—considered Your resignation as helpful and [even] essential for the preservation of the Armenian nation's survivors and the Armenians of Constantinople; [the Assembly] communicated this to Your Eminence through His Grace [Bp.] Mesrob Naroyan and Mr. B. [Barkev] Papazian, and its Office announced it; two days after this, Your Eminence suddenly left the capital city,

having sent a letter to the National Assembly Chairman dated December 9th, indicating that You had “withdrawn from office.”

The Assembly considered that, upon the vacating of the Patriarchal Throne in this manner, the clearly stated provisions of Art. 2 of the National Constitution [took effect]; an election for a Vicar was conducted legally and the *mazbata*³⁴⁵ was presented to the government; the 31 deputies present at the National Assembly’s 5th of January [1923] session unanimously approved this election, and, in this way, Your Eminence’s duty as Patriarch has truly and legally come to an end.

The Assembly also observed that, since the Vicar’s election, the government has started to demonstrate goodwill toward the Armenians, and we are enjoying the benefits already; that the Administrative Assemblies—together with their Supervisory Councils and auxiliary entities—are continuing to function regularly and legally, cognizant of their duties and mandates, and driven only by a desire to help; and that all their actions and initiatives are congruous with the requirements of legality.

The Assembly also considers it necessary to declare that none of its members nourishes any designs toward the person of Your Eminence and that the articles in the newspapers to which You have alluded have not emanated from the Patriarchate but are based on various sources of information reported by journalists. By communicating these considerations to Your Eminence, the Assembly has the full faith that from now on wrong steps will not be taken, so that the [National] Administration will not be endangered and the government will not have unnecessary suspicions toward the Armenians of Turkey—all of which are, naturally, the greatest wish of Your High Eminence, as well.

Greeting you in brotherly love and prayer, I remain,

Bp. Kevork Arslanian³⁴⁶

President of the National Central Administration’s Joint Assembly
and Patriarchal Vicar

For the sake of historical accuracy, I have reproduced here [below] the two letters I exchanged with Bp. Mesrob Naroyan about this time, which give an idea of the exchange of unofficial and amicable information simultaneous with the official communication:

20 March 1923, Péra

Personal

Your Beatific Eminence, Dear Archbishop Zaven,

We are pleased to know that You are in peace and good health in Your present solitary life.

The Joint Assembly took Your Eminence’s two letters under consideration today and decided to respond. As one of those who respect You, I considered it necessary to make some personal suggestions to You at this time.

First, I would want you to understand our situation and not be hurt by the contents of the response. In view of the dominant mentality and conditions around us, the best thing is for Your Eminence to remain silent and retired.

Second, the Joint Assembly has always had respect for Your Eminence and, when confronted with fabrications about *financial abuses* and apostasy connected with your

recent departure, it defended Your Eminence's dignity against these malicious defamations.

Third, most of the Armenians of Constantinople do not support You. This is not because you are a traitor or a criminal vis-à-vis the Nation but because of a [familiar] historical situation, whereby responsible leaders in office during revolutionary times have always been subjected to criticism and diatribe. There are numerous individuals today who wish to accuse You in front of the National Assembly for responsibility in several tragedies. We, of course, are not of that persuasion, but You may be certain that, if the matter comes in front of the National Assembly, members attending the sessions will come forward to express themselves against You.

Among official circles here there is the prevalent conviction that the Patriarchate has no legal basis anywhere outside of Turkey. It is a different matter that His Holiness the Catholicos of All Armenians, taking advantage of Your Eminence's presence, may create and organize a post of Catholicosal Representative or Vicar.

The assortment of things said on the occasion of Bp. Yervant's arrival in Athens are the opinions of the newspapers. The Patriarchate has no part in them.

I am certain that Your Eminence—guided by prudence, wisdom, and experience—would not wish to create a confrontation between Yourself and the present National Authorities in Constantinople—a development that could have tragic consequences for all Armenians.

People here have lost all their faith in the National Delegation, because pro or con expressions by Turkish Armenians do not appear to have any effect on its actions.

I am writing You these lines without any secondary motives, as a person familiar with the situation and concerned about the Nation's interests. I am not an apologist for the present Vicar or the Political Assembly, and I am not an admirer of everything they do; they certainly have their faults and deficiencies. However, Your Eminence knows that the best thing is to keep quiet and wait, until the horizon clears and the sun of peace rises, so that our long-suffering Nation can see the level road on which it will henceforth travel.

I repeat once again that I wrote these bold lines out of respect for You, and I am certain that you will read them in this conviction.

With my respects and prayers, I remain,

Bp. Mesrob Naroyan

I responded to this letter immediately, as follows:

Dear Bishop Mesrob,

I received with thanks your letter of the 20th of March. The decision of the Joint Assembly also was communicated to me with a letter bearing the same date. I was surprised at its tone and contents. The evidence being put forth about my resignation would not withstand critical inspection. [The letter] talks about the Constitution, yet expresses opinions contrary to it. The Assembly does not know that the only body that could consider me resigned or assess the meaning of my letter is the General Assembly, but the latter did not have the legal quorum after my departure from Constantinople. Unofficial opinions or desires are the legal values of the Assembly members. I hear that there were those who would force me to resign by

making accusations; I have nothing to say about this, except that those deciding to do such a thing should accept to be judged by history.

The prevalent mentality is very natural, and I was expecting it already, as I discussed with the Chairman of the Political Assembly when I was in Constantinople. The Armenians of Constantinople need to make an about-face to save themselves and submit [to the authorities]. In such an event, naturally all the blame will be placed on the leader, especially when he is absent and gone abroad.

Like the people of Constantinople, the official [Armenian] organizations cannot behave any differently, either. They will condemn and curse me and—when obliged—will consider me resigned or even expelled, but they should have done this when I had made a statement or performed an action. Why did they feel the need to ascribe things to me and create problems of authority over the issue of the Prelacy of Greece and publish this in the newspapers? They should have publicized the contents of my last letters and informed the newspapers of their decisions. If both the Joint Assembly and You wish and consider it beneficial to the Nation that I remain silent and not start disputes or confrontations, shouldn't the Vicar be made to understand the same thing, so that he will be more circumspect on this matter and not do things that provoke me, such as causing things to be published.

Understanding well the delicate position of the [Armenian] official organizations in Constantinople and the possibility that any expression on my part could be harmful to them and to our people [in Turkey], I have behaved with extreme prudence until now and lived entirely isolated. I did not even become involved in the Nation's affairs in Varna, refused invitations from other cities in Bulgaria, and did not go to Sofia in order not to have contacts with [Bulgarian] official circles. I consider my 25 years of active service to the Nation quite sufficient, and I await the signing of the Peace Treaty so that I may decide where I will spend the last years of my life. I have had enough of the glory and the pain of the Patriarch's office, and you may be certain and also assure the Vicar that I am not entertaining notions of violating your jurisdiction or of acting as Patriarch [whether here or] elsewhere.

In accordance with your wishes, I shall continue my silence, hoping that some day the Vicar's appointment will be approved and that the Patriarchate will remain as before—albeit in a skeletal state—so that I will be freed from my historical responsibility.

Having decided not to write again to the Patriarchate, I request that You speak to the Trusteeship of the Armash Monastery and let them know that the familiar package [belonging to] the Monastery, which they had requested from me through a lieutenancy letter, is with me and at their disposition, and I am ready to remit it here to a person of their choice, as soon as possible.

Abp. Zaven

In this way, my second term of duty as Patriarch was coming to an end. From this point on, I considered myself freed from official duties and disposed to serve the Nation and the Church in other ways.



The Byzantine lighthouse of Kez-Kulesi (Maiden Tower), where Zaven Patriarch boarded the boat to Varna.

VI. After My Withdrawal from the Patriarchate

My arrival in Varna on the 12th of December 1922 was the beginning of a new life for me. Accustomed to an active life, and still energetic, inactivity was difficult for me to take, but the circumstances obliged me to this inactive life, at least temporarily, while I awaited the outcome of the Lausanne Conference.

After seeking asylum in Varna, I isolated myself at a summer resort near the city. I kept my contact with the National Delegation, in particular by corresponding with its Vice President, Kapriel Noradungian, who had become the Delegation's leader after Boghos Pasha's withdrawal and had gone to Lausanne to present the Armenians' demands at the Peace Conference.

As is well known, the Lausanne Peace Conference started on the 20th of November 1922. The negotiations came to a dead end and stopped on the 5th of February 1923, and the delegates returned to their countries. On the 24th of April [1923], the Conference resumed its sessions. They were concluded on the 24th of July [1923], when the Lausanne Peace Treaty was signed, and the Armenian Question was once and for all buried.

During this period of waiting, in order not to make my presence altogether useless, I became interested in the Armenian refugees who had taken refuge in Bulgaria. There was a crisis in the air, because the government wanted to take the refugees away from the cities and disperse them in the villages. A telegram had just been received from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which was ordering these refugees to be sent to the provinces in the interior and to have those who resisted be expelled from the country.

At the first instance, on the 17th of December 1922, I went to the [Armenian] Church [in Varna] and counseled the parishioners to obey the Bulgarian government's orders, to be grateful, and to get along well with the Bulgarian population. After the service, I suggested to the Parish Council and the Refugees' Commission to send one or two [of their members] to Sofia to obtain the central government's permission for the recently arrived Armenian refugees to be able to stay in Varna and not to be taken to other places. They did as I suggested; a day or two later [a delegation consisting of] two Armenians and one Bulgarian [was] sent to Sofia to make this appeal.

On the other hand, considering that my presence in Bulgaria could play a beneficial role through my acquaintance with Bulgarian government [personalities], on the 11th of January 1923, I sent a letter to Dikran Zaven³⁴⁷ in Sofia, addressed to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Dashkalov.

With this letter, I reported that, because of political events, I had been obliged to abandon my seat and take refuge on Bulgarian soil, which was so dear to our people, and that now it was one of my sacred duties to come to Sofia to personally express our unfortunate people's feelings of gratitude for the kind hospitality and the amenities put at their disposal. I also said that I wished to sincerely congratulate [Dashkalov] for having survived the assassination attempt staged against him, but that—regretfully—circumstances forced me to stay where I

was. I expressed my hope that I would be able, quite soon, to pay my respects and feelings of gratitude to him in person. I concluded my letter by greeting Bulgaria in his person.

Shortly after this, still concerned by the well-being of the refugees, on the 23rd of January 1923, I wrote to Noradungian in Paris, asking him what he thought about the refugees who had come to Bulgaria by way of Thrace. Noradungian sent me instructions on the 14th of February [1923], requesting me to send him a report with the following information:

1. Cities and villages in Bulgaria where there are Armenian refugees; the number of persons and families at each locality, with details as to men and women aged 18 years and above, and those younger than 18 ;
2. Native lands of these refugees, indicating cities and villages;
3. Numbers of refugees who are already settled and of those who would be willing to move when a suitable destination is chosen and facilities provided for their travel;
4. Numbers of agricultural workers and artisans, giving details as to their specializations;
5. Numbers of orphans, their ages and genders, and organizations responsible for their care.

The Armenians of Bulgaria had established a Central Refugee Commission in Sofia. I relayed these instructions to this Commission so that it would put together the information requested. I also gave to the Commission two checks that had been sent to me, one from a fundraiser held in Egypt (200 British pounds) and the other sent from Anvers by Chamkertan (600 francs). In this way, these sums would have served their purpose.

On the 8th of October 1923, I wrote another letter to Noradungian, asking him to approach the governments of England and France so that, through their friendly requests, [the authorities in] Bulgaria and Rumania would stop deporting the Armenian refugees.

An equally important issue for the Armenians in Bulgaria was for the government to recognize the [Armenian] Prelacy and for an [Armenian] National Authority to be created with its own ratified constitution. Efforts had been made to obtain these several times in the past, but nothing had been accomplished.

Now that the Constantinople Patriarchate had been disabled and was unable to help the Bulgarian-Armenians, it had become all the more essential to have such structures. I therefore sent out invitations signed by the pastor of Varna, Priest Sarkis, to invite the following persons to a meeting at my residence on the 22nd of April 1923: Avedis Terzibashian, Avedis Manugian (Parish Council [member]), Apkar Papazian, Kapriel Boyajian, Hayg Papazian, Ghazaros Tahmizian (Parish Council [member]), Madteos Nalbandian, Murad Yeranosian, Mihran Zkonian, Harutyun Papazian, Sarkis Krikorov, Sahag Der Tovmasian, Setrag Karian, Sdepan Kanarian, Vahan Mazmanian, [and] Onnig Ajemian. Of those invited, Karian and H. Papazian³⁴⁸ could not attend because they were away from the city, and Krikorov was absent without giving a reason. Consultations took place about the General Assembly of Bulgarian-Armenians, which was planned to take place in Filibeh.

A committee was formed to deal with the preliminaries [of the General Assembly], having as its members: Dr. H. Papazian, K. Boyajian, M. Zkonian, O. Ajemian, Murad Yeranosian, Gh. Tahmizian, S. Kanarian, and Pilibbos Halajian. During my time in Varna, this commission did not do anything. Indeed, members Yeranosian, Zkonian, and Kanarian

resigned at the very first meeting (on the 29th of April). I do not know what happened after my departure, but it is well known that, for a long time, the Bulgarian government recognized Abp. Sdepannos Hovagimian as the Prelate of the Armenians in Bulgaria, and in this way the local Armenians [enjoyed the benefits of] having a recognized National authority.

While I was in Bulgaria, certain people had written to me letters expressing the opinion that it would be good if I were to move to Europe to be located near the National Delegation. These [same] persons wanted to see me as the Prelate of the Armenians in Europe so that my political activity would not provoke [the Turkish authorities] and not endanger the Armenians in Turkey.

I wrote to one of these friends that, if my presence in Europe was considered beneficial, I would be ready to accept the mentioned position temporarily, and, because financial means were lacking for the formation of such a new Prelacy—following a suggestion made to me—I proposed to assume the position of the Pastor of London, because Kalusd Gyulbengian³⁴⁹ was already paying its expenses. An opportunity for doing this was at hand, because that position had been vacated because of the scandal surrounding Apel Vartabed. I presented these ideas to Noradungian so that I could act according to his advice. K. Noradungian wrote me a letter dated the 6th of April 1923, in which, among other things, he wrote the following.

As for the Pastorate of London and the Prelacy General of Europe, I shall speak with Mr. Kalusd Gyulbengian on the first opportunity, but, from what I have heard, Mr. Gyulbengian is extremely annoyed by the well-known scandal and does not wish to hear any comments or remarks on matters having to do with the Church.

In any event, it is certainly necessary to find a solution to this problem, because we have heard that our co-nationals in London do not wish to frequent church as long as it has not been anointed by a worthy clergyman.

Nothing was done about this issue until the signing of the Lausanne Treaty on the 23rd of July [1923], and, after that, thinking about it was no longer indispensable.

During my stay in Bulgaria, I did not shirk from my clergyman's duties of consoling the people. Whenever I had the occasion, I took part in church ceremonies and gave sermons.

From the 10th to the 14th of August 1923, I went to Rusjuk [Ruse], where I officiated at Mass and preached. On the 20th of August 1923, I moved to Sofia, where I also did what I could to console the people.

During my stay in Bulgaria, with medical advice, I spent from the 9th of May to the 3rd of June [1923] at thermal baths, traveling over two different paths for going and returning.

Once the Lausanne Treaty was signed, the period of waiting was over for me. I decided to retire to Baghdad and withdraw from active life.

On the 22nd of October 1923, I left Sofia and traveled to Selanik [Thessaloniki] by way of Nish—Sgyub [Skopje]—Gevgeli [Gevgelija]. On the 7th of November [1923], I sailed to Piraeus, Athens ([where I stayed] from the 7th to the 25th of November) and to Alexandria (the 27th of November). On the 4th of December, I arrived in Cairo, where I stayed for one month and worked on the gift of the Melkonian [brothers].³⁵⁰

On the 4th of January 1924, I went to Jerusalem, where I also stayed for about one month. On the 29th of January, I left Jerusalem and traveled through Beirut and Trablus [Tripoli] (February 3rd) to Aleppo (February 5th), where I stayed for 20 days.

On the 26th of February, I arrived at Der Zor, then continued on to Anah and Hit, and reached Baghdad on the 29th of February, where I intended to wait for better days.

I consider myself obliged to state—with gratitude—that, during this long trip, various classes of society everywhere showed me respect, sympathy, and homage. I should mention with special gratitude the honors my late teacher Patriarch Yeghishé Turian bestowed upon me in Jerusalem by voluntarily withdrawing from his rightful role as the master of ceremonies and lending me his throne during the Christmas celebrations.

I celebrated Mass and preached in every city on my way. I uttered words of encouragement to our disillusioned people and to the masses of refugees. I took an interest in their pain, and I did what I could not to let them fall into despondency or despair.

Everywhere I went, I visited all the institutions of the Nation—prelacies, churches, schools, etc. I also visited all the refugee camps—among them, those in Selanik, Piraeus, Athens, Beirut, and Aleppo—and I consoled the residents. On my path, I also came across several orphanages that had moved abroad and received information on them from those in charge.

Having witnessed the sufferings of my flock's dispersed remnants, I was now withdrawing to Baghdad grief stricken and with a broken heart.

After about eight months in Baghdad, following Garabed Melkonian's invitation, I left the city on the 4th of December 1924, went through Damascus and arrived on the 12th of December 1924 in Alexandria. From there, I left on the 21st of December [1924] for Cyprus, where I stayed until the 16th of May 1925.

The arbitration process in Alexandria between Garabed Melkonian and Artaki Melkonian ended in a reconciliation agreement being signed on the 23rd of May 1925. After this, I went to Jerusalem to visit Patriarch Turian. On the 4th of July [1925], according to the project that had been developed, I returned to Cyprus together with Garabed Melkonian and Mushegh Seropian. On the 18th of July [1925], I visited Jerusalem again with the proposal to place the Melkonian Gift under the Jerusalem Patriarchate's trusteeship.

Patriarch Turian and his advisors presented various excuses and did not wish to undertake this trusteeship, and I returned quickly to Cyprus. After staying there for several days, on the 1st of August [1925], I went to Alexandria, because it had been decided that the Melkonian Gift was to be placed under the trusteeship of the [Armenian] General Benevolent Union, and their representative Krikor Sinabian had arrived in Alexandria to discuss this matter. After an agreement had been reached, I returned to Cyprus on the 20th of August 1924.

On the 3rd of December 1925, I returned to Egypt, because of a dispute that had arisen surrounding the gift and because of Garabed Melkonian's inconstant character. I arranged for the definitive removal of M. Seropian and G. Aghlaghanian from this project. On the 28th of December 1925, I arranged for the official transfer of the gift's trusteeship to the AGBU, and I returned to Cyprus as the Director of the [Melkonian] Institution. In connection with this work, the AGBU declared me a "Benefactor Member."

Once again in connection with the same gift, I traveled to Egypt between the 20th of January and the 11th of February 1926. From there I left for Cyprus and, toward the end of April, traveled to Beirut (April 21st), Aleppo (April 24th), Zahleh (April 28th), and Jerusalem (May 4th) to collect more than 300 orphans (boys and girls) for the Melkonian Institution. Just as the Institution had been more or less put into motion, Mr. Melkonian once again caused some agitation. On the 2nd of December 1926, I left Cyprus for Egypt, where, on the 15th of December 1926, a new contract was signed on the Melkonian Gift. In order not to

endanger the project, on the 18th of December 1926, I resigned from the position of Director Plenipotentiary of the Melkonian Institution, but I retained the title of President of the Trust. In this capacity, I was forced to settle in Cairo, where I remained until May 1927.

Thereafter, I resigned from that post, and, on the 16th of May 1927, I left for Baghdad, where I remain to this date. I have not held an office since [my return to Baghdad], despite being twice elected Prelate of Baghdad, as I am physically unable of holding office [now], especially since 1932, when I lost my voice after the operation on my throat.³⁵¹

Epilogue

Twenty-five years after witnessing the greatest tragedy befallen his people, we find this tormented Church figure withdrawn in retirement at his native Baghdad in peace with himself, resigned to his nation's cruel fate.

Baghdad of the 1940s had a flourishing Armenian community, tracing its roots to the 17th century. In this ancient Armenian “diaspora” community, now bolstered by the “remnants of his flock” from the Anatolian homeland, we find him leading a quiet life surrounded by the families of his nephews and nieces, several of whom had shared in his tribulations in Constantinople, in his exile across Anatolia and Syria, and on his subsequent “wanderings” in the wilderness of the new Armenian diaspora communities.

Soon after leaving Constantinople, his voice began to deteriorate, obliging his retirement from active Church life, particularly after 1932, when he underwent surgery of the larynx, depriving him permanently of the ability to speak. Years later, when he began to work, silently, on his memoirs, he would go into seclusion, writing, for days, emerging only to have his niece, Aznive, read to him aloud his hand-written manuscript, listening eagerly to his words. In those years, he would visit Jerusalem to review documents and verify records and spend summer months in Lebanon working on his memoirs.

He did not appear in public very much, except on religious celebrations at Church and occasionally at special community gatherings. On such occasions, it was not uncommon to see the wistful scene of a forlorn stranger, perhaps a survivor from Van, Erzurum, or some little-known hamlet, slowly approach him to murmur some respectful words or share some personal recollection—as if that brief encounter, somehow, incarnated for them their past better years.

He was often seen alone on his evening walks along the Tigris river, stopping now and then and staring at the river, as if listening ... listening to voices in the waters from his ancestral highlands of Anatolia.

He passed away peacefully in Baghdad on June 4th, 1947, and was taken to Jerusalem for interment alongside his peers.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”

II Timothy 4:7

Annotations

- ¹ [Throughout the text, “Nation” is used in the sense of Millet of the late Ottoman period. Because the Armenian Nation is the primary concern of this work, the use of “Nation” and “National” throughout are understood to pertain to the “Armenian Nation.” In the exclusive sense, the “Armenian Nation” consists of the members of the Armenian Apostolic Church living in the Ottoman Empire; more inclusive definitions consider non-Apostolic Armenians (Catholic and Protestant) of the Empire and the Armenians of non-Ottoman lands (Russia, Iran) also to be covered by the concept.]
- ² [Following is the timeline of the Armenian Patriarchs of Constantinople: Khrimian 1869–1873, Varzhabedian 1874–1884, Vehabedian 1885–1888, Izmirlian 1894–1896, Ormanian 1896–1908, and Turian 1909–1911.]
- ³ [The ancient name for the region encompassing present-day Iraq. The name Mesopotamia is derived from the Greek word, which means “land between the two rivers,” referring to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.]
- ⁴ [*Kahana* (Arm.): Married clergyman of the Armenian Apostolic Church, who is authorized to perform all the sacraments and orders except the ordainment of other clergymen.]
- ⁵ [Mihran Hrachya Svajian, a well-known educator and graduate of Noubar Shahnazarian School in Constantinople, was sent by Patriarch Nerses Varzhabedian of Constantinople to Baghdad in December 1876 to establish the Tarkmanchats School for Boys. He later established the first school for girls named Zabelian School in 1903 after the daughter of its benefactor, Ovaness Iskenderian. Svajian later taught French in local Arab schools and was decorated with Legion d'Honneur. He died in October 1915 in Ras ul Ain (Der Zor).]
- ⁶ [The United Fellowship (Miatsyal Ėngerutyun) was formed on June 1, 1881, by the union of three educational organizations whose founders were Mgërdich Portukalian, Arpiar Arpiarian, Minas Cheraz, and other prominent Armenian personalities. The Fellowship eventually established 85 schools throughout the Armenian provinces.]
- ⁷ [The village of Armash, to the north of Iznik (Nicomedeia), is believed to have been established by Armenians from Marash who fled the harsh conditions imposed upon them in their hometown in early 15th century. In 1416, the Armenians built a chapel dedicated to the Holy Mother of God. By the year 1611, this chapel had turned into the Holy Mother of God monastery. On March 31, 1889, upon the initiative of Patriarch Khoren Ashëkian, it was decided to choose the Monastery of Armash as a locale for a seminary to provide the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire with learned clergymen. The Seminary was inaugurated on September 18, 1889, having Archbp. Maghakia Ormanian as its Superintendent. The Seminary functioned until 1916. During this period of 27 years, the Seminary enrolled close to 300 students, 36 of whom became vartabeds or celibate clergymen (13 of these were martyred during the 1915 Turkish crimes against Armenians).]
- ⁸ [Maghakia Ormanian (1841–1918), a Constantinopolitan by birth, was brought up as an Armenian Catholic in Rome. His conversion into the Armenian Apostolic Church took

place in 1879 in Constantinople. After serving as Primate of Erzurum for many years, he first taught theology at Echmiadzin and then became Dean of the Armash Seminary in 1890. Ormanian was elected Patriarch of Constantinople in 1896, a position he maintained until 1908. His most valuable work was his monumental *Azkabadum* (History of the Nation), which was published in three volumes.]

- 9 [Vartabed (Arm.): Celibate clergyman of the Armenian Apostolic Church, who has been ordained to this rank subsequent to the completion of theological studies corresponding to a doctorate.]
- 10 [On the 14th of August 1896, a group of 31 Tashnagtsagan and Hënchagian freedom fighters, headed by Papken Syuni, broke into the Ottoman Bank to impose upon the Ottoman government the implementation of the Armenian Reforms. The incident led to the killing of close to 5,000 Armenians in Constantinople and the vicinities.]
- 11 The first victim of Chamchian's hatred toward the Seminary was my classmate Mashdots Vartabed Papazian (born Nerses Papazian, martyred in 1915), who committed the mistake of addressing Vicar Chamchian in a letter as "Most Reverend" (*kerabadiv*), instead of the latter's preferred "Most Gracious" (*partsrashnorh*). Mashdots Vartabed had to flee to Bulgaria to escape Vicar Chamchian's wrath.
- 12 Apig Unjian was sincerely interested in seeing clergymen trained and, to this end, would cover the Seminary's budget deficit every year. Unjian detested the ignorant bishop, Chamchian, who had long been seeking the patriarchal throne, without any success.
- 13 [Other reliable sources indicate that Patriarch Zaven had six classmates: Papken Gyuleserian, later Coadjutor Catholicos of Cilicia; Khosrov Behrigian, later Primate of Kayseri and a victim of the 1915 Turkish crimes against Armenians; Mushegh Seropian, later Primate of Adana; Sëmpad Saadetian, later Primate of Erzurum; Mashdots Papazian; and Aghan Hamamjian, whose name the Patriarch mentions as his colleague in Armash.]
- 14 [The Sanasarian College of Garin was established in 1881 by the benefactor Mgërdich Sanasarian. It played an important role in the upbringing and education of young Armenians who assumed leading positions within the Armenian communities of the Ottoman Empire.]
- 15 [The first short-lived Ottoman Constitution was adopted in 1876.]
- 16 [*Srpazan* (Arm.): His Grace, His Eminence.]
- 17 Ormanian had methodically kept all the letters I addressed to him, and these are now available at the Nubarian Library in Paris. Regretfully, I have lost Ormanian's extremely important and significant responses to me.
- 18 [Nazaret DagHAVarian (1862–1915) was a scientist, author, and editor. He was a founding member of the Armenian General Benevolent Union and as such was instrumental in establishing branches of the Union throughout Turkey. He served as a member to the Ottoman Parliament until his arrest and murder during the massacres perpetrated against Armenians.]
- 19 [The issue of Armenian Reforms surfaced at the end of the Russo-Turkish war of 1878, during negotiations, which resulted in the Treaty of San Stefano (March 3, 1878) and its Article XVI. The article stated: "Since the evacuation of Russian troops from the territories which they occupy in Armenia and which ought to be returned to Turkey could give rise to conflicts and complications prejudicial to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte, with no further delay, promises to bring about the improvements and reforms called for by local needs in provinces inhabited by

Armenians, and to guarantee their safety against the Kurds and the Circassians.” Article XVI, however, was soon changed into Article LXI during the Congress of Berlin on July 8, 1878. This version bound the Porte to introduce “without further loss of time such ameliorations and reforms as are called for by the local conditions of the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to take measures to protect them against the Circassians and Kurds.” Thereafter, the Armenian Reforms became a pretext in the hands of the European powers to intensify of their interventions on behalf of the Ottoman Empire’s Christian population. One such intervention was in May 1895, when the British, French, and Russians called for reforms in the Armenian provinces. The call was answered by widespread massacres organized by Abdülhamid II, claiming the lives of at least 300,000 Armenians. The Balkan War, 1912–1913, created a favorable atmosphere for the revival of the Armenian Question in order to improve the conditions of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. A reforms project, prepared by the Russian First Dragoman Andre Mandelstam and Armenian representatives, was introduced and discussed in Constantinople in the meeting of the ambassadors of the Triple Entente and Triple Alliance. The project suggested the formation of one province from the six Armenian vilayets (Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir, Kharput, and Sivas) under either an Ottoman Christian, or a European governor general to be appointed by the powers for five years. Germany opposed the project and succeeded in pressuring Russia to remodel it. In the final reforms agreement signed between Russia (on behalf of the powers) and Turkey on the 8th of February 1914, there was no mention of Armenia and Armenians. The agreement was reduced to reforms in the six vilayets of Eastern Anatolia by grouping these six vilayets into two provinces under two European inspectors general to be nominated by the powers and appointed by the sultan.]

²⁰ [The Armenian National Delegation was created on the 10th of November 1912, when Catholicos Kevork V invited Boghos Nubar to head it and to advocate the Armenian problem before European powers that were discussing the Balkan War in London. It was initially comprised of Archbishop Kevork Utujian of Paris, primate of the Armenians in Europe; Yakub Artin Pasha of Egypt, a founder of the Armenian General Benevolent Union and the president of the Egyptian Academy; Minas Cheraz of Paris, secretary of the Armenian Delegation to the Berlin Congress in 1878; and Harutyun Mosdichian of London. The Delegation’s aim was to secure reforms in the Armenian provinces of the Ottoman Empire, based on the Treaty of Berlin and the reforms project of 1895, under collective supervision of the powers. Asking for autonomy or independence was not part of the proposals of the delegation. The Delegation’s mission ended with the agreement Turkey signed on the 8th of February 1914 with European powers, undertaking the implementation of Armenian Reforms under the supervision of two inspectors general. The outbreak of the Great War necessitated the activation of the Armenian National Delegation. On the 28th of April 1915, a telegram by Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar signaled the beginning of the second phase of the mission of the Armenian National Delegation.]

²¹ [Kevork V Surenyants (1847–1930) was installed Catholicos of All Armenians in Echmiadzin in 1911. As an advocate of the Armenian liberation movement, he initiated the formation of Armenian National Delegation under Boghos Nubar’s presidency.]

²² [Boghos Nubar (1851–1930) was the son of Nubar Pasha who had assumed the Egyptian premiership three times in the nineteenth century. A statesman, inventor, and industrialist who founded the Armenian General Benevolent Union in 1906 in Cairo—the largest

Armenian charitable organization functioning to date throughout the world. Boghos Nubar headed the Armenian National Delegation that was entrusted with the task of advocating Armenian rights before European powers. He is also one of two founders of the city Heliopolis in Egypt.]

- 23 [The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (*Hay Heghapokhagan Tashnagsutyun*)—also known as Tashnagsutyun or the Dashnaks—was established in Tiflis in 1890. The party's initial aim was to secure the freedom of Western Armenia (the six Armenian provinces) through the people's war. Later, the party gradually included in its goals the struggle against the czar's regime. The Party continues to function to date.]
- 24 I had met Vahan Papazian in Van and known him to be an honest person and of right mind. When I came to Constantinople, I saw that he was the Secretary of the Security Committee and kept him in that position to the end, disregarding remarks made by certain persons, which were occasioned more by his affiliation with Tashnagsutyun than by his personal traits.
- 25 *Vem* (Paris), No. 4, p. 73.
- 26 [*chëkësh, çikis* (Tur.): Unexpected harsh remark, scolding.]
- 27 [Ormanian's voluminous work on the history of the Armenian Church in conjunction with the history of the Armenian nation.]
- 28 [Vahan Tekeyan (1878–1945) was a poet, editor, educator, and political activist. He was a member of the Armenian National Delegation and was known as the Prince of Armenian Poets.]
- 29 This village also put up stiff resistance during the 1915 deportations.
- 30 Mustafa Abdul Khalik was Governor of Paghesh [Bitlis] in 1915 and became famous for his savagery. He was the Governor of Aleppo in 1916, when I was going through that area on my way to Baghdad as an exile. [Later], during the *Milli* [Turkish Nationalist] governments of Mustafa Kemal, he adopted the name of Abdul Khalik Renda and served as the President of the Grand National Assembly and Minister of Finance.
- 31 This Vartabed, who had been a monk at the Sts. Tateos and Partoghimeos Monastery of Urmia (Iran), was appointed the pastor of the Chmëshgadzak-Charsanjak Diocese and was martyred during the deportations.
- 32 During the deportations, Servet demonstrated hideous savagery by massacring the Armenians of the city and the Plain of Mush. A short time later, he met his death there. Abdul Khalik of Sghert and Servet of Mush were both natives of Rumelia. It is worth noting that all government officials with origins in Rumelia came to be known for their hatred toward the Christians. It appears that their hearts were bent on avenging the loss of their own native lands.
- 33 Bishop Nerses [Kharakhanian] was a monk from the Surp Garabed Monastery of Mush. In 1884, Maghakia Vartabed Ormanian, who was at that time the Prelate of Garin, appointed him Prelate's Vicar for Këghi. Bp. Nerses was then elected Prelate of Mush. During the reign of [Abdul] Hamid, he was exiled, first to Constantinople and then to Jerusalem. After the restoration of the Ottoman Constitution, he returned to Mush and resumed his duties as Prelate. In 1915, he died of typhus in Mush. During the deportations and massacres that took place shortly after his demise, the Muslims of Mush took his corpse out of the grave and savagely dragged it in the streets.
- 34 Vartan Vartabed was also a monk from the Surp Garabed Monastery of Mush. He was an active and diplomatic person who served the population of the Plain of Mush well and was

much loved by them. During times when the Prelate's seat was unoccupied, he was ready to act as Vicar. He also enjoyed the trust of the revolutionaries, who had been active in that region for many years, and he extended to them his clandestine assistance. At the same time, he knew how to get along with the local government and the Kurdish aghas of the region. In respect for his memory, it should be said that Vartan Vartabed was a more cautious and far sighted person than Kharakhanian, who did some imprudent things.

- 35 [Rupen Pasha (1882–1951) was a leader of the heroic self-defense of Sasun in 1915. Later, he was Minister of War of the First Republic of Armenia.]
- 36 [Located in modern Mush (the ancient Armenian province of Taron), it is sometimes also referred to as the Monastery of Glak (Glakavank) after Zenob Glak, the reputed fourth-century Syrian abbot of the Monastery of St. John the Baptist [Yovhannes], the Precursor [Karapet in Armenian], who, according to the medieval composition, *The History of Daron*, had been appointed the monastery's first abbot and also the first bishop of the Mamikonian tun [noble house] by Gregory the Illuminator, who is credited with the conversion of Armenia to Christianity in c. A.D. 301–314. The monastery as it stood at the beginning of the 20th century dates to the 10th century A.D. and was, according to Maghakia [Maghakia] Ormanian, one of the three holiest sites of pilgrimage for the Armenians. It was virtually destroyed c. 1915 as a result of the Genocide. See Levon Avdoyan, *Pseudo-Yovhannes Mamikonean: The History of Daron*, 1993.]
- 37 [The militia leader Rupen was not a “Pasha” (high Ottoman civilian or military official) but may have been called with this honorific by certain of his supporters.]
- 38 [Onnig Tertsagian (1870–1915), also known as Arshag Vramian, was one of the leaders of the Armenian liberation movement. He was one of the organizers of the capture of the Ottoman Bank and a founder of the daily newspaper, Hayrenik. He was member of the Turkish Parliament.]
- 39 [Reference to members of the Ittihad ve Terakkî Cemiyati (Committee of Union and Progress, in short CUP), founded in 1889 in Paris. Ittihad was the strongest of the groups who identified themselves as Young Turks (Jeunes Turques). Opposing the policies of Sultan Abdülhamid II, the young Turks sought the restoration of the constitution and parliament of 1876 to rule democratically. The CUP ultimately forced the Sultan to accept these demands in the so-called Young Turk Revolution of 1908.]
- 40 [*komitaji* (Tur.): member of a revolutionary committee in the late Ottoman period.]
- 41 [Mehmed Talaat/Talat Pasha (1874–1921) was the Ottoman Grand Vizier (1917–1918), and a member of the CUP triumvirate that ran the Ottoman government from 1913 to 1918. As minister of the interior, he played the most decisive role in the organization of the deportation and killing of Armenians. In November 1918, together with Enver and Jemal, he fled to Germany, where Soghomon Tehlirian assassinated him three years later.]
- 42 [The Armenian alphabet was invented by Mesrob Mashdots in A.D. 404 or 405. The first Armenian book was printed by Hagop Meghabard (The Sinful) in Venice in 1513.]
- 43 At that time, the Prelate of Papert was Kevork Vartabed Ipranosian, a former student of the Kevorkian Seminary of Echmiadzin. He had been Prelate's Vicar at Dikranagerd before I was appointed there. Shortly after my visit, though, he lost his mental capacities, moved to Constantinople, and died there.
- 44 Bekir Sami was a Circassian, born and educated in Russia, who had enjoyed the kindness of [the entrepreneur and philanthropist Mgërdich] Sanasarian. During the Ittihad governments, he had been Governor at Van, Trebizond, Aleppo, and elsewhere. The Kemalist

regime benefited from him, too, by sending him as Minister of Foreign Affairs to Moscow and London. He later fell from grace and met a miserable end.

45 During the deportations, according to a communiqué received at the Patriarchate from the [State] Superintendent of Religions, Kevork Vartabed Turian was sent from Trebizond to Erzurum. He was, however, murdered on the way.

46 [This academy, *Galgatayi Hayots Martasiragan Jemaran*, was founded by the Armenian community of Calcutta in 1821 to provide young Armenians with proper Armenian education. It continues to serve the Armenian communities of India and Iran.]

47 [Known also as Karekin Drabizoni, he was elected Patriarch of the Armenians in Turkey in 1950 and remained in that position until his death in 1961.]

48 Karekin Vartabed [Khachadurian] had earlier gone to Mush with the purpose of organizing an ecclesiastical school at the Surp Garabed [Monastery] but left without success.

49 [Armen Karo Pastërmajian (1873–1923) was one of the organizers of the Ottoman Bank incident who later became a member of the Ottoman Parliament. Later, he was appointed Ambassador of the First Republic of Armenia to the United States.]

50 Hamazasb Vartabed Yeghiseyan, an active churchman, was also martyred during the [1915] deportations.

51 [The official interpreters of consulates in countries where Arabic, Turkish, or Persian is spoken.]

52 Bishop Kapriel Jevahirjian was a good clergyman. He had been quite satisfied working as a preacher in the neighborhoods of Constantinople and had never served in the Provinces. He was a close relative of Kapriel Noradungian. For many years, he had been Patriarchal Vicar, in particular during the entire term of Patriarch Ormanian. Ormanian used to say, “I am very satisfied with him, as he does not take the initiative to do anything without having first consulted me.”

53 Rev. Arsen Shmavonian was the Pastor of the Péra Meeting House of the Armenian Protestants and the brother of Arshag Shmavonian, the Dragoman of the American Embassy.

54 The Certificate of Honorary Membership, illustrated by Panos Terlemezian, stated, “Armenian United Fellowship’s Certificate of Honorary Membership Given to His Beatitude Archbishop Zaven, Patriarch of the Armenians of Turkey, for the help he kindly extended for the advancement of the Fellowship.

Founding Assembly: S. Karayan (Chairman), Bp. Kapriel Jevahirjian (President)

Administrative Assembly: Hovh[annes] Isakulian (Secretary), A. Shmavonian (Chairman) Constantinople, the 19th of October 1913.”

55 [Throughout the text, *vosgi* (literally, “gold,” or “gold coin”), has been rendered with its customary equivalent, “pound.” The smaller denomination, *ghrush*, has been rendered with its customary equivalent, “piaster.” Other monetary units have been preserved and explained.]

56 [Mehmed V Reshad (1844–1918), after the abdication of his brother, Abdülhamid II, nominally reigned as Ottoman Sultan from 1909 to 1918, with the real political power being in the hand of the CUP triumvirate, Jemal, Enver, and Talaat.]

57 [The reference is to Sultan Abdulhamid II.]

58 As a striking demonstration of their pathetic condition, I should mention a visit I paid to the Crown Prince on the occasion of the *bayram* [Islamic holiday], at which the Greek Patriarch was also present. Yusuf Izzeddin was unable to distinguish between the

two of us, and he addressed me as the Greek Patriarch and the other clergyman as the Armenian Patriarch. This pathetic situation must surely have been the result of his alcoholism.

- 59 [The “Protestant Nation” was recognized by the Ottoman authorities in the mid-19th century. The “Nation Head” (Arm. *Azkabed*, Tur. *Millet Bashi*) was this community’s spiritual-administrative leader.]
- 60 [Dr. Hagop Zavriev (1866–1920) was a statesman and political activist who participated in the Armenian volunteers’ movement. He was Assistant Commissioner of the Russian government in Van, Khnis, Erzurum, and Trabzon.]
- 61 [Andre Mandelstam (1869–1939) was a Russian diplomat and historian who acted as the First Dragoman of the Russian Embassy in Turkey (1898–1915). During this period, he played an important role in the preparation of the Reforms Program to be implemented in the Armenian provinces of the Ottoman Empire. He was author of *The Fate of the Ottoman Empire*.]
- 62 [The Armenian National Constitution, ratified by the Ottoman Government in 1863, constituted the set of rules that regulated the administrative affairs of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.]
- 63 [The Armenian-populated provinces known as the six Eastern Anatolian Provinces were Erzurum, Bitlis, Van, Sivas, Mamuret-ul-Aziz (Kharpert), and Diarbekir.]
- 64 [Reference to the Ottoman government.]
- 65 [Russia, Great Britain, Germany, France, Austria, and Italy.]
- 66 [The Hünchags or Hunchaks were members of the Social Democrat Hünchagian Party (*Sotsial Temograd Hünchagian Gusagtsutyun*) established in Geneva in autumn 1887. The party aimed at liberating Western Armenia from Ottoman rule and establishing a socialist, independent Armenia. The Party continues to function to date.]
- 67 [Wherever double dates are given for an event, the first is according to the Ottoman Mali (Fiscal) calendar, and the second according to the Western (Gregorian) calendar.]
- 68 [Said Halim Pasha (1863–1921) was the Grand Vizier of the Ottoman State from 1913 to 1916. The grandson of Muhammad Ali Pasha, the renowned viceroy of Egypt, Said Halim Pasha opposed Ottoman participation in World War I, despite signing the treaty of alliance with Germany. After the armistice signed at Mudros (Oct. 30, 1918), he was banished to Malta by British authorities. On his release he went to Rome, where he was assassinated by Arshavir Shiragian.]
- 69 [In 1891, Sultan Abdul-Hamid II organized the Kurds into Hamidieh regiments to suppress the Armenian liberation movement, organize massacres in the Armenian-populated provinces, and fight against the Russian army.]
- 70 The Triple Alliance was formed by Russia, Great Britain, and France, the Triple Entente consisted of Germany, Austria, and Italy.]
- 71 [Vartkes Serengyulian (1871–1915), as one of the organizers of the Bank Ottoman incident in 1896 was arrested, imprisoned, and set free after the Young Turks’ revolution in 1908. Later, he was elected member to the Ottoman Parliament and became a victim of the 1915 Turkish crimes against Armenians.]
- 72 Those marked with a star were candidates elected from the Ittihad list.
- 73 Those interested will find particular details in Vahan Papazian’s series of articles in the four issues of the periodical, *Vém* (Paris), and also in Andre Mandelstam, *La Société des nations et les puissances devant le problème arménien*, (Paris: P. Pedone, 1926), Ch. 2.

- ⁷⁴ Sayabalian was exiled to Ayash and became one of the first victims of the April [1915] Crime.
- ⁷⁵ [The official daily of Tashnagtsutyun in Constantinople.]
- ⁷⁶ Catholicos Sahag, in his 7th [*sic*] of May 1914 letter to me from Sis, wrote with some bitterness, “We are suffering here (he is referring to the emotions caused among the public during the ordination of bishops); there you are being challenged; here ignorant laymen violate the hierarchical structure; there supposedly knowledgeable people challenge in the papers the head and representative of the Nation. Centuries follow centuries, new calamities surpass older ones, but, instead of learning from our misfortunes and tempering our pain, we are now publicly shaming one another in front of strangers.” [The date of the letter appears to be erroneous in the Armenian text; Sayabalian’s article having appeared on the 13th of May 1914, the Catholicos’s letter may have been dated the 17th of May 1914. Sahag II Khabayan (1849–1939) was installed Catholicos of the See of Cilicia in 1902. During his reign the seat was moved from Sis to Antelias near Beirut, Lebanon.]
- ⁷⁷ Chobanian, alarmed, wrote to me on the 13th of May from Paris, “I just read in *Pyuzantion* [Byzantium] the news of Your resignation, which I find extremely sad, even under the present catastrophic circumstances.... What will the European overseers think about us? Barely having touched their feet down in *Dajgasdan* [Turkey], they are witnessing our disunity.” [Arshag Chobanian (1872–1954) is known as the Cultural Ambassador of Armenians to France, a title given to this poet, translator, editor, and political activist as an appreciation for his relentless services in introducing the Armenian culture and cause to Europe.]
- ⁷⁸ [Kapriel Noradungian (1852–1936), who had been Minister of Public Works (1908) and of Foreign Affairs (1912) of the Ottoman Empire, succeeded Boghos Nubar as head of the Armenian National Delegation.]
- ⁷⁹ [The Armenian Brotherhood of St. James was established by Armenian monks in the fourth century in Jerusalem and derived its name from the St. James Monastery.]
- ⁸⁰ [The Central School was established in 1886 through the efforts of Patriarch Nerses Varzhabedian and Armenian intellectuals. It functions to date in Istanbul.]
- ⁸¹ [Reference to Gavriilo Princip (1894–1918), a South Slav nationalist who assassinated Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne at Sarajevo, Bosnia, on June 28, 1914, thus providing Austria-Hungary with an excuse to initiate hostilities against Serbia and pave the ground for World War I.]
- ⁸² Only much later did I see illustrated Turkish propaganda booklets containing various photographs of [Armenian] volunteer regiments.
- ⁸³ [The long reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, from 1876 until 1908, is known as the *Istibdad* [Absolutism] period in Ottoman history.]
- ⁸⁴ [*mutesarif* (Tur.): the highest administrative official in an Ottoman *sanjak*.]
- ⁸⁵ One *god* is equal to 12 *hokka* [*okka?*]. [“*Meri god*,” or “forest *god*,” may be a variant of *god*; and, *okka* or *okha* is a unit of measure equivalent to 1,283 grams.]
- ⁸⁶ [*bulghur*, *bulghur* (Tur.): Cracked wheat that can be cooked like rice; rendered in English as “bulgar/bulgur (wheat).”]
- ⁸⁷ One *part* is equal to 30 bundles or trusses.
- ⁸⁸ [*palan* (Tur.): Frameless soft saddle.]
- ⁸⁹ [*direm*, *dirhem* (Gk.>Ara.>Tur.): a unit of measure defined as 1/400 of *okka*, or approx. 3.2 grams.]

- 90 [A unit of weight differing in various places and times. In this case, possibly close to 354 grams.]
- 91 [*bedel* (Ara.>Tur.): literally, “value” or “worth”; in the military service context, the sum men under military service must pay to be exempted from all or part of the service.]
- 92 [The Armenian General Benevolent Union (*Haygagan Parekordzagan Ēnthanur Miutyun*) is the largest Armenian philanthropic association in the world and was founded by Boghos Nubar in 1906 in Cairo, Egypt. It was formed to, among other things, “help the Armenians of the East advance intellectually and morally; improve their financial conditions.” The organization continues its charitable and educational work among Armenians throughout the world to this day.]
- 93 [The date is evidently inaccurate in the Armenian original; possibly meant was the 29th or the 30th of August.]
- 94 [1 *kileh* is 24 *okha*.]
- 95 [*shayak* (Ara.>Tur.): coarsely woven, durable wool fabric.]
- 96 [Kizilbash (Red Head in Turkish) was a designation originally given to those Turkmen tribes who wore red caps as a support of the founders of the Iranian Safavid dynasty. Later, this name was applied to the followers of a Shii sect in eastern Asia Minor. It is noteworthy that Kizilbashes imprinted the sign of the cross on the dough during bread making and felt more comfortable in the presence of Christians than Turks.]
- 97 [*mejdieh* (Tur.): Silver coin worth 20 piasters, named after Sultan Abdul Mejid.]
- 98 [*khrkha* (Ara.>Tur.): cloth jacket, often with cotton padding, worn indoors to keep warm.]
- 99 [*colchek* (Turkish): a measuring cup for grain, sometimes used as a synonym for *kileh*.]
- 100 [*Eriza*, *Erizavank*, *Erznga*, and *Erzinjan* are variant names for an ancient city on the right bank of the upper Euphrates.]
- 101 [*kol-ordu*, *kolordu* (Tur.): Army Corps.]
- 102 [Here and elsewhere, emphases in quoted text have been preserved, as have emphases in the author’s own narrative.]
- 103 See *Haygashen* [Yearbook, Constantinople, 1922], p. 113-114.
- 104 [Ahmed Jemal Pasha (1872–1922) was a Turkish army officer who was made head of security forces in Constantinople and then minister of public works. After attempting unsuccessfully to invade Egypt during World War I, he was made governor of Syria. After the war he served the new Turkish Republic. He was assassinated by Sdepan Dzaghigian in Tiflis, Georgia.]
- 105 What were called “Ottoman warships,” it should be said, were nothing other than the German armored ships *Goeben* and *Breslau*, which had taken refuge in the Dardanelles after being harassed in the Mediterranean by Allied warships. Through a secret agreement, they were sold to the Ottoman government, and Ottoman flags were displayed on them. *Goeben* was renamed as *Yavuz*, and *Breslau* as *Tòghrud* [Turghud?] *Reis*. German marines remained on the ships, wearing the *fez* on their heads, and, with Enver’s agreement, they [continued to] serve their [own] fatherland and thrust Turkey into the war, which was contrary to the Turkish government’s wishes.
- 106 [This hospital was established in 1832 by Harutyun Amira Bezjian. It continues to provide medical services to the Armenians of Constantinople and the Turkish population at large.]
- 107 [The mention of philological skills here may have been intended to apply as much to Armenian as to Turkish and, to a lesser extent, to other regional languages.]

- ¹⁰⁸ [Krikoris Supreme Vartabed Balakian was one of the intellectuals who were rounded up on the night of the 24th of April 1915 by the Turkish authorities. His eyewitness accounts of barbaric Turkish acts were published in two volumes under the title *Hay Koghkotsa* (Armenian Golgotha). The first volume appeared in 1922 in Vienna, and the second was published after his death, which occurred in 1934 in Paris.]
- ¹⁰⁹ [Kevork IV Medzakordz (1813–1882), Catholicos of All Armenians in Echmiadzin (1866–1882), was appointed Prelate of the Diocese of Brusa twice: first in 1844 and then in 1861–1866. During the period from October 17, 1858, through April 21, 1860, he was elected Patriarch of the Armenians of Turkey.]
- ¹¹⁰ Bp. Knel Kalemkyarian also wrote a report about this incident, part of which was later published (see *Haygashen Darekirk* [Haygashen Yearbook], p. 119-121).
- ¹¹¹ [Dr. Johannes Lepsius (1858–1926) was a German Protestant theologian who devoted himself to helping the Armenians. He is the author of *Armenien und Europa* (1896) and *Deutschland und Armenien 1914–1918* (1919).
- ¹¹² [*Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, by Henry Morgenthau, formerly U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, New York, 1919.]
- ¹¹³ [The joint declaration published in *The Times*, on May 24, 1915, stated:
For the past month, Kurds and the Turkish population of Armenia have been engaged in massacring Armenians with the connivance and help of the Ottoman authorities. Such massacres took place about the middle of April at Erzurum, Dertshau [Derjan], Mush, Zeytun, and in all Cilicia.
The inhabitants of about a hundred villages near Van were all assassinated. In the town itself, the Armenian quarter is besieged by Kurds. At the same time, the Ottoman government at Constantinople is raging against the inoffensive Armenian population.
In the face of these fresh crimes committed by Turkey, the Allied Governments announce publicly to the Sublime Porte that they will hold all members of the Government, as well as such of their agents as are implicated, personally responsible for such massacres.]
- ¹¹⁴ [Talaat was assassinated by Soghomon Tehlirian in Berlin in March 1921, Said Halim by Arshavir Shiragian in Rome in December 1921, Behaeddin Shakir by Aram Yerganian in Berlin in April 1922, Jemal by Sdepan Dzaghigian in Tiflis in July 1922, and Enver by Hagop Melkumov in Bukhara in August 1922.]
- ¹¹⁵ See Vahan Menakhorian's article, *Potorgits arach* [Before the storm], in *Vem*, No. 6, where the author deals with the General Assembly of the Tashnagsutyun in Garin and attempts to justify the proposal.
- ¹¹⁶ [The person referred to was Adur Yasyan of Yozgad, also known as Arshavir Sahagian.]
- ¹¹⁷ In a series of articles published in the Constantinople daily *Son Posta* in 1937, the editor of the old *Tanin* newspaper, Muhyeddin Bergen, wrote the following, "The Armenians were going to stage uprisings everywhere, and, when the Russians attacked, they were going to shoot the Turkish army in the back." Supposedly Talaat Pasha twice sent Enver to warn me about this, and I paid no attention to him; instead I reiterated my own and my Nation's loyalty. This story is entirely a falsehood. From the beginning of the war until it ended, Enver Pasha never set foot in the Patriarchate, nor did he utter any such words to me during my visits to him. These words were said only by Talaat, in the circumstances described above.
- ¹¹⁸ Mihran Boyajian, a government employee, had accompanied Hoff to Van, and, after Hoff's recall, he remained in Paghesh as a judicial inspector. When Vramian arrived in

Paghesh under guard, Boyajian applied to Governor Mustafa Abdul Khalik to have Vramian released, but the Governor replied, "*Shimdi intikam zemanıdır*" (Now is the time for vengeance), and he did as he had planned. Boyajian related this to me this during my exile in Mosul.

- 119 [The heroic self-defense of the Armenians of Van lasted until May 3/16, 1915. On that day, the Armenians captured the city of Van, and the Turkish army retreated, hearing that the Russian troops and Armenian volunteers were approaching Van.]
- 120 [Enver Pasha (1881–1922), the Ottoman general and commander in chief, was a hero of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and the leader of the CUP coup of the 23rd of January 1913. Thereafter, until 1918, he governed the Ottoman Empire with Talaat and Jemal. Enver was a proponent of the Pan-Turkic (or Pan-Turanian) schemes for uniting the Turkic peoples of Central Asia with the Ottoman Turks. He was killed by Hagop Melkumov in action against the Russian Red Army in Tajikistan.]
- 121 This uncertainty lasted a long time. I received the first clear information during one of my visits to Enver Pasha, when he said, "We retook Van, but in the whole land we found only two old women—one Kurd and one Armenian."
- 122 The names of the arrested people have been printed numerous times in books and newspapers, and we will not repeat them here.
- 123 [The word used in the original, presumably already a translation from Turkish, is *megusatsnel*, could mean either "disperse" or "isolate."]
- 124 [Gomidas Vartabed Soghomonian (1869–1935) was composer, musicologist, singer, conductor, and educator. He collected thousands of Armenian folk songs throughout Turkey and saved them from perishing. Deeply affected by the loss of the Armenian intelligentsia and hundreds of thousands of fellow Armenians, Gomidas Vartabed lost his sanity and was taken to Paris where he passed away. His remains were transferred to Armenia in 1937.]
- 125 After the Armistice, Hrand Vartabed immediately abandoned the cowl and left Constantinople for America, where he made himself forgotten. The traitor Harutyun Mgërdichian had confined himself to his house, but he met his just punishment through an Armenian's bullet, which found him sitting by the window.
- 126 [Mustafa Kemal (1881–1938) was the founder and first President (1923–1938) of the Republic of Turkey. He encouraged the adoption of a European way of life for Turkey. In 1924 he abolished the caliphate and began sweeping reforms throughout Turkey. In 1934 he was given the name Atatürk ("Father of Turks") by the National Assembly.]
- 127 It is not clear whether the Der Nersesian in question is Dikran or Hrachya. Dikran [Der Nersesian] paid me a visit during the period before my exile, when I was under surveillance and no one dared to come and see me. I had not seen his face in one or two years, and I do not know whether he came to hearten me or to spy on me. Bp. Dajad's comment could also pertain to Hrachya [Der Nersesian], who had regular contact with government circles at that time. After the Armistice, when the Tashnagsagans started accusing him, Hrachya invited me to his sister's house on Medz-Gghzi [Büyük Ada, Prinkipo] and hosted me there for two days. The Police Chief Bedri once told Shirinian, "We announced that we needed 20 (twenty) Armenian spies, and 150 people submitted applications."
- 128 See *Haygashen*, p. 149–150. [Rohrbach is considered the mastermind behind the idea that led to the deportation of Armenians to Mesopotamia as a reinforcement to the Baghdad Railway project.]
- 129 [This article was originally published in German, then translated into Armenian and

now into English; inaccuracies may inevitably be compounded in such sequential translations.]

¹³⁰ [Trasdamad Ganayan (1883–1956) was the commander of the Second Armenian Volunteers' Regiment during World War I and a leader of the heroic battle of Bash-Abaran. Later, he was installed Minister of War of the First Republic of Armenia.]

¹³¹ Dr. Lepsius, in his book, *La Rapport sur le massacre d'Armenie* (p. 195), writes the following. "His Eminence Zaven's character is as far from the politician's crafty character as it could be. He suffered terribly from the fate imposed upon his Nation and his Church, but he had no idea how to resist the government's authority. He made all the appeals that were within his authority; he presented to the Ministers his people's tragic situation—with constant petitions and laments—until such time as the doors were closed in front of him and he was persuaded of the powerlessness of this position. Those whom he approached did not want to grant even his smallest requests, even those that dealt with the spiritual care of the deportees! Patriarch Zaven became an indomitable witness to his people's extermination, the degradation and annulment of the Patriarchate's rights, and the destruction of the Armenian nation's church organization."

¹³² [In the 1850s American missionaries, supported by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions from Boston, established their first missions in Kharpert (Harput) and its surrounding Armenian villages. Some years later they founded a theological school there, which by 1880, following funding from the US and local Armenians, was enlarged and expanded greatly and named Euphrates College, to provide secular education mostly in the sciences and liberal arts programs. Records indicate that during its best years more than one thousand male and female students were attending the college. The faculty included many of its illustrious alumni, who had pursued post-graduate studies at the great universities of the US and Europe. One of them was Arshag Shēmavonian who later was the dragoman at the US Embassy in Constantinople.]

¹³³ Elected Prelate [of Kharpert] was Bsag Vartabed Der Khorenian, [who had been until then] the Prelate of Kēghi.

¹³⁴ My relations with Talaat were still good, and that is why he rendered me this service.

¹³⁵ Priest Vartan Aslanian, the brother of Bp. Kevork Aslanian and an able and talented man with words and the pen, was in jail as Dikran was leaving. Later, we heard that he had despaired, set his cell on fire, and died in the flames together with his cellmate Hampartsum, an honorable and honest Armenian who was the *kehya* [steward] of the village of Kētērbēlu near Diarbekir.

¹³⁶ Bp. Mesrob Naroyan was later arrested in Konia and brought to Constantinople, because the authorities had found a report he had written among the papers of the Constantinople Committee of the Tashnagsutyun. He was kept in jail for about 10 days and then released. He stayed in Constantinople and served as the preacher of the Beshigtash Church.

¹³⁷ [A correction suggested by Prof. Vahakn Dadrian.]

¹³⁸ During the reactionary movement of the 31st of March 1909, Khalil Bey had taken refuge in Zohrab's house and hidden there for several days, until order had been established and Sultan Hamid deposed. Because of this, he was indebted to Zohrab and tried to save him.

¹³⁹ [*Rumelia* (Tur.): literally, "(Eastern) Roman lands"; in Ottoman usage, the expression denotes the Balkan peninsula.]

¹⁴⁰ Vosgan Bey Mardigian, in his book published in Cairo in 1939, *Pararan mdadzumi*

[Dictionary of Thoughts], makes no mention of having met with his fellow Ministers during the General War, nor of having anything to temper their anger, nor of having saved a single one of his co-nationals. It seems that then, as now, he must have adopted a Turkophilic attitude in order not to lose his retirement pension and future expected benefits. Those reading his memoirs receive the impression that the former Minister has no complaint against his former friends, who massacred more than one million of his co-nationals with unprecedented savagery. Does Vosgan Bey still have expectations, or is this the lasting influence of Turkish mores on him? Such a difference there was between Kapriel Noradungian and Vosgan Mardigian!

¹⁴¹ Some said he had been murdered.

¹⁴² [Abdul Mejid or Abdülmejid II (1868–1944) was the last Caliph and crown prince of the Ottoman dynasty of Turkey. He became crown prince in 1918. Later, he was elected Caliph by the Grand National Assembly on the 18th of November 1922, after the sultanate was abolished. On the 29th of October 1923, Abdülmejid proclaimed the Turkish Republic and on the 3rd of March 1924, the Grand National Assembly abolished the caliphate, whereupon he was immediately exiled.]

¹⁴³ Dr. Torkomian has also written about this incident in *Vem* (no. 19, p. 46-47).

¹⁴⁴ [Reference to the massacres perpetrated in 1895 and 1896 by Sultan Hamid II's orders. Some 300,000 Armenians in the Armenian Provinces perished during these massacres, known in Armenian historiography as the Great Massacre.]

¹⁴⁵ [Reference to Van, Bitlis, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, Diarbekir, Sivas, Trebizond, and Erzurum. The first four were supposed to be governed by Inspector General Hoff and the last three by inspector General Westenenk, in accordance with the short-lived Reforms Project.]

¹⁴⁶ [Madteos Kherian, a trader of cigarettes in Egypt, had provided in his will for the establishment of an Agricultural College in the port of Mersin, in Cilicia. However, before the will could be executed in 1921, most of the Armenians had left Cilicia when the French abandoned it to Turkey.]

¹⁴⁷ [*para* (Per. > Tur.): Small coin worth 1/40 of a piaster.]

¹⁴⁸ [Victor Emmanuel III (1869–1947), the last Italian monarch who came to the throne in 1900. He passed away in exile where he was sent in 1946 following the installment of a republican government.]

¹⁴⁹ [Thomas Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) was the 28th president of the United States (1913–21). A scholarly man and an idealist, he became the leading advocate of the League of Nations, for which he was awarded the 1919 Nobel Prize for Peace.]

¹⁵⁰ [Robert Offley Ashburton Crewe-Milnes (1858–1945) was the British Ambassador to France in 1922, after being the Secretary of State for Colonies.]

¹⁵¹ [Reference to the book Published in London in 1916 “for official use” only, under the title, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915–16: Documents presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs by Viscount Bryce, with a preface by Viscount Bryce.*]

¹⁵² There are various stories about Gomidas Vartabed's return from exile. According to Dr. V. Torkomian, it was Mejid Effendi who had Gomidas liberated. Vosgan Bey Mardigian, in his book, *Pararan mdadzumi* [Dictionary of Thoughts], attributes the credit to himself, by saying, “As a result of my repeated appeals, the Minister finally had him brought back.”

¹⁵³ [Possibly because Italy had severed its diplomatic relations with Ottoman Turkey.]

¹⁵⁴ [The extermination of a people, which does not have a precedent in the history of the

human race, took place in Turkey during the last 10 months, and it is still continuing. Will the Christian and civilized world remain indifferent?]

- 155 Deportations had already started in the regions when the April [1915] arrests were made in Constantinople, and, after this date, searches continued for some people who had been overlooked in April. People such as Sarkis Suin, Prof. Khachadurian, Teotig, Yervant Odian, Apig Mubahyajian, etc. were arrested and exiled during the following months. Zabel Yesayan, feeling that it would soon be her turn to be arrested, obtained a passport in her father's name and not her husband's and, receiving travel expenses from the Teachers' Assistance Chest [*Usutschats Oknutyan Sëndug*], went to Bulgaria. Madame Yesayan resided in Sgyudar [Üsküdar] and established an organization there to set the city on fire in the event deportations [started] in Constantinople.
- 156 [Ahmed Riza (1859-1930) was one of the early conservative intellectual leaders of the Young Turks movement in Europe before their taking power in 1908. He advocated restoration of the Ottoman Constitution through evolution and not revolution. He was elected president of the first parliament after the Young Turks came to power in 1908, but later his influence diminished to the nationalist Turkish factions. M. Shukri Hanioglu in his book "The Young Turks in Opposition" describes Ahmed Riza as urging Armenian and Macedonian Christians to turn their efforts towards restoration of the Ottoman Constitution of 1876 rather than seek special reforms for themselves by the intervention of the Great Powers.]
- 157 [This must be a printing mistake. Taniel Varuzhan was one of the intellectuals arrested and deported by the authorities on April 11/24, 1915. He was murdered on August 23, 1915 in Changêrê. The text should read: . . . Taniel Varuzhan's wife, etc.]
- 158 [The Azkanêver Hayuhyats Association was founded in 1879 in Constantinople by poetess Sibil (Zabel Asadur, wife of Hrant Asadur) to offer education to Armenian girls in the Armenian provinces of Turkey. Its existence ended in 1915.]
- 159 [Hovhannes (Ivan) Aivazovsky (1817–1900) was one of the most famous painters in Russia and a professor at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg.]
- 160 After I left Constantinople for exile, Bp. Kapriel Jevahirjian was appointed Vicar and Representative of Catholicos Sahag. Crown Prince Mejid Effendi, who was quite interested in painting, sent word to Jevahirjian to have those two paintings sent so that he could make copies of them and return them. Jevahirjian earnestly looked for them, inquired of [Levon] Hajian, and even threatened to have him exiled, but he was unable to find any trace of the paintings. Only I and my Vicar Yervant Vartabed knew where the paintings were, and, during this time, both of us were away from Constantinople; I was in Baghdad, and Yervant Vartabed was in Jerusalem.
- 161 [Shavarsh Misakian (1884–1957) was an editor and a political activist who founded the *Haratch* daily newspaper of Paris in 1925. *Haratch* is the longest existing Armenian newspaper in France.]
- 162 [Siruni or Hagop Jololian (1890–1973) was a writer, editor, and philologist.]
- 163 Reference is made here not to Dikran Cheogyurian, but to his brother, the tailor Hovhannes.
- 164 [*kavas* (Ara.): an armed messenger or doorkeeper or guard of an embassy, consulate, or an institution.]
- 165 [Later, Zabel and her family moved to Los Angeles where she now lives at the age of 92 with two generations of her offsprings.]

- 166 [*selamlëk* (Tur.): Ceremony performed when the Sultan went to the mosque for the Friday prayers, attended only by Muslim male notables.]
- 167 [Hrant Asadur (1862–1928) was a writer and a community activist.]
- 168 In 1917–1918, when I was exiled to Mosul, the German Propaganda Officer stationed there gave me a brochure to read about the harm the British had caused the Armenians; if I am not mistaken, the title was *Les Anglais et les Arméniens*. It contained remarkable details, such as extracts from the manuscripts of Patriarch Ashëkian, which I believe Hrand Asadur must have provided.
- 169 When people expressed amazement that Kegham had not been deported, Talaat is reputed to have said, “He has tuberculosis, and he will die in a few days.” Indeed, had Kegham not been ill, he would surely have been deported.
- 170 [Arshag Alboyajian (1879–1962) was a historian, teacher, and author of many important books related to the history of Armenia and Armenians.]
- 171 Bedri Bey had been transferred to a different position several months before, and Ahmed Bey had replaced him.
- 172 [Mention should be made to the fact that prior to and during World War I the Armenian Church had three catholicosates and two patriarchates. The Catholicosate of All Armenians, headquartered in Echmiadzin, is the utmost spiritual authority for all Armenians. The See of Echmiadzin was established by Gregory the Illuminator in the beginning of the fourth century. Due to historical events, it was transferred to Sis, the capital of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia in 1293. In 1441, the See was moved back to Echmiadzin where it still exists to date. The Catholicosate of Aghtamar was established in the tenth century, where the Catholicos of All Armenians was compelled to move due to historical events. This See, very limited in function and jurisdiction, lasted until World War I. The third Catholicosate was that of Sis or Cilicia, which as such came into existence in 1441 parallel to the Catholicosate of All Armenians, and which continues to function in Antelias, near Beirut, Lebanon. The Patriarchate of Jerusalem was founded early in the 14th century when the monastery of St. James in Jerusalem proclaimed its bishop Sarkis an independent Patriarch. The Patriarchate of Constantinople was created in 1461 by the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II, who appointed a Bishop Hovagim of Bursa to be the religious leader of the entire Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire. Because the territory involved included the majority of Armenians, the Patriarch of Constantinople, while owing spiritual allegiance to Echmiadzin, was effectively the most powerful religious figure in the Armenian church until World War I, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.]
- 173 The Ottoman government always put retired Patriarchs on a pension, basing the amount on the length of the person’s service. Ormanian received 35 pounds [monthly]; Turian and Arsharuni each received 20 pounds.
- 174 The Pastërmajian clan was one of the wealthy and influential families of Garin. Their ancestor, Khachadur Pastërmajian, a wealthy and bold man, was treacherously murdered by the Turks; he had been buried in the courtyard of the church, with a long epitaph. Khachadur’s children were Harutyun, Dikran, and Setrag. Harutyun’s child was Armen Karo, the notable Tashnagsagan, who had a role in the Ottoman Bank affair. After the Ottoman Constitution, he became a member of the Ottoman Parliament. At the beginning of the War, he organized groups of volunteers in the Caucasus and later became the Ambassador of the Armenian Republic to the United States. He died in Switzerland. One

of his brothers, Khachig, was a pharmacist in Garin and was murdered during the deportations. Another brother, Vahan, was graduated an officer from the Military School; he was wounded in the War and is now established in Paris with his family. Harutyun's younger brother, Setrag, was a graduate of the Berberian School; he was first a cashier at the Ottoman Bank in Garin, then Assistant Director of the *Régie*; he was treacherously murdered in Garin by the Ittihadists. [Harutyun's] elder son, Mihran, was a student at the Military School; he was deported with the intellectuals and disappeared.

175 This woman, Rehan, had been the standard-bearer of the Hēnchagians at a demonstration they had organized, during which they attempted to take Ashēkian to the Sublime Porte. She had been arrested there and sent to Garin; she returned to Constantinople only after the re-establishment of the Ottoman Constitution.

176 Four of my brother's children were in Constantinople at this time.

177 Yeranuhi Momjian was an intelligent girl from Garin. The Azkanēver Association had her brought to Constantinople. After graduating from the Yesayan School, she had started to frequent the School of Fine Arts. She knew me from Garin and visited me often and was present on that day. After the war, Miss Momjian went to Switzerland to study pedagogy, but, when she returned to Constantinople, she was immediately forced to leave again. Now she lives in New York [under the married name of] Mrs. Manugian. On the day of the policeman's visit, also present was the Mother Superior of the Kalfayan Orphanage, who had come to entrust to us several orphan girls for a few days.

178 [Haydar Pasha is the railway terminus on the Asiatic side of Constantinople and the departure point for trains heading East or South.]

179 It should be hundreds of thousands. [The original letter, which is kept at the Nubarian Library in Paris, says hundreds.]

180 [On his election Patriarch of Constantinople, he had asked his brother, Hovagim, who was in Baghdad at the time to send two of his daughters, Vartanush and Aznive, and later his son, Alexan, to attend the good schools in Constantinople and provide him with a semblance of family home life.]

181 Teotig had been sentenced to two years of imprisonment because of the contents of the 1914 edition of his *Amenun daretsuytsē* [Everyman's Almanac]; having barely served this sentence, he was arrested again and sent to exile and by coincidence was in the same train as me. [Teotig (1873–1928) was a renowned editor, educator, and philologist.]

182 These were carriages known as *jaylē* [carriages equipped with spring suspension], in which one could lie down on a mattress. Our group had two mattresses and several *bataniyeh* [blankets].

183 Our coachman was a certain Hovhannes, the only survivor of the complete massacre of the Armenians of Osmaniye, who had been spared thanks to the guaranty given by the Turkish owner of his carriage.

184 This was a completely Armenian village before the War. The villagers had undertaken to build a church on a hill but were prevented from completing it. This half-finished church had been the subject of long negotiations between the Patriarchate and the government.

185 Karmen was the erstwhile Dajad Vartabed from Van. He had renounced his holy orders and become a revolutionary. When I saw him, he was a fugitive in disguise. Later, he was discovered and killed.

186 [*komiseri muavin*: This is one of numerous Armeno-Turkish expressions the Patriarch uses in the text. Here, the Turkish words *komiser* (Police Commissioner) and *muavin* (assistant)

have been put together using Armenian syntax, whereas Turkish syntax would have produced *komiser muavini*.]

187 After the war, our orphan seekers found this girl and gave her to the care of one of our orphanages.

188 [*alaja* (Tur.): cloth woven from thread of several different colors.]

189 [Salih] Zeki Bey was the son of the erstwhile Governor Ali Bey of Van who, having submitted his resignation, was returning to Constantinople by way of the Caucasus when, because of his persecutory acts toward Armenians, he was targeted for an assassination in Batum.

190 The remaining 11 were Sdepan Vartabed Khorkhorunian of Fanus, [and Priests] Harutyun Der Melkonian of Aintab [Anteb], Khoren Deyirmenjian of Albisdan [Elbistan], Norayr Eogheyan of Yozghad, Kapriel Begian of Rodosto, Arsen Harutyunian of Ovajëk [Ovacik], Krikor Boyajian of Ojaklu, Movses Geogjian of Telemelig, Ghevont Janigian of Telemelig, Sukias Gargarian of Akshehir, Sahag Sergenian of Zeytun, Sarkis Der Sarkisian of Shevirgeh.

191 Later, I learned that there was an orphanage in town with 300 children, all of them Armenians. After Armenians had been pushed to the desert, there were very few [adult] Armenians left in Der Zor; the remaining ones were ill or imprisoned.

192 [Translation from Turkish: After I ask about your health and spirits. If you inquire about us, we are still living in Suvar. There are about 300 people left here, [and] it is said that there is hope for them, but I doubt it, the fellow seems to have bargained to sweep us off from the roots, perhaps we will stay here a few more days; if you have it at hand, please send me another modest amount, my brother—from young until old, forgive my debts to you.]

193 [Translation from Turkish: After I ask about your health and spirits, if you inquire about us, until today we are alive, but we have given up hope in God, because I came within half an hour of Miyardin, but it was not destined to be; what good is it, my sister! This letter is my last; all of you—please forgive my debts to you; farewell all my friends...]

194 [Should be the 19th of September.]

195 [Should be the 21st of September.]

196 [Should be the 22nd of September.]

197 [Wilhelm Leopold Colmar, Baron von der Goltz (1843–1916), was an imperial German field marshal who reorganized the Turkish army and who served as commander in chief of Turkish forces against the British in Mesopotamia during World War I. He was known as Goltz Pasha.]

198 I think Ali Suad Bey was Lieutenant Governor in Baghdad. It was said that the extermination orders for Der Zor had initially been sent to him, but he had refused to implement them—earning the gratitude of the Armenians—and because of this he had been transferred from Baghdad. To replace him, [Salih] Zeki had been sent from Constantinople with special instructions.

199 A graduate of the Robert College in Constantinople.

200 [*Defterdarutyun* appears to be a neologism of the author. By adding the Armenian nominative suffix *-utyun* on the Persian-Turkish *Defterdar* (high level official responsible for the finances of a Province), he has created a new noun signifying the government finance office, in this case the one in Baghdad.]

201 [Al-Kut is small town on the Tigris river to the south of Baghdad. In their advance to cap-

ture Baghdad in the winter of 1915/16, ten thousand British troops were besieged in Al Kut by Turkish forces for 147 days and finally surrendered after suffering massive casualties.]

- ²⁰² Memduh was a native of Garin. During the time I was Prelate there, he had been sent there as a *Maiyet Memuri* [administrative trainee] to serve under and be trained by Governor Nazēm Pasha. I was considered close to Nazēm Pasha and often visited him. Memduh showed me respect, entered the circle of Sanasarian, and spent many evenings among us. Numerous times he asked me to intervene with the Governor on his behalf. It was this beast who in 1915 set on fire the marketplace of Tokat and then directed the deportation of the Armenians of Erznga. Later, he had the caravans of Armenian deportees from Garin, Papert, and Terjan, who were coming through Erznga, massacred at Kemakh Boghazi, which is a short distance from Erznga. After the deportations of Garin in 1915, when Prelate of Garin Bp. Sēmpad was coming through Erznga on his way to Constantinople, Memduh had him murdered by a policeman a short distance outside the city. In recognition of his accomplishments in Erznga, Talaat appointed Memduh Governor of Paghesh. When the Russians staged a surprise attack and occupied Paghesh, Memduh barely survived. He was appointed Governor of Baghdad but stayed at that post hardly 20 or 30 days. He then became Governor of Mosul and delivered the city to the enemy. After the war, Memduh went to Izmir to enrich himself by robbing the Armenians, but, shortly after his arrival, he fell victim to an automobile accident.
- ²⁰³ During my term of duty as Prelate of Garin, I was still a Vartabed, and the people of Garin called me "*Hayr Surp* [Holy Father]." They continued to call me "*Hayr Surp*" even after I was elected Patriarch. Memduh lived in Armenian circles in Garin, learned these words, and made use of them.
- ²⁰⁴ [Smaller than the Sunnites or orthodox Muslims, the Shi'ites comprise the second major branch of Islam. Shi'ites claim that the right for the temporal and spiritual leadership in Islam should have belonged to the descendants of Ali, a son-in-law of Muhammad and the fourth Caliph who was killed in 661. The Shi'ites eventually became the majority faith in Iran and Iraq particularly after the 16th century, when the Iranian Safavid dynasty made it the sole legal faith of their empire.]
- ²⁰⁵ Samarra is a town on the Tigris to the north of Baghdad. It is famous for its golden-domed buildings, which are sites of pilgrimage.
- ²⁰⁶ The customary price was 5 or 6 pounds.
- ²⁰⁷ Father Atanas was a Latin clergyman of Baghdad, reputed for his knowledge of Arabic language and literature. The Turks exiled him to Gesaria because of his liberal ideas.
- ²⁰⁸ In the past, Tikrit was famous as a center of Assyrian Christians and their Archbishops. Now there are no Christians remaining in Tikrit, and the town's Turkish and Arabic inhabitants are known for their rudeness and hostility toward Christians. [Tikrit is also known as the birthplace of Saladin (1137–1193), founder of the Ayyubid dynasty and the sultan who achieved final success in wars against the Christian Crusaders with the capture of Jerusalem in 1187.]
- ²⁰⁹ Gayyara signifies "the place of bitumen." This area was named so because, if a hole is dug in the ground to a depth of about half a meter to a meter, petroleum seeps out of the surrounding soil and fills it within a few hours. During the war, the Turks used to extract petroleum here, then distill it like *oghi* [brandy], using alembics, and put it to use.
- ²¹⁰ [Reference is to the Ottoman Telegraphic News Agency.]

- 211 [General Antranig Ozanian (1865–1927) is the National Hero of the Armenian people whose efforts to liberate Karabagh were crippled by the British. He died in Fresno, California, where he had come to raise funds for the Armenian army.]
- 212 [Kevork Chavush (1870–1907) was a revolutionary activist who participated in the heroic battle of self defense (1891–1894) and the revolt (1904) in Sasun. Together with General Antranig, he organized the assassination of Khalil Bey.]
- 213 [Those Nestorians who became Catholic in 1551 are referred to as Chaldeans and their church as the Chaldean Catholic Church. They reside mostly in Iraq, Iran, and Lebanon and celebrate their liturgy in Syriac.]
- 214 [Christian church of Syria, Iraq, and India, recognizing the Syrian Orthodox patriarch of Antioch as its spiritual head. It was founded (6th cent.) as a Monophysite church in Syria by Jacob Baradaeus. Most Jacobites live in Iraq, while their patriarch resides at Damascus. Their liturgical language is Syriac.]
- 215 [*Mtran* (Ara.): Metropolitan, Archbishop.]
- 216 [*Khuri* (Ara.): Priest, minister, parson, pastor, vicar.]
- 217 [*Kass* or *kassis* (Ara.): Priest, minister, parson, pastor, vicar.]
- 218 [A fictitious but plausible name based on *yerets*, which signifies priest, senior, elder, etc.]
- 219 [Priest Krikor was well known among the Armenians of Iraq during WWII. He gave the last rites to the Patriarch and, upon the Patriarch's death, flew with the casket to Jerusalem for burial.]
- 220 [Yazidis or Yezidis constitute a religious sect whose followers reside mostly in Iraq, Turkey, Syria, and Armenia. Elements of their faith are derived from Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Nestorianism, Islam, and Judaism. They deny the existence of evil. Their religious center is the tomb of Sheikh 'Adi, located north of Mosul.]
- 221 [In certain dialects of Kurdish, (*Az*) *bërchima!* means "(I am) hungry!" This could be a regional variant.]
- 222 After the Armistice, Khoren went to the United States to join his sisters and earned his living as an engraver.
- 223 [Mehmed VI Vahideddin or Vahdeddin (1861–1926) was the last sultan of the Ottoman Empire. He became sultan on the 4th of July 1918, and attempted to follow the example of his elder brother Abdülhamid II by opposing all nationalist ideologies and dissolving the Parliament By signing the Treaty of Sèvres on the 10th of August 1920), he paved the road before the nationalists to assume control of Turkey and abolish the sultanate on the 1st of November 1922. Mehmed VI fled to Malta and unsuccessfully tried to install himself as caliph in the Hejaz.]
- 224 [In spite of the protest of the Turkish commander, Mosul itself was occupied on the 3rd of November, after the Armistice but in full conformity with the terms of article 16, and the Turkish troops were required to be clear of the whole Vilayet of Mosul within 10 days.]
- 225 When I went to Baghdad, the Security Chief invited me and requested information about the Christians of Mesopotamia and the seats of their spiritual leaders. [British officials] there, too, seemed to be convinced that my seat was in Mosul.
- 226 [Gerald Leachman (1880-1920) was the Political and Intelligence officer in Mesopotamia. Leachman was brought in by the British Commissioner A. T. Wilson following several incidents of mysterious assassinations of British officers in the area (attributed at the time to Kemalist agents and Arab nationalists). Leachman (a contemporary of T.E.Lawrence and St. John Philby of Arabia fame) was a well-known smart and tenacious traveler among

the desert tribes of central Arabia and Mesopotamia along the Euphrates river among the large Shammar and Aniaza tribes. His tempestuous and overbearing manner earned him assassination in August 1920 by a tribal chief and his two sons who disappeared among Turks. The tribal chief (sheikh) was later caught and died in jail.]

227 [Western Saudi Arabia, where Mecca is located and from where Sharif Hussein led the Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire.]

228 The informer was Mihran Boyajian, a native of Diarbekir and formerly the Prefect of Gyumyushkhaneh [Gümüşhane] and Arghni Maden [Ergani Maden]. Before the war, he had been designated as an escort to [Inspector General] Hoff. When Hoff was recalled, Boyajian became a political inspector for the Governorate of Paghesh. When all Armenian functionaries were expelled from their jobs, Boyajian also lost his position and took refuge in Mosul. He was in Mosul when the British took control of the city. Boyajian was a colorless man; under Turkish rule, he worshipped the Turks and took part in their debauchery; under British authority, he became an Anglophile.

229 [Head of the foremost representative family of the Arabs of Mosul.]

230 Lieutenant Colonel Leachman had ordered that all the wool in the warehouse be given to us, and we were immediately issued more than 3,600 kilograms of wool. The warehouse was managed by a former soldier—a local man who had stayed behind after the Turkish army's departure. This manager promised to give us all the new wool that was received at the warehouse. At that time, the government had ordered that the skins of all sheep slaughtered be delivered to the warehouse to be made into inflatable bags which were then used in making rafts to carry goods downstream from Mosul to Baghdad. The government warehouse also received the wool sheared from the skins. The manager subsequently spoke to the city's Governor, Mr. Michen, and received his approval.

231 [One dram equals 1/16 of an ounce; therefore, 120 drams is 7 1/2 ounces, or about 213 grams.]

232 Priest Parsegh Torosian later emigrated to Buenos Aires and died there in 1936.

233 Priest Ghevont returned to Geyveh after the Armistice, and Kemalists murdered him in the nearby hills.

234 [Reference to the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, which was founded in November 1915 and which shortly after functioned under the name of American Near Eastern Relief by a decision of the U.S. Congress.]

235 [Arnold Talbot Wilson (1884–1940) was Acting British Civil Commissioner for Mesopotamia during 1918–1920. A former officer of the British India Army. A strong-headed imperious man who did not believe in the independence to the former Ottoman provinces. He later represented private British oil interests in the Middle East.]

236 ["Paris, the 23rd. Armenian Patriarchate. Niaven [i.e., Zaven], Mosul. National Delegation would be grateful if your Beatitude could come to Paris as soon as possible to give your precious collaboration. We request that you take along Professor Khachadurian. Please cable [your] response. Nubar."]

237 [Followers of Nestorius—who separated Christ's divine and human natures and, therefore, was anathematized by the Council of Ephesus in 431—who live in Iraq, Iran, and Syria. They are referred to also as Assyrians.]

238 They had three battalions, and the Armenians had one.

239 [Simon Gharibian was a prominent Armenian philanthropist. He and his family built schools, churches, and refugee camps in Iraq. He retired and died in Europe after WWII.]

- ²⁴⁰ [Representative of the American Society for Armenian Relief in Baghdad.]
- ²⁴¹ [Landowner and grower of wheat, barley and rice in the area. One of the sons, Iskender Stefan, was a prominent businessman and benefactor in Iraq.]
- ²⁴² [Orientalist Arshag Safrasdian (1885–1958) was a staff member of the British Foreign Office and a collaborator with Boghos Nubar and the Armenian National Delegation.]
- ²⁴³ Our Church still used the Old Style calendar.
- ²⁴⁴ [Mihran Svazli or Sevasli was the Chairman of the Armenian National Union of America; Vahan Kyurkjian, a historian, was the Executive Director of the Armenian General Benevolent Union in America. It was Kyurkjian who first called for a national union while editing a newspaper in Egypt, an idea that eventually materialized in the form of the AGBU in 1906; he was sent by Boghos Nubar to the United States as a special delegate to establish the first AGBU chapter in the United States. Both Svazli and Kyurkjian were in constant communication with the Armenian National Delegation as its extensions in the United States.]
- ²⁴⁵ [see footnote 234.]
- ²⁴⁶ [Georges Clémenceau (1841–1929), a statesman and journalist, was the French Premier in 1917–1920 and played an important role in the Allied victory during World War I.]
- ²⁴⁷ [Vahan Malezian (1873–1963), a writer and lawyer, was the Director General of the Armenian General Benevolent Union for many years and a close associate of Boghos Nubar.]
- ²⁴⁸ [Yakub Artin Pasha of Egypt was a founder of the Armenian General Benevolent Union and the president of the Egyptian Academy.]
- ²⁴⁹ [This pact, signed at the port of Mudros on Lemnos Island between Great Britain (on behalf of the Allies) and the Ottoman Empire, officially marked the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, whereupon the Ottoman army was demobilized, various territories were surrendered to the Allies, etc.]
- ²⁵⁰ Jemal Pasha had been the Governor of Adana for some time; from that period, he knew the Armenians of Cilicia. Because he was not in agreement with the massacres, when the Cilician Armenians were deported, he settled them in Syria, which was his military jurisdiction. The *Giligetsi* [Armenians of Cilicia] were not massacred, but they suffered losses due to poverty and disease. Jemal Pasha was the Minister of the Navy in the Cabinet, but he had disagreements with Talaat on a number of issues; as a result, he was given the task of invading Egypt and thus was sent away from the Capital.
- ²⁵¹ The Tashnagsagans took advantage of this disposition and caused a scandal during the funeral of Maruké Ipranosian on the 24th of October 1920. H. Amaduni reported on this demonstration—from the viewpoint and the mentality of a Tashnagsagan partisan—and sanctified his Party (*Hayrenik* monthly, March [1921] issue). The matter was very simple in its essence. The Prime Minister of Armenia, Khadisian, had come to Constantinople and was trying to accomplish some things concerning the internal loan among the Armenians of Constantinople. As in everything regarding the Party, in this matter, too, all Tashnagsagan ranks were involved. The Patriarchate did not interfere at all in this matter. Maruké Ipranosian was reputed to be a very wealthy merchant and was expected to contribute several hundred thousand pounds, but he signed up for only 30,000 and left for Europe, and, on his way back, regrettably, he died in a train accident. The Tashnagsutyun wanted to use this opportunity to squeeze another large sum by denying Ipranosian a solemn burial—even though Ipranosian had given 50,000 pounds previously for the

Trusteeship's work. Tashnagsagan youth were brought out, and they prevented the burial ceremony at the Holy Trinity Church of Péra. Amaduni wrote about how he went to negotiate the loan for Armenia with the deceased's inheritors. Needless to say, others also tried to exploit the situation for extorting money. This sad situation was revealed during an inquiry of the National General Assembly, when Political Assembly member Aram Jyumbyushian openly accused his fellow assembly members of the Tashnagsutyun and Hënchag parties. His statements led to a lack-of-confidence proposal being submitted for a vote, and the Political Assembly was overthrown after a general speech of Dr. Tavitian. During the time that this matter was being debated in the Political and the National General Assemblies, I stated clearly that this problem was the work of the Tashnagsutyun and that it discredited us in the eyes of foreigners.

²⁵² [Researching the archives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which are housed at the Houghton Library at Harvard University, Dr. Suzanne E. Moranian found the following quote, related by a representative of the Near East Relief to Patriarch Zaven, "The Armenians can never forget what the Near East Relief has done for them. The children would all be dead had it not been for you. . . . [The relief workers] have performed a miracle by getting hold of all these children and saving them, and we owe everything to the Americans." See *The American Missionaries and the Armenian Question, 1915–1927*, by Suzanne E. Moranian, 1994, p. 235.]

²⁵³ [Khas-Kyugh was named after its origins as a village (*kyugh*) and was still a village outside Constantinople at this date.]

²⁵⁴ [The Armenian Refugees (Lord Mayor's) fund was established in October 1915 under the presidency of the Lord Mayor of London and through the efforts of pro-Armenian humanitarians, such as Lord James Bryce. Aneurin Williams was entrusted with the chairmanship of the Fund, and Reverend Harold Buxton became Honorary Secretary. The Fund soon expanded its scope to assist also the Nestorian and Syrian Christian refugees.]

²⁵⁵ It should be specified that this number represents mainly the orphans taken from Turkish orphanages during the four or five months following the Armistice.

²⁵⁶ [Either one stole or several—numeral is missing in the original.]

²⁵⁷ Some of these were taken from the Turkish State Museum. [The order of the items has been reproduced here as in the original text.]

²⁵⁸ These, too, were taken from State buildings. They had been collected in the countryside and brought to Constantinople, to be sent to Germany.

²⁵⁹ [*Kadēnlar İslam Cemiyeti* (Tur.): Women's Islamic Association.]

²⁶⁰ [Reference to: Der Movsesian, Tavit, *The Only Way Out for the Armenian Diaspora* (*Kaghutahayutyan hamar yelits miag aghakē*).]

²⁶¹ [Rupen Herian was one of the organizers of the Armenian Legion who, later, devoted himself to the search for Armenian orphans in the Arabian deserts.]

²⁶² [Miss Karen Jeppé was a Danish missionary who had been actively involved in humanitarian activities in Turkey in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. She harbored great sympathy toward needy Armenians and, in 1922, was assigned by the League of Nations to a special committee to search for and save deported Armenian children in Syria.]

²⁶³ Dr. Emirzé related to me a noteworthy incident. When the Doctor arrived in Edessa and started to gather the orphan girls from Turkish harems, an American woman missionary there scolded him for what he was attempting to do and said, "They should remain where they are and make the Turks into Christians." Dr. Emirzé gave the answer required, "[You

are acting as if] the Armenian girls were not good Christians, since you have come to preach to them Christianity; would it not be more appropriate that American missionary women such as yourselves enter the harems and try to make the Turks into Christians?"

²⁶⁴ [Arakel Chakërian (1885–?), a chemistry teacher at the Armenian Central lyceum from 1913 through 1922, later became the administrator of the National Center of Scientific Research at the Sorbonne in Paris and was famed for his many contributions in the field of chemistry.]

²⁶⁵ Armenian Catholics were represented at this meeting by Krikor Sinabian.

²⁶⁶ I am unable to comment on the details, because I do not have at hand the transcriptions of these sessions. I can say this much, that the [All-Armenian Organization] maintained regular correspondence with the National Delegation in Europe. I think that the following incident, which took up several sessions, should give an idea of the harmony established between the spiritual heads through the formation of the All-Armenian Organization. During the deportations from Trebizond, a local Armenian-Catholic woman called Aghavni Sandaljian married a government employee called Hilmi and thereby avoided being deported. Furthermore, she took into her house as an adoptee a young girl, Adriné Der Parseghian, whose family had been deported. After the Armistice, the little girl's uncle came from Batum to Trebizond to look for his relatives, and when he heard that the little girl had been taken to Sandaljians' house in Constantinople, he [came to Constantinople and] asked to have her back. Upon Sandaljian's refusal, Mr. Chakërian went to his home with a policeman, although this was a Turkish home, and forcibly took the little girl and entrusted her to her [paternal] uncle. Among Armenian Catholics, the Patriarchal Vicar Sayeghian and the official assemblies were troubled by this development; they protested that a member of their community had been dishonored and without even the official government document, which declared that Aghavni Sandaljian was the wife of Hilmi the Turk, being obeyed. The All-Armenian Assembly devoted several of its sessions to this problem and finally, at the 6th of December 1921 session, decided that for the time the orphan girl had stayed with the Sandaljians, her uncle's support indemnity of 200 pounds should be augmented by 300 pounds from the Trusteeship's treasury and the entire amount given to Sandaljian to bring the matter to closure.

²⁶⁷ [Damad Ferid Pasha, the unpopular Grand Vizier, yielding to the nationalistic movement of Kemal Atatürk, resigned in early 1920. His resignation, however, did not last long. In April 1920, he returned to his previous post with the support of the Allied Powers and tried, unsuccessfully, to crush Kemal's movement.]

²⁶⁸ [Literally meaning nationalist, the word refers to the movement initiated by Mustafa Kemal (later called Atatürk, meaning "Father of the Turks") in an attempt to maintain the integrity of the Turkish nation after Turkey was defeated during World War I. Under Kemal, a National Congress met in 1919 at Erzurum to endorse a protocol calling for an independent Turkish state. In September of the same year, the Congress reconvened in Sivas, where the delegates adopted a National Pact and pledged, among other things, to put an end to the privileges of minorities in Turkey.]

²⁶⁹ [Mark Lambert Bristol (1886–1939) was the U.S. High Commissioner to Turkey during the years 1919 through 1927.]

²⁷⁰ [Reference, in a broader sense, to the period extending from 1839, when Sultan Abdülmejid issued the Gülhane (Rose Garden) Decree, through 1878, when Sultan Abdülhamid II suspended the Constitution. This is referred to, in Turkish historiography,

as the period of reorganization. Included in this period is also the Imperial Rescript of 1856, which, repeating the declaration of the previous decree with regard to the equality of all Ottoman citizens under the law and offering additional reforms to the advantage of non-Muslim subjects, provided a basis for the Armenians under Ottoman rule to design a National Constitution (ratified by the sultan in 1863) to accordingly organize their community life.]

- ²⁷¹ [Eleuthérios Venizélos (1864–1936) was the most prominent Greek politician of the early 20th century. He played a most crucial role in doubling the size of Greece geographically and demographically during the period 1912 through 1920 when he was intermittently installed Prime Minister of Greece.]
- ²⁷² The *Garnetsi* traditionally believed that Catholicos Yezr had convened a meeting in this temple, which adopted a stance in favor of the Council of Chalcedon.
- ²⁷³ [From the rendering of the word in Armenian, *Union* appears to be a French company. *Rossia* means Russia in Russian.]
- ²⁷⁴ Salih Pasha succeeded Ali Rēza Pasha on the 7th of March 1920 but had a very short term of office. Nine to ten days later, the Allies declared their intention of occupying Constantinople; Salih Pasha resigned and Damad Ferid Pasha succeeded him on the 5th of April 1920. On the 21st of October 1920, Salih Pasha joined Tevfik Pasha's cabinet; together with Izzet Pasha and Hyuseyin Kyazim Bey, he went to Angora on the 5th of December 1920, where he stayed for three months and tried to forge an agreement between the Sublime Porte and Angora.
- ²⁷⁵ [An Eastern-rite community of the Roman Catholic Church. Believed to have been originated by St. Marun, a Syrian hermit of the late 4th and early 5th centuries, and St. Yuhanna Marun, Patriarch of Antioch in 685-707, the Maronites are prominent in Lebanon. In 1860 the Maronites suffered a massacre incited by the Ottoman government.]
- ²⁷⁶ [The massacres in Cilicia in general and in Adana in particular took place in April 1909 under the newly established Ittihadist regime and claimed the lives of thousands of Armenians.]
- ²⁷⁷ [Sultan Mohammed II (1430–1481), called “the Conqueror” or “the Great,” captured Constantinople in 1453, subdued Serbia, and conquered Greece and Crimea. He waged war with Venice and unsuccessfully besieged Rhodes.]
- ²⁷⁸ [Reference to the CUP coup led by Enver in January 1913, upon which the Ittihadist triumvirate—Tallat, Cemal (Jemal), and Enver—established their dictatorship.]
- ²⁷⁹ [The term “Eastern Question” was first used in 1822, during the Congress of the Holy Alliance in Verona, where the powers discussed the tense situation in the Balkans caused by the eruption of the Greek liberation movement. At this point, the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire in Eastern Europe and Asia Minor became a major issue in world politics for the first time. The Armenian Question, as part of the Eastern Question, surfaced at the end of the Russo-Turkish war of 1878, during negotiations that resulted in the Treaty of San Stefano (March 3, 1878) and its Article XVI. The article stated, “Because the evacuation of Russian troops from the territories that they occupy in Armenia and that ought to be returned to Turkey could give rise to conflicts and complications prejudicial to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte, with no further delay, promises to bring about the improvements and reforms called for by local needs in provinces inhabited by Armenians and to guarantee their safety against the Kurds and the Circassians.”]

- ²⁸⁰ [George Nathaniel Curzon (1859–1925) was Viceroy of India in 1898–1905 and British Foreign Secretary in 1919–1924.]
- ²⁸¹ The Dragoman of the French Embassy, Mr. Le Doux, had already given his consent to Mr. Chayian when he came to see me on the 6th of January [1921] and, in the presence of Sdepan Karayan and Dr. Tavitian, informed me that, in response to the communication he had sent to Paris, he had received the response, “The Patriarch may rest assured that England, France, and Italy have taken the Armenians’ interests into consideration. The consultations have already gone quite far, and it is unnecessary for the Patriarch to undertake such an arduous trip during wintertime.” We insisted that the National Administration had already decided for [the Patriarch] to go and that we considered it essential for him to go and make personal appeals during these days when our Nation’s fate was being decided. Le Doux promised to send another telegram to Paris and to request permission for my travel. The response to this telegram was delayed because of Clémenceau’s travel, and we [reiterated] our request two more times. Finally, on Saturday, the 7th of February [1921], Le Doux informed Dr. Tavitian that instructions for my trip to Paris had been received.
- ²⁸² [The Ramgavars were members of the Armenian Constitutional Democrat Party established in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1908. The party was the continuation of the first Armenian political party, the Armenagan Organization (1885). It aimed at securing the right to self-determination for all nationalities of the Ottoman Empire, with equal rights, and protecting the territorial integrity of the Empire. As of 1921, the Party functions under the name Democratic Liberal Party (*Ramgavar Azadagan gusagsutyun*)]
- ²⁸³ [On the 12th of January 1919, during the Paris Peace Conference, a preliminary meeting of the French, British, U.S., and Italian heads of government and foreign ministers—Georges Clémenceau and Stephen Pichon (France), Lloyd George and Arthur James Balfour (Great Britain), Woodrow Wilson and Robert Lansing (the United States), and Vittorio Emanuele Orlando and Sidney Sonnino (Italy)—decided to establish the Supreme Council composed of themselves and the Japanese plenipotentiaries and having full control of all major decision making. In less than two months, the Supreme Council was reduced to only the heads of French, British, U.S., and Italian governments.]
- ²⁸⁴ [People of Georgian origin who dwelled mainly along the southeastern shore of the Black Sea and who were forced to convert to Islam under Ottoman Turkish rule. Despite their conversion, the Laz maintained their language, which is heavily influenced by Greek and Turkish, and their culture.]
- ²⁸⁵ [General Ghorghanian was the military counselor of the Armenian Republic’s Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference and a close associate of Avedis Aharonian.]
- ²⁸⁶ [James Malcom, a British Armenian businessman, was the President of the Armenian United Association of London (founded in 1898) and the representative of the Armenian National Delegation in London. Despite the opposition of British Zionists, Malcolm advocated in British government circles the creation of an independent Armenia in the eastern provinces of a dicentralized Ottoman Empire under Russian protection.]
- ²⁸⁷ [Robert Gilbert Vansittart (1881–1957), a Germanophobe British diplomat and author, was first secretary at the Paris Peace Conference (1919–20) and principal private secretary to Lord Curzon (1920–24).]
- ²⁸⁸ [Viscount James Bryce (1838–1922), the foremost champion of the Armenian Cause in Great Britain, was a jurist, historian, and diplomat who served as Ambassador of Great

Britain to the United States (1907–1913). One clear evidence of his interest in the Armenian Question was the publication of the book *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915–1916* in 1916. Before that, Bryce had published the fourth edition (1896) of his book called *Transcaucasia and Ararat*, in which he gave an account of his tour in the region in 1876, with a supplementary chapter on the 20 years of the Armenian Question.]

289 [The British-Armenian Committee is believed to have been formed in late 1912/early 1913 with the participation of British Members of Parliament and Englishmen interested in the Armenian Cause, under the chairmanship of Aneurin Williams. The Committee functioned until 1924.]

290 [Alexandre Millerand (1859–1943) was President of the French Republic from 1920 to 1924, after having served as Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1920 upon Clémenceau's resignation. He attempted to strengthen the power of the president by constitutional revision. This attempt caused him his downfall.]

291 [Jules Cambon (1845–1935) was Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry under Aristide Briand in 1915 and later a leading negotiator at the Versailles Conference.]

292 [Hovhannes Masehian Khan (1864–1931), best known in Armenian historiography as the translator of Shakespeare's works from English into Armenian, was a statesman who served Persia domestically and in foreign countries in many different capacities, mostly as Ambassador to various countries. He was a member of the Armenian National Delegation.]

293 [*Armenkhorah* (Gk.): Armenian village.]

294 [Lord Edgar Algernon Robert Cecil (1864–1958), Minister of Blockade, 1916–1918, was Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1918 and later a participant in drafting the League of Nations Covenant.]

295 [Leon Trotsky (1879–1940) as a Communist theorist was a leader in Russia's October Revolution in 1917 and later commissar of foreign affairs and of war in the Soviet Union (1917–1924). Later, Stalin removed Trotsky from all positions of power and exiled him to Mexico, where he was assassinated as the leader of an anti-Stalinist opposition abroad.]

296 [Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov Lenin (1870–1924) was the founder of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the leader of the Bolshevik Revolution (1917), and the first head of the Soviet State (1917–1924).]

297 This conversation is reproduced from entries I had made in my diary on the same day. In his book, Vosgan Bey Mardigian accuses me of having kept the King's comments on his Muslim subjects a secret upon my return to Constantinople. To show how incorrect this claim is, I reproduce here the lines pertaining to my audience with the King of England from my lengthy report of the 18th of March 1920, which I had sent to the Political Assembly in Constantinople: "His Majesty the King expressed his sorrow about the Cilician massacre, promised his protection to the Armenian nation, informed me that he had already ordered his government to take all possible measures to protect the Armenians against Turkish savagery, and said, 'If we are not going very far [in these measures], it is because we have numerous Muslim subjects.'" These lines show that I did not conceal from the National authorities what the King of England had told me. It is not possible to accuse Dr. Tavitian of having concealed it from the Political Assembly, either, because, in his letter of the 27th of April [1920], he wrote to me, "We received the 17-page report that Your Eminence had sent.... I communicated it to my colleagues...."

298 [Reference to the Conference of San Remo (April 19–26, 1920) on the Italian Riviera,

- attended by the Prime Ministers of great Britain, France, and Italy and representatives of Japan, Greece, and Belgium, to decide the future of the former territories of the Ottoman Empire. It was this conference that approved the final details of the peace treaty with Turkey, which was signed at Sèvres on the 10th of August 1920.]
- 299 [Henri Joseph Eugène Gouraud (1867–1946) was Commander of the French forces in the Levant (1920–1922).]
- 300 [The French Colonel Edouard Brémont was appointed Chief Administrator of Cilicia by General Allenby, Commander of the British Forces in the Middle East.]
- 301 On the day as this meeting with the French Prime Minister Millerand, I had made entries in my diary, and the conversation is recreated from these. I am deeply amazed by Mr. H. Amaduni's version of this conversation, which I find entirely at odds with reality (see *Hayrenik* monthly, March 1941 issue), and the reader will be able to make the same observation by comparing the two. It appears that the idea of sending soldiers to Armenia was Mr. Amaduni's wish but not Millerand's.
- 302 [Paul Deschanel (1855–1922), the tenth president of the Third French Republic (1920), was a scholar elected to the Académie Française in 1899. He presided over the Chamber of Deputies in 1912–1920).]
- 303 [Maurice Paléologue (1859–1944) was the French Ambassador to Russia during World War I.]
- 304 [The Armenian Church rejects the ruling of the Council of Chalcedon (451) that the one Person of Christ consists of two natures and professes Monophysitism, believing in the "one incarnate nature of the Word." In other words, the Armenian Church confesses the doctrine which was approved and formulated by the first three Ecumenical Councils, and which is summed up in the Creed of Nicaea and Constantinople, according to which Jesus Christ was perfect God and perfect man. The divinity and the humanity were united without confusion, forming one single nature in Jesus Christ.]
- 305 [Francesco Saverio Nitti (1868–1953). A former journalist and professor of economics, Nitti was Minister of the Treasury in 1917–1919 and Prime Minister from June 1919 to June 1920.]
- 306 [Philippe Berthelot (1866–1934), was one of the most influential role players of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in international relations during World War I.]
- 307 [Ferdinand Foch (1851–1929), French Marshall, was the commander of Allied forces during the last months of World War I.]
- 308 [Apraham Der Hagopian, a professor of Robert College in Constantinople, as a member of the Armenian National Delegation, was sent to the United States to represent Boghos Nubar and the Armenian National Delegation.]
- 309 [The map prepared according to President Wilson's arbitration was published on the 22nd of November 1920. The map enclosed an area of 68,500 square kilometers that included the provinces of Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, and Trebizond.]
- 310 [The term Rumelia or Rumeli refers to the former Ottoman possessions in the Balkans, literally meaning 'the land of Byzantines.' The Treaty of Berlin (1878) had separated Eastern Rumelia (southern Bulgaria) from the enlarged Bulgarian state that was created earlier the same year by the Treaty of San Stefano and had returned it to the Ottoman Empire. In September 1885, Bulgarian nationalists mounted a coup in Eastern Rumelia and declared the province's unification with Bulgaria.]
- 311 [Following are the provisions of the Sèvres Treaty with regard to Armenia.]

Article 88- Turkey, in accordance with the action already taken by the Allied Powers, hereby recognizes Armenia as a free and independent State.

Article 89- Turkey and Armenia as well as the other High Contracting Parties agree to submit to the arbitration of the President of the United States of America the question of the frontier to be fixed between Turkey and Armenia in the vilayets of Erzurum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis, and to accept his decision thereupon, as well as any stipulations he may prescribe as to access for Armenia to the sea, and as to the demilitarization of any portion of Turkish territory adjacent to the said frontier.

Article 90- In the event of the determination of the frontier under Article 89 involving the transfer of the whole or any part of the territory of the said vilayets to Armenia, Turkey hereby renounces as from the date of such decision all rights and title over the territory so transferred. The provisions of the present Treaty applicable to territory detached from Turkey shall thereupon become applicable to the said territory.

The proportion and nature of the financial obligations of Turkey which Armenia will have to assume, or of the rights which will pass to her, on account of the transfer of the said territory will be determined in accordance with Articles 241 to 244, Part VIII (Financial Clauses) of the present Treaty.

Subsequent agreements will, if necessary, decide all questions which are not decided by the present Treaty and which may arise in consequence of the transfer of the said territory.

Article 91- In the event of any portion of the territory referred to in Article 89 being transferred to Armenia, a Boundary Commission, whose composition will be determined subsequently, will be constituted within three months from the delivery of the decision referred to in the said Article to trace on the spot the frontier between Armenia and Turkey as established by such decision.

Article 92- The frontiers between Armenia and Azerbaijan and Georgia respectively will be determined by direct agreement between the States concerned. If in either case the States concerned have failed to determine the frontier by agreement at the date of the decision referred to in Article 89, the frontier line in question will be determined by the Principal Allied Powers, who will also provide for its being traced on the spot.

Article 93- Armenia accepts and agrees to embody in a Treaty with the Principal Allied Powers such provisions as may be deemed necessary by these Powers to protect the interests of inhabitants of that State who differ from the majority of the population in race, language, or religion.

Armenia further accepts and agrees to embody in a Treaty with the Principal Allied Powers such provisions as these Powers may deem necessary to protect freedom of transit and equitable treatment for the commerce of other nations.]

³¹² [Reference to the Sykes-Picot Agreement between France and Great Britain, which was signed on the 3rd of January 1916 and modified on the 26th of April 1916 to gain Russia's approval. Another modification, in April 1917, included Italy in the agreement by allotting certain Ottoman territories to Italy. According to the initial Agreement, Syria, Cilicia, and three Armenian provinces were allotted to France; Mesopotamia and Palestine to Britain, with the exception of Jerusalem; and Constantinople with the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, the province of Trebizond, and the remaining three Armenian provinces in Eastern Anatolia to Russia.]

³¹³ [Mihran Damadian (1863–1945) acted in Adana as the representative of the United Armenian Delegation and on the 5th of August 1920 proclaimed himself governor of

- Cilicia under French mandate. The French authorities forced him out the same day.]
- 314 [Hajën was renamed “Saimbeyli” in the Turkish Republic period.]
- 315 [Dr. C.F.H. Crathern was a YMCA secretary in Marash, Cilicia.]
- 316 [*Milliji* (Ara.>Tur.): a Turkish neologism signifying, “supporter of the *Milli* (Turkish Nationalist) ideology.”]
- 317 [Novelist Zabel Yesayan (1878–1943) demonstrated her keen interest in the miserable state of Armenians victimized by the Turks twice: first after the massacres in Cilicia in 1909 and then during and immediately after World War I. She elaborately presented the situation and suffering of her co-nationals in her novels.]
- 318 The Chief of the First Section was Kimmerer.
- 319 [The reference is to the Mekhitarist Armenian Catholic Congregation, based on the island of San Lazzaro off the coast of Venice.]
- 320 This unworthy person, after causing Hajën to be reduced to ashes, entered the service of the Greek government and wrecked the Turkish villages near Izmir, thereby spreading hatred toward Armenians among ordinary Turks. As a result, there were many Armenian victims when [the Turks] reoccupied Izmir. From Izmir, Aram Gaydzag went to Athens, where he passed away a few years ago.
- 321 [The Treaty of Lausanne (24th of July 1923) freed Turkey from all foreign control over its army and navy and abolished foreign rights in return for the promise of judicial reforms. Turkey accepted an obligation to protect the few minorities who remained on Turkish soil. Thus, the Armenian Question was reduced to a matter of minority rights, without even mentioning the names Armenia or Armenians.]
- 322 [Alexander Khadisian (1876–1945) was Mayor of Tiflis, Georgia, in 1910–1917, President of the Armenian National Council in 1915–1917, and Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia from August 1919 through May 1920.]
- 323 [Dr. Hamazasb Ohanjanian (1873–1947) was a member of the Armenian Republic’s delegation at the Paris Peace conference. Later, he was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in Khadisian’s cabinet in 1920 and soon after, in May, became Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia.]
- 324 [Tashnagtsutyun organized the February Uprising on the 13th of February 1921 against the Soviet government in Armenia and succeeded in capturing the capital city of Yerevan on the 17th of February. It was during this period that Simon Vratsian, as the leader of the uprising, approached the Turks asking for their support against the Communists. The Armenian Communists retook Yerevan on the 3rd of April 1921, and, by the 15th of April 1921, the uprising ended. There were many casualties during this bloody conflict.]
- 325 [The Armenian Relief Organization, well known as HOG, was established in September 1921 to secure financial assistance for needy Armenians in Soviet Armenia and help rebuild Armenia. The organization functioned until December 1937.]
- 326 [Hovhannes Tumanian (1869–1923) is known as the Poet of All Armenians. He was active in relief works and became one of the founders of the Armenian Relief Organization (H.O.G.) in 1921.]
- 327 [Taniel or Tanush Shahverdian (1882–1941) was Soviet Armenia’s Commercial Representative in Turkey in 1921 and from 1924 to 1928.]
- 328 [Historian and critic Ardashes Garinian (1886–1982) was dispatched by the government of Soviet Armenia to Turkey and the United States in 1921 and 1922 to study the Armenian communities.]

- 329 [Alexander Miasnikian (1886–1925) was Soviet Armenia’s first Prime Minister, who died in a plane crash near Tiflis while still Premier.]
- 330 [The reference is to the Armenian SSR’s post–World War II campaign for “repatriation,” during which some 100,000 Armenians—by and large refugees from Western Armenia and other parts of Turkey—were encouraged to move to Armenia from the Middle East, Europe, and the Americas.]
- 331 [İsmet İnönü (1884–1973). İsmet Pasha was Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s Chief of Staff in the war against the Greeks and adopted the name İnönü after defeating the Greeks twice at the village of İnönü. Later, he became the first Prime Minister of the new Turkish Republic.]
- 332 [The Governor-General of Eastern Thrace.]
- 333 [Levon Pashalian (1868–1943), in addition to being a renowned Armenian novelist, was Boghos Nubar’s aide in Paris during World War I and the following years both in the Armenian National Delegation and the Armenian General Benevolent Union. In 1923, he became Executive Secretary of the Central Council of Armenian Refugees.]
- 334 Kerovpé Damadian was Talaat’s closest friend.
- 335 Some 10 days earlier, Pyuzant Kechian had come to the Patriarchate to see me and beseeched me to obtain a passport for him from the British Embassy so that he could go abroad. I told him that the British Embassy had, indeed, sent me word that it was well-disposed to issue British *laissez-passer* documents to all employees and assemblymen of the Patriarchate who felt themselves endangered so that they could take refuge abroad, but Kechian did not have any ties with the Patriarchate, and therefore I could not intervene on his behalf. Hearing this, Kechian left disappointed. Later Harutyun Mosdichian pleaded with me and persuaded me to obtain a passport for Kechian, but the latter never used it.
- 336 Those present have been marked with an asterisk (*).
- 337 [This Assemblyman’s family name is either Sarafian (as reported on the numbered list of the 54 deputies) or Sarajian, as given here.]
- 338 They [Vartanush, her husband Khoren Fesjian, and infant daughter Sona] had boarded the Bulgarian ship *Tsar Ferdinand* on the preceding Monday, and the ship had left port the following Wednesday.
- 339 [*Këz-Kulesi*, *Kizkulesi* (Tur.): literally, “Maiden Tower”; a tower on a small island in the Bosphorus Straits across from the Golden Horn and close to the Asiatic shore, dating from the Byzantine era.]
- 340 The Howard Karageozian (a.k.a. Karagheusian) Orphanage was established in 1921 in Constantinople by the Howard Karagheusian Commemorative Corporation of New York. Upon Dr. Kevork Tavitian’s recommendation, the orphanage was moved from Constantinople to France in 1923. The Howard Karagheusian Commemorative Corporation continues to assist needy Armenians in the Middle East.
- 341 [The Greek Patriarchate was located in the Fener quarter of Constantinople and was often referred to in this manner.]
- 342 See *Aztarar* (Constantinople), 21 July 1928 issue.
- 343 [*İttihadji* (Ara.>Tur.): a member or sympathizer of the İttihad (Party).”]
- 344 [When the Ottomans conquered Constantinople in 1453, the Greek Patriarchate had been established in the city for about a millennium and was the highest center of Orthodox Christianity. Mehmed the Conqueror, in his effort to dilute the Greek

character of Constantinople, invited the Armenian Patriarch, until then in Brusa, to come and set up an Armenian Patriarchate in Constantinople in 1461.]

- ³⁴⁵ [*mazbata* (Ara.>Tur.): minutes of a meeting that are signed by numerous people and submitted to an authority.]
- ³⁴⁶ [The Vicar's family name had been given as "Aslanian" up to this point. Bishop Aslanian's (1869–1951) family name is known in Armenian literature by both versions.]
- ³⁴⁷ [Dikran Zaven (1874–1938), as indicated earlier, was one of the editors of the Turkish newspaper *Jeune turc*. After the Milli movement, Zaven was actively involved in the editorship of the French periodical *Balkan Federation* and thus had connections with the political leadership of the Balkan countries.]
- ³⁴⁸ [Of Hayg Papazian and Harutyun Papazian, who were among the invited persons, it is not clear which was absent. The one who was present must have been "Dr. H. Papazian," mentioned in the following paragraph.]
- ³⁴⁹ [Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian (1869–1955), a pioneer architect of the oil concessions in the Middle East. Son of a wealthy merchant family in Constantinople who was schooled in France and studied mining in England. He engineered the Turkish Petroleum Company in 1912, with Royal Dutch/Shell, German and Turkish banking interests by securing exclusive oil exploration rights in Mesopotamia from the Sublime Porte. Later (after WWI) the Turkish Petroleum Co. was evolved into Iraq Petroleum Company with US Standard Oil, British and other European oil companies with Gulbenkian retaining 5% shareholding, which continues today as Gulbenkian Foundation of Portugal. He was economic advisor to the Turkish embassies in Paris and London.]
- ³⁵⁰ [The gift of the brothers Kevork and Garabed Melkonian of Egypt led to the establishment of the Melkonian Educational Institute for Armenian boys and girls in 1926 in Nicosia, Cyprus. The Institute, many of whose graduates serve as community leaders in the Armenian Diaspora, continues its mission under the auspices of the Armenian General Benevolent Union.]
- ³⁵¹ [Reference to the surgical operation performed on Zaven Patriarch in 1932 in Paris, where he was diagnosed with cancer of the larynx for which he underwent a total laryngectomy, leaving him with permanent loss of ability to speak.]

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