

ARMENIAN ATROCITIES AND TERRORISM

PUBLICATION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF TURKISH AMERICAN ASSOCIATIONS

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I. Preface

The publication of this account is long overdue. This compilation is not only intended to honor the memories of those who lost their lives during the tragic period surrounding World War I in eastern Anatolia, but also to serve as a response to the often malicious defamation campaigns waged against Turks and the Turkish Republic.

The experience of the Turks and Armenians during World War I and its aftermath has been widely distorted. Armenians in diaspora around the world have aggressively promoted their claims that the Turks of the Ottoman Empire perpetrated a systematic annihilation campaign against the Armenians of eastern Anatolia. This distortion of history has been so widely and incessantly dispersed by the Armenians that, year after year, resolutions are considered in the U.S. Congress and throughout Canada and Europe promoting Armenian claims.

There are many reasons why we feel that we must defend our ancestors as well as future generations against these attacks. For the objective observer, it will undoubtedly be difficult to understand the passions that run so deeply on both sides of this issue. While it is difficult to summarize the feelings of an entire people on a few pages, there are some common sentiments which must be briefly touched upon:

First, while it is not disputed that the whole population in eastern Anatolia suffered losses during this period, the enormous loss of life among the Muslim people often goes ignored or is even flatly denied. Secondly, Turks have been falsely accused of the most heinous of crimes: genocide. This is certainly not a charge which should be accepted at face value by scholars, the U.S. Congress, or the general public.

Thirdly, by continuing to present inaccurate depictions of history and Turks, unfounded ethnic hatred is perpetuated. This was clearly manifested in the 1970's and 1980's when Armenian terrorists waged a campaign to advance their goals, targeting Turks and killing many innocent people in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia.

The truth of the matter is that Turks and Armenians lived together for centuries. Armenians lived comfortably in areas of the Empire removed from the intercommunal fighting, and they continued to serve in high-level offices of the Ottoman government. These realities clearly defy the concept of an annihilation campaign, which would have put the entire Armenian population at risk. Today, an Armenian minority continues to live and thrive in Turkey, enjoying the full rights of Turkish citizenship.

However, the subject at hand discusses a time of war, and it is not our intent to minimize the suffering of any side of the conflict. It is our hope that this volume will shed light on an often overlooked aspect of history. Only after the full truth is accepted can we redeem our people, adequately commemorate the period, and honor those who suffered unspeakable hardships and lost their lives.

II. Introduction

The recollections of Armenians who lived through the ethnic warfare and conflict that raged through eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus from 1915 to 1921 have been frequently used by Armenian writers and propagandists to illustrate that a "genocide" was perpetrated against the Armenians by the Turks. The heartbreaking stories of Armenian "survivors" are often presented as part of the proof that the Ottoman authorities engaged in a systematic destruction of the Empire's Armenian citizenry. These stories have also become a major and potent source for indoctrinating younger generations of Armenians in this country into believing that a horrible crime was committed against their ancestors and that they should forever hate and despise the Turks and seek revenge against them for the events that took place more than 80 years ago. These themes and messages are repeated in countless books, essays, novels, poems, and plays that focus on the experiences and recollections of those Armenians who survived the ravages of war and famine that took place in eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus during and immediately after World War I.

Reading the standard Armenian interpretations of the events surrounding World War I, or those written by the supporters of the Armenian views, one would have no idea that more than a million Muslims, the majority of them Turks, also lost their lives in intercommunal fighting, and that another 900,000 became refugees in eastern Anatolia during 1914-21. According to careful and detailed analysis of historical statistics and records, the ethnic warfare that engulfed the Armenian, Turkish, and Kurdish communities led to drastic losses of the Muslim population in major eastern Anatolian cities: For example, the Muslim population of Van decreased by 62 percent, that of Bitlis and Erzurum by 42 percent and 31 percent, respectively.¹ Eyewitness accounts and reports show that the majority of the Turks and other Muslims who lost their lives were killed by bands of Armenian irregulars or by Armenians serving in the Russian army. The massacres committed by the Armenians indiscriminately targeted men, women, and children, and they involved gruesome methods that were intended to spread terror among the innocent civilians and cause total physical destruction of their communities. The methods, scope, and the impact of the ethnic cleansing strategy used by the Armenian revolutionary groups were witnessed and recorded by numerous non-Turkish and independent observers. For example, Captain Emory Niles and Mr. Arthur Sutherland, two Americans who investigated the conditions in eastern Anatolia for the U.S. government, reported:

"In this entire region, [Region from Bitlis to Van to Beyazit], we were informed that the damage and destruction that had been done by the Armenians, who, after the Russians retired, remained in occupation of the country, and who, when the Turkish army advanced, destroyed everything belonging to the Muslims. Moreover, the Armenians are accused of having committed murder, rape, arson, and horrible atrocities of every description upon the Muslim population. At first we were most incredulous of these stories, but we finally came to believe them, since the testimony was absolutely unanimous and was corroborated by material evidence. For instance, the only quarters left at all intact in the cities of Bitlis and Van are the Armenian quarters, as was evidenced by churches and inscriptions on the houses, while the Muslim quarters were completely destroyed. Villages said to have been Armenian were still standing, whereas Muslim villages were completely destroyed."²

The atrocities committed by the Armenians against the Turks had begun before the Ottoman government's decision in late May 1915 to deport Armenians from eastern provinces. However, their intensity and scope increased vastly during the latter part of the decade. Reports sent by the Ottoman officials in Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, and other eastern provinces to Istanbul describe in detail

the massacres that were carried out by the Armenians.³ What took place in Van following the rebellion by the Armenians in March 1915 was typical of many towns and villages in eastern Anatolia:

"The stories told by Muslim villagers were all much the same. When the Armenians attacked Muslims' own villages or nearby villages, Muslims fled with whatever moveable property they could carry. On the road, Armenian bandits first robbed them, then raped many of the women and killed many of the men. Usually, but not always, a number of women and young children were killed as well. The surviving villagers were then left to travel to safety if they could, without food or adequate clothing. The villagers were unable to defend themselves either in their homes or on the road because most young Muslim males had been conscripted. Only very old and very young males and women were left. Armenian bands, however, were made up of young males who had never been drafted, were deserters from the Ottoman army, or had come from the Caucasus."⁴

Despite overwhelming historical evidence, the plight and suffering of the Turks and other Muslim communities in eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus have received far less attention than that experienced by the Armenians. By talking only about the Armenian "survivors" of an alleged "genocide" perpetrated by the Ottoman government, Armenian writers and propagandists, along with their sympathizers, have managed to disseminate the misperception that it was only the Armenians who were killed, tortured, and forced to flee from their traditional homelands. The success of the Armenian propagandists in perpetuating the myth of "genocide" has led many Americans to overlook the fact that more than a million Muslims also lost their lives and close to a million became refugees.

Several factors have been responsible for the silence about the plight of the Turkish victims of Armenian atrocities. The most important has been the historical prejudice and bias in the West against the Turks and Muslims in general which led many to view only the Armenians as the victims and to ignore the calamity that fell on the non-Christian populations of the Empire. This traditional one-sided and biased perception was bolstered in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by the reports of the Christian missionaries, sent to the region mostly from the United States, whose religious zeal and anti-Muslim world view precluded objectivity in dealing with the causes and consequences of the rising ethnic and religious tensions in the Ottoman Empire.⁵ Another reason is that unlike their Armenian counterparts, the Muslim survivors of the violence that gripped eastern Anatolia had no chance to make their voices heard in the West, especially in the United States. Many Armenians who survived World War I and immigrated to this country succeeded in telling their recollections and stories to sympathetic audiences. More importantly, their children and grandchildren went to some of the best American universities. These second and third generation Armenians - novelists, professors, poets, playwrights - then became articulate spokespeople for their grandparents and parents. By contrast, few, if any, of the Muslim survivors immigrated to the United States after World War I to tell their recollections of the horrors they lived through at the hands of the Armenians. The majority of the Turks who survived the violence of 1915-21 continued to live as simple peasants and villagers in some of Turkey's least developed regions. Consequently, they had no means to influence American public opinion through books, "oral history" programs in universities or media appearances. Although their travails and horrible experiences are well-known and still remembered in their small villages or towns, as a trip to eastern Turkey today will readily show, they have remained largely unknown to the rest of the world.

While the Armenians have continued to clamor for an apology from Turkey, they have shown no inclination whatsoever to express any regret or remorse for millions of Muslims who were either

killed or forced to become refugees in eastern Anatolia during 1915-21. Characteristically, Armenian writers and propagandists either completely ignore the killings of innocent Muslim men, women, and children, or come up with superfluous explanations. The following statement by Dennis Papazian, Director of the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, is typical of the Armenian attitude:

"The Turks died unfortunately because their own government led them into World War I against the European allies. Many Turkish Muslims also died fighting Arab Muslims . . . and Indian Muslims who were with the British Middle East army in Mesopotamia. All this Muslim blood, then, is on the head of the Ottoman Turkish government and not on the victimized and helpless Armenians."⁶

Papazian's argument is not only a blatant distortion of historical facts, but defies logic as well: How could anyone account for the massacres of more than a million Muslims in eastern Anatolia, in places such as Van, Bitlis, or Erzurum, with the Arab-Ottoman or British-Ottoman war campaigns that took place in Iraq, Syria, or Yemen? And how is it possible, indeed, for the so-called "helpless" Armenians to slaughter entire village communities, brutalize their victims, rape women, and bring about so much havoc and destruction? Papazian clearly fits into the category of Armenian-American historians whose writings have been described by the British historian Gwynne Dyer as representing "capering caricatures of the historical method" which reflect "the deafening drumbeat of the propaganda, and the sheer lack of sophistication in argument which comes from preaching decade after decade to a convinced and emotionally committed audience."⁷

In addition to official Ottoman records and reports prepared by Western observers, there is much information about the intensity and scope of Armenian atrocities in the recollections of some of the Muslims who survived the ethnic warfare in eastern Anatolia. By now, the majority of the victims of Armenian violence have passed away without, unfortunately, having had a chance to talk about their experiences to scholars, writers, and journalists. Only a handful of them are alive today and they are in the very late stages of their lives. An effort-albeit belatedly-was made by a team of researchers led by Professor Azmi Suslu in the early 1980's to interview some of the survivors in Van, Kars, Bitlis, and Mus. These interviews, together with the photographs of the individuals who were interviewed, were published in Turkish as *Van, Bitlis, Mus, ve Kars'taki Ermeni Katliamları, Gazilerle Mulakat Van Yuzuncu Yıl Universitesi Rektörlüğü Yayınları*, No. 8 Ankara, 1994. The translations of these interviews are presented here see Part III for the first time in English.

Footnotes:

¹ Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922*, Princeton, N.J.: The Darwin Press, 1995, p. 229

² *Ibid.*, pp. 224-225.

³ See, e.g., the documentation and references in Kamuran Gurun, *The Armenian File* London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1985, pp. 196-200.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁵ For a detailed account of how the Christian missionaries conveyed a distorted image of the Armenian question to the West, see Jeremy Salt, *Imperialism, Evangelism, and the Ottoman Armenians, 1878-1906* London: Frank Cass, 1995.

⁶ The Armenian Research Center, *What Every Armenian Should Know* Dearborn, Michigan, n.d., p.29.

⁷ Gwynne Dyer, "Turkish 'Falsifiers' and Armenian 'Deceivers': Historiography of the Armenian Massacres," *Middle Eastern Studies*, January 1976, p. 101.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE SURVIVORS

The testimonies of those who were interviewed by the team of researchers show that Armenian and Muslim communities lived on relatively good terms and peacefully until the Armenian revolutionary organizations began their rebellion against the Ottoman government and started their collaboration with the Russians. As Hacı Zekeriya Koç, born and raised in a village called Ayanis near Van, recalls:

"When the Armenian incidents broke out we were in our village, Ayanis. Zeve, Mollakasim and Ayanis were the villages in the region inhabited entirely by Muslims. There were five or ten Armenian homes in the other villages. Before these problems broke out, we had excellent relations with the Armenians. We got along particularly well with Armenian-inhabited Alakoy. We would invite each other to banquets, and there were no hostilities between us."

Others, such as Bekir Yörük, who was born in Van in 1900, express a similar view:

"We lived in the same neighborhoods as the Armenians. We too lived in the Norşin neighborhood and got along well until the Russians intervened."

However, once the political agitation by the Armenian revolutionary and terrorist organizations began in earnest in early 1915, violence and bloodshed replaced these peaceful relations after the Armenians began attacking civilian Muslim communities. The eyewitness testimonies of the victims of these Armenian attacks underscore a systematic policy of ethnic cleansing that is reminiscent of the horrors that were inflicted on the Bosnian Muslims by the Serb extremists in the 1990's: Massacres of entire villages, indiscriminate killing of the old and the young, brutalization and rape of women, burning and destruction of mosques, and forced expulsion of people from their villages. The atrocities committed by the Armenians in and around Van and Bitlis during 1915-16, for example, are vividly recalled by those who managed to save their lives. Sait Aldanmaz, who was born in Bitlis in 1900, remembers:

"With my own eyes I saw an Armenian poke a dagger into a woman's stomach and pull out her child. They killed 15-20 people with bayonets in my neighborhood of Ersan. When the Russians arrived, the Armenians helped them . . . Among the ruins of every home, in the fields, and in the farms were the bodies killed with the Armenians' bayonets. We applied for permission to bury them. The soldiers dug ditches and the bodies were buried there."

İbrahim Sargın who lived in the village of Zeve near Van was 11 years old when he witnessed the destruction of his community by the Armenians:

. . . The village was burning . . . The Armenians were throwing small children in the air and piercing them with bayonets or sticking them in the stomach with bayonets. The children let out shrill cries and fell to the ground like baby birds . . . They captured Corporal Seyyat alive, laid him on the ground, undressed him, and skinned him alive. They also carved out his shoulders and carved into his sides, taunting him by saying that Sultan Reşat promoted him and gave him a medal. The Armenians also set fire to the grass and threw some of our women and children into the fire and burned them alive. They sliced the throats of the rest of the survivors as if they were sacrificial lambs . . . After massacring the entire village, they killed the five most attractive women: my cousin Seher, Esmâ, the headman's wife, a distant relative Hayriye, my Aunt Ayşe, and Güllü."

The savagery and brutality that was inflicted on the innocent villagers by the Armenian rebels in 1915 in Van's villages was also recalled by Bekir Yörük:

". . . My uncle, his family and children, were cut into pieces with a hatchet under the mulberry tree in our neighborhood. They [Armenians] massacred all those that stayed behind when we left . . . They killed whomever they could corner. They killed them and threw them into the lake or into the fire. For example, a woman was baking bread in a nearby village, and had her young child at her side. The Armenians went into her backyard and asked her what she was doing. When she answered that she was baking bread, they insisted she needed a kebab as well, and pierced her child and threw him into the fire and burned him alive."

Mehmet Hatunoglu similarly lived to tell the horrors that he witnessed as a child:

"I can't tell you what I saw, it was so hideous. They [Armenians] planted a stake every fifty meters on the Pular (now Çınarlı neighborhood) and Ercis-Egans road, and impaled the elderly taken from the mosques on these stakes. They all died in a pool of blood. Then we went into the large Çavuşoğlu barn, and saw people sliced up and laying in blood, most of whom were relatives or people we knew. They were beaten and killed with axes, shovels, and cleavers. They placed a basket over the head of Haydar Imam, and impaled him.

According to the recollections of the victims, rape of Muslim women and young girls was widely practiced by the Armenians to terrorize the civilian population. Hacı Sait Aldanmaz, born in Bitlis in 1902, remembers a particularly horrible incident:

"The Armenians were committing atrocities [in Bitlis] before the Russian invasion as well, but after the occupation, the crimes accelerated. As far as I remember, 9 year old Hatice who lived in the Hersan neighborhood was taken from her mother's arms by the Armenians, who viciously raped her without reference to the fact that she was a child. Hako was the Armenian who took this child from her mother and raped her."

Thousands of those who managed to escape the Armenian violence were uprooted from their villages and became refugees. Those who escaped from Van, Bitlis, or Kars were forced to travel very long distances to safety under the most difficult conditions. Many of them died on the way from hunger and disease, but some managed to survive. As a child, Bekir Yörük witnessed the suffering of Turks who escaped from Van in 1915 and became refugees:

"We left before the Russians arrived. There were about 250 in our group, and 60 died. Some died at the hands of the Armenian bandits, others from cholera, disease, and hunger . . . The women couldn't take care of the children. Hunger and disease were rampant."

Kadriye Duran, the daughter of Hamit and Nigar Duran, was ten years old when she was uprooted from her village called Kavunlu near Van by the Armenians and became a refugee:

"We were going towards Edremit when the Armenians raided Van. The city was burning . . . We reached Edremit, but they raided that too. We went from there to Bitlis to Siirt, to Diyarbakir, and then to Siverek. We stayed there three years. There were eight people in our family who became refugees. On the way, my brother Ali was captured. The rest died on the road. Only my mother and I were able to

return to Van. We weren't the only ones affected. The inhabitants of Van, Edremit, and Van's Muslim villages all became refugees. Those that didn't run were killed at the hands of the enemy, while most of those that got away died on the road."

While most of the people who were interviewed talked about the horrible events that they witnessed in Armenian attacks on Muslim citizens, some also mentioned a few brave Armenians who ventured to help them. Cevahir Kokum, born and raised in Bitlis, remembers one:

"My deceased grandmother would always talk about an Armenian called Manik. When talking about him, she would also pray in thanks for all that he had done. Manik worked as a servant for Haci Yusufzade. This Armenian saved my grandmother and her other relatives from the Armenian massacres . . . Manik would leave in the day, and return at nightfall with all of the bread, sugar, and other food supplies he could find. When we asked why he was doing this, he replied that he could not betray us after eating our bread for so many years. One day Manik came to us excitedly and said that the Russians had emptied the city, and that it was not right for him to stay after everything that the Armenians had done, and that he would immigrate to Russia with the rest of the Armenians . . . Manik left, but we did not forget him or what he did."

The recollections of those who were interviewed show, once again, that explanations of the events that took place in eastern Anatolia during World War I with reference to an alleged "genocide" committed by the Turks against the Armenians are gross distortions of the historical record. Descriptions and analyses of this period that do not take into consideration the aims, methods, and ultimate objectives of the Armenian revolutionary and terrorist organizations, especially their systematic use of violence against innocent Muslim civilians and the havoc they brought on to Muslim communities, do not reflect historical accuracy and objectivity. Similarly, any description of this turbulent period has to take into account not just what the Armenians had to endure but also the plight and suffering of the Empire's Muslim population as well. Moreover, the tragic developments that cost the lives of millions of people on both sides during 1915-21 have to be viewed in the context of great power rivalries in the region, Russia's efforts to use the Armenians in its expansionist policies vis-a-vis the Ottoman Empire and the fateful decision of the Armenian organizations to collaborate with the Russians. To describe the tragic events during World War I that claimed the lives of both Armenians and Turks as a pre-meditated and planned "genocide" perpetrated by Ottoman authorities against the Armenians simply is a gross distortion of historical facts.

Despite overwhelming evidence that Muslims also suffered greatly in the events of eastern Anatolia during the turbulent years from 1915 to 1921, Armenian propagandists have continued to claim that Armenians were the only victims of these incidents. Moreover, they have sought to convince American and world public opinion that the Ottoman authorities were engaged in a systematic and planned effort to eradicate the Empire's Armenian population. The stories told by Armenian survivors and reports written at the time by Christian missionaries and Western observers sympathetic to the Armenians are weaved together with forged documents such as the infamous Andonian book and fabricated statements attributed to Hitler to perpetuate the myth of "genocide."⁸ Instead of historical objectivity, based on a careful study of all the available evidence, Armenian propagandists continue to claim that their own version of the events that took place in eastern Turkey more than 80 years ago as the absolute and undeniable truth. Although world-renowned experts and historians of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey -scholars who, unlike the Armenian propagandists, have worked for long years in the Ottoman archives in Istanbul -reject the "genocide" allegation and refuse to support Armenian claims, the Armenian propaganda machine in this country continues to parrot the standard "party line" Armenian accusations against the Turks.⁹

In addition to books and publications, extensive lobbying in Congress, and grassroots activities to influence American public opinion, Armenian propagandists seek to perpetuate the "genocide" myth to convince younger generations of Armenians that they are the descendants of innocent victims of a "genocide" that was committed by the Turks. Young Armenian children are taught that their ancestors, who lived peacefully and minded their own affairs in the Ottoman Empire, were suddenly subjected to a horrible crime perpetrated by the Turks who massacred millions of Armenians and tried to exterminate their race from the face of the earth. This so-called "history" that is taught to young Armenian children has nothing to say about the fact that many Armenians rose to the highest positions of power in the Ottoman Empire, that they practiced their religion freely in a predominantly Muslim state and that many Armenians in large Ottoman cities such as Istanbul or Izmir lived prosperous lives since they controlled a great deal of commercial and business activities. The standard "history" that the young Armenians learn today similarly has nothing to say about the real course of events that preceded the Ottoman government's decision to deport Armenians from several eastern provinces: How Armenian revolutionary groups decided to seek independence through violence, how terrorism was used by the Armenian radicals to provoke an intervention by the Western powers, how rebellions were started in cities like Van and Bitlis in 1915 in which thousands of innocent Muslim civilians were killed or forced to flee their homes, or how the Armenian rebels made the fateful decision to side with the advancing Russian army and fight against the Ottomans.

Armenian propagandists and writers seek to accomplish several objectives in their ceaseless efforts to indoctrinate young Armenian-Americans in this country. Their first, and most important objective, is to have these young people develop intense hatred and enmity towards Turks and Turkey. In books, essays, and poems written by Armenian authors, the Turks are portrayed as the most barbaric nation in the world and capable of carrying out only the most heinous and horrible acts against humanity. The dehumanization of "the Turk" through blatantly racist remarks and characterizations is one of the most common themes in books written by Armenians or in the articles and essays published in Armenian-American newspapers and magazines. The second objective of the Armenian propaganda machine is to convince the young Armenian-Americans that they should "never forget" what happened in 1915 and seek revenge against the Turks for the

alleged atrocities they committed against the Armenians. Again, in Armenian newspapers and publications the theme of "revenge" is constantly played up and the Armenian youth is exhorted to action to "pursue the just cause of their people." The third objective of the Armenian scholars, writers, and propagandists is to indoctrinate the young Armenians into believing that their homeland was taken away from them forcibly and that it should be returned to them. The effort here is directed toward first pushing Turkey into a position of accepting the blame for an alleged "genocide" and, following that admission, to press for territorial claims in eastern Turkey near the borders of the newly-independent Armenian republic. Finally, Armenian propagandists use the myth of "genocide" to instill a sense of identity among the Armenian youth to prevent their complete assimilation into American society and culture. The process of building up national or cultural identity by choosing an "enemy" has been practiced widely by many ethnic groups throughout the world. In the case of the Armenian-Americans, fostering enmity toward Turkey by perpetuating the myth of "genocide" serves the same purpose.

The process of indoctrinating the Armenian-American youth takes place at many different levels, ranging from church sermons on Sundays to organized activities such as "genocide workshops" at youth camps. For example, the Armenian Youth Federation regularly conducts a "genocide education workshop" at Camp Haiastan to provide Armenian youth "with a better knowledge and understanding of the Armenian Genocide."¹⁰ A 16-year-old, who participated in one of these so-called "education workshops," described her impressions as follows:

"Upon arriving at the camp, I saw most of the Watertown chapter already there. I met people from Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and New York. There were more than 100 kids there all busy getting to know each other . . . The main reason we had this weekend was to learn about the awful incident that took place in 1915, the Genocide. We went to lectures on Saturday and Sunday and learned about the "bigger picture." . . . While listening to the different discussions during the weekend, we were all reminded of where each came from and what our ancestors had to go through for us to be here today."¹¹

According to reports in the Armenian-American newspapers, the "education" of the Armenian youth in these camps goes beyond teaching them the Armenian version of history. It also includes training them in techniques of "activism." These involve teaching youngsters how they should organize demonstrations in front of Turkish Embassy and consulate buildings in the United States. For example, the caption of a photo taken on the camp grounds showing young kids with posters and banners denouncing Turkey reads: "Campers learn a little about activism during a mock demonstration in the cabin circle."¹²

Another photo that appeared in an Armenian-American newspaper has far more serious and alarming implications about how far the Armenian propagandists go in turning young children into hate merchants and potential terrorists. This photo shows a group of five young Armenian children holding another young person hostage with his hands tied behind his back and seated on a chair. The scene was apparently the reenactment of the 1983 attack on the Turkish Embassy in Lisbon when five Armenian terrorists tried to get into the building and take its residents hostage. The newspaper report states: "On July 5, 1983, five Armenians now known as the Lisbon 5 took over the Turkish Embassy in Lisbon. These brave Armenians' purpose was to attract attention to the unjust acts of 1915. The Lisbon 5 were about to get caught when the building blew up. All five Armenians perished. Last Saturday, July 10, we at Camp Haiastan had a reenactment of what happened. We broke up into different committees to help the Lisbon 5."¹³

Given the "education" and "training" they receive from the Armenian propaganda machine, it is no wonder that the Armenian youth is indoctrinated not just into believing the genocide myth, but also conditioned to use whatever means necessary, including the use of terrorist methods, to avenge an alleged crime that was committed against their ancestors. Indeed, the anti-Turkish propaganda that has been churned up by the Armenian propaganda machine for decades in this country played a significant role in the wave of Armenian violence that has targeted Turkish diplomats, Turkey's diplomatic and commercial offices, businesses owned by Turkish-Americans, and American professors of history who have dared to speak out objectively on the Armenian issue in the Ottoman Empire.

Footnotes:

⁸ For years, Armenians used a book supposedly written by an Armenian named Aram Andonian called the *Memoirs of Naim Bey: Turkish Official Documents Relating to the Deportations and Massacres of Armenians* to prove that the Ottoman government in Istanbul sent directives to officials in the provinces to massacre the Armenians. The book was exposed as a forgery in Sinasi Orel and Sureyya Yuca's book *Ermenilerce Talat Pasa'ya Atfedilen Telgraflarin Gercek_Yuzu* Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu, 1983. For its English translation, see *The Talat Pasa "Telegrams": Historical Facts or Armenian Fiction?* Nicosia: Rustem and Bro, 1983. Armenian propagandists continue to use a statement allegedly made by Hitler: "Who, after all speaks today of the extermination of the Armenians?" This quote, too, has been proven false and unfounded. See Heath W. Lowry, "The U.S. Congress and Adolf Hitler on the Armenians," *Political Communication and Persuasion: An International Journal* Vol. 3, No. 2, 1985.

⁹ For the statement signed by more than 60 American scholars of Ottoman Empire contesting Armenian claims, see "What American Scholars Say About Armenian Allegations," the advertisement that was prepared by the Assembly of Turkish American Associations that appeared in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* on May 19, 1985.

¹⁰ *The Armenian Weekly*, May 17, 1997.

¹¹ Letter from Alina Nalbandian in *The Armenian Weekly*, June 1, 1996.

¹² *The Armenian Weekly*, July 17, 1993.

¹³ *Idem*.

ARMENIAN TERRORISM AND THE ARMENIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Beginning with the cold-blooded murder of Turkey's Consul General in Los Angeles, Mehmet Baydar, and his young deputy, Consul Bahadır Demir in January 1973, Armenian terrorists waged a relentless campaign of assassination against Turkish diplomats and officials. For the next 15 years, Armenian terrorists murdered 73 innocent men, women, and children, including 41 Turkish diplomats in the United States, Canada, Europe, the Middle East, and Australia. In addition, the spree of Armenian political terrorism involved bombings that claimed the lives of innocent bystanders in France and Turkey as well as several hostage-taking incidents.

With the exception of the first event in Los Angeles that was carried out by a lone Armenian-American, all other terrorist acts were carried out by the two main Armenian terrorist groups, Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) and the Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide (JCAG). The worldwide campaign of Armenian terrorism against Turkish diplomats usually involved two or three gunmen stalking the official travelling in his car between home and work, and shooting at the intended victim when his car stopped at a traffic light. Although few of the Armenian assassins were apprehended, most have eluded capture by the authorities.

The United States and Canada ranked high in terms of the number of Armenian terrorist acts around the world. In addition to the murders of Mehmet Baydar and Bahadır Demir, Kemal Arıkan, the Turkish Consul General in Los Angeles was assassinated by two Armenian terrorists in January 1982, and the Honorary Turkish Consul General in Boston, Orhan Gündüz, was killed in May 1982. Both attacks were claimed by JCAG. While an Armenian terrorist named Hampig Sassounian was charged with Arıkan's murder, Gündüz's killer was never apprehended. During the same year, Kani Güngör, a commercial counselor at the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa was seriously wounded and permanently paralyzed by an ASALA member and Turkey's military attache in Ottawa, Colonel Atilla Altıkat was shot to death by a gunman of the JCAG.

In March 1995, the Turkish Ambassador in Ottawa was seriously injured and his wife and daughter were taken hostage by the JCAG-ARA (Armenian Revolutionary Army). In addition to assassinations, Armenian terrorists frequently planted bombs at various targets and threatened the lives of many Turks and friends of Turkey. At least two other potentially deadly Armenian terrorist attacks planned against the Honorary Turkish Consuls in Tampa and Philadelphia were aborted either by the intended victim or by the police.

The Armenian terrorist campaign against the representatives of Turkey, Turkish-Americans, and friends of Turkey was widely criticized by the U.S. government and in the media. By the early 1980s, U.S. officials and American experts on international terrorism ranked the Armenian terrorist groups among the deadliest terrorist organizations in existence and a major threat to law and order in the United States. Similarly, especially in view of the indiscriminate killings and bombings that targeted both Turks and others, there was a growing backlash against the Armenian terrorists in Western Europe as well.

However, some Armenian-Americans, including professors teaching at prestigious universities in this country, prominent writers and elected public officials, expressed their satisfaction at the fact that Armenian terrorism had led to widespread publicity about the events that took place in eastern Turkey during World War I. The typical attitude of many Armenians was that while they did not necessarily approve of the killings of Turkish officials, they were nevertheless happy that these events had put the spotlight on the alleged "genocide" of the Armenians by the Turks more than 80 years ago.

However, there were also many Armenian-Americans who did not shy away from expressing their open support for the terrorists. The trial of Gourgen Mkritch Yanikian in Santa Barbara in 1973 was a harbinger of things to come: Yanikian, who had carried out one of the most heinous double-murders in the state's history, was treated as a "hero" by the crowd of Armenians who had gathered in the courtroom. Armenian-Americans quickly mobilized and formed a group called "American Friends of Armenian Martyrs" to raise funds for his defense and to use the court case as "an educational campaign to bring the story of Turkish genocide before the American and world attention."⁽¹⁴⁾ Until his death almost a decade later, a few months after he was released from prison on the order of the then California governor, George Deukmejian, Yanikian continued to receive gifts and supportive letters from Armenian-Americans. Similarly, after Hampig Sassounian was found guilty of murdering the Turkish Consul-General in Los Angeles, Kemal Arıkan, a campaign to provide funds for his defense raised \$250,000 in small donations from Armenian-Americans throughout the United States.⁽¹⁵⁾ Armenian-Americans launched similar campaigns for moral support and fund-raising for several other Armenian terrorists who were captured by the authorities in this country and in Europe.⁽¹⁶⁾

In his study of Armenian terrorism, Michael Gunter provides a detailed description of the attitudes expressed by some of the leading members of the Armenian-American community about the Armenian terrorists:

"Harry Derderian, a leading official of the Armenian National Committee (the Dashnag's political arm), for example, told a reporter: "If terrorism is a contributing factor in getting people's attention, I can go along with it." Commenting about the events of 1915 and the current terrorism, Armand Arabian, a superior court judge in California, declared: "It is the right of Armenians to seek redress . . . Some seek it on street corners." After Hampig Sassounian was found guilty of murdering the Turkish Consul in Los Angeles in 1982 . . . Bishop Yeprem Tabakian, the prelate of the Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church, stated: "Hampig's conviction is an indictment directed against all Armenians." Archbishop Vatche Hovsepian, the primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church, added: "I am truly shocked about the verdict." George Mason, the moderate publisher of The [Armenian] California Courier, concluded: "There are many Armenian Americans in California who feel great sympathy and support for Armenian terrorists. I have talked to numerous peaceful, fair, and thoughtful men who have expressed support for the terrorists."

Levon Marashlian, of the Glendale College of Armenian history and culture, said Armenian terrorists are "patriots who have been waiting for 70 years." An Armenian student of Dr. Dennis Papazian, professor of history and the University of Michigan in Dearborn, was quoted as saying: "In a way, I'm kind of proud of the terrorists."⁽¹⁷⁾

The support that Armenian-Americans gave to the assassins of Turkish diplomats was also reflected in the Armenian publications in this country. For example, the January 28, 1982 issue of The Armenian Reporter published a New Year's message by Ara Alex Yenikomshian, a leading

member of ASALA. The message, a transcript of the broadcast that was made in Beirut, discussed openly the terrorist activities that were carried out by ASALA during 1982 and exhorted all Armenians to "action" until "occupied Armenian lands are liberated."(18)The openness with which a prominent Armenian newspaper in this country lent its pages to one of the top leaders of ASALA clearly showed the degree of sympathy and support that many Armenian-Americans extended to a terrorist organization that was considered to be a threat to law and order by the FBI and other American law enforcement agencies.

The direct or indirect support that was given to Armenian terrorism by many Armenian-Americans played a major role in the acts of violence that led to scores of fatalities in this country and elsewhere in the world during the 1970s and 1980s. Undoubtedly, the efforts of the Armenian propagandists to portray Turks and Turkey as the enemy of the Armenian people, to dehumanize the Turks, and to glorify the assassinations of the Young Turk leaders by Armenian terrorists after World War I were all influential in leading young Armenians toward the path of terrorism and violence. Studies on terrorism show that many terrorists are drawn to violence when they are able to overcome moral restraint through the process of socialization, collective beliefs, influence of history, and family traditions.(19) These studies also show how through indoctrination and propaganda, individuals can be "transformed rapidly into skilled combatants, who may feel little compunction and even a sense of pride in taking human life."(20) One of the main objectives of the Armenian propaganda machine in the United States is to perpetuate the "genocide" myth to such an extreme that taking revenge against the Turks through any means, including acts of violence against Turkish officials, becomes morally acceptable for young Armenian-Americans. An Armenian terrorist, who got caught with four others in 1982 after five sticks of dynamite and a timing device was found in their luggage at Boston's Logan International Airport, underscored this point when he said later in an interview: "We had no intentions of plea bargaining . . . because we sincerely thought that what we had done was morally justifiable."(21)

The dehumanization of the intended victims is another characteristic feature of terrorist mentality and behavior. As one expert notes: "Once dehumanized, the potential victims are no longer viewed as persons with feelings, hopes, and concerns, but as subhuman objects . . . It is easier, for example, to brutalize victims when they are referred to as 'worms'."(22) The behavior of the Armenian terrorists conformed to this pattern. With their constant vilification and dehumanization of "the Turk" in their writings, Armenian propagandists in this country created a favorable environment for the wave of violence and terrorism by young Armenian terrorists against Turkish officials for nearly two decades beginning in the early 1970s. The comments of John D. Hagopian in an Armenian-American newspaper is a typical example of this effort to divest the Turks of human qualities: "You [the Turks] are the offspring of those who butchered my people, and I have no love for you whatsoever. Yes, God made you and your fathers. But he also made snakes and jackals and hyenas, and Oswald, and Manson."(23)

The glorification of the Armenian terrorists who assassinated the Young Turk leaders after World War I by the Armenian propagandists and writers has similarly contributed to the attractiveness of terrorism for some young American Armenians. Books and articles written about the Armenian terrorists of the 1920s portray them as national heroes who fulfilled their mission of taking revenge against the Turks rather than criminals or terrorists. Individuals who carried out these assassinations are presented to the younger generations of Armenians in this country as virtual role models who dared to challenge the historical "injustice" that was done to the Armenian nation by the Turks. 24 Decades of hero-worshipping of those who assassinated Young Turk leaders influenced the motives and behavior of those young Armenians who chose to follow in their

footsteps more than 60 years later. It is also worth noting the similarities and continuities between the two waves of Armenian community mobilized to raise funds for the terrorists with the Armenian churches and community centers in America taking the lead. And in both instances, the actions of the Armenian terrorists were supported directly or indirectly by many Armenian-Americans for publicizing their "cause" and reviving an interest about the Armenian question in American public opinion.

Footnotes:

¹⁴ The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, March 24, 1973.

¹⁵ Michael M. Gunter, "Pursuing the Just Cause of Their People": A Study of Contemporary Armenian Terrorism (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press), p. 74.

¹⁶ See, e.g. the coverage of the "campaign of solidarity" with Max-Hrair Klindjian, who was caught after he unsuccessfully tried to assassinate Turkey's Ambassador to Switzerland in The Armenian Weekly, January 19, 1982.

¹⁷ Gunter, "Pursuing the Just Cause of Their People:" A Study of Contemporary Armenian Terrorism, pp. 99-100.

¹⁸ "ASALA's A. Yenikomshian Addresses New Year's Message to Armenians" The Armenian Reporter January 26, 1982.

¹⁹ Martha Crenshaw, "Questions to be answered, research to be done, knowledge to be applied," in Walter Reich (ed.), *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Minds* (New York, NY, Cambridge University Press), pp. 252-54.

²⁰ Albert Bandura, "Mechanisms of moral disengagement," in Reich (ed), *Origins of Terrorism*, p. 163.

²¹ Quoted by Jeffrey D. Simon in his *The Terrorist Trap: America's Experience With Terrorism* (Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press), p. 317.

²² *Ibid.* 181.

²³ John D. Hagopian, "We will never forget," *The Armenian Reporter*, January 23, 1982.

²⁴ See, e.g., Edward Alexander, *A Crime of Vengeance* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1991), and Jacques Derogy, *Resistance and Revenge* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1990).

INTIMIDATION IN ACADEMIA

One of the major goals of the Armenian propaganda machine in this country has been to suppress scholarly debates and discussions of the tragic events that took place in eastern Anatolia during World War I. Fearful that objective and unbiased historical analysis might endanger decades of propaganda based on one-sided interpretations of the historical record, Armenians have tried to use various methods to silence those American historians and experts on the Ottoman Empire who do not subscribe to the standard "party line" perspective on the Armenian question. Initially, these methods involved the use of physical violence and terrorism: In 1982, Armenian students and extremists disrupted the history class taught by Professor Stanford J. Shaw at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA), a prominent scholar and a widely-recognized expert on Ottoman history. Later, Armenians turned to terrorism: They bombed Shaw's home and also broke into his office at the university and ransacked it. Professor Shaw had become a target for Armenian terrorists because, based on his years of meticulous research in the Ottoman archives, he had come to the conclusion that there was no systematic effort by the Ottoman government to engage in genocide against the Armenians. The fact that the physical violence and terrorism directed at Shaw took place at UCLA was no coincidence: In addition to being located in one of the largest Armenian-American communities in the United States, UCLA's Center for Near Eastern Studies has become a major center for producing anti-Turkish propaganda through the efforts of a leading Armenian-American historian, Richard G. Hovannissian.

The terrorist bombing of Shaw's home was meant to send a signal to other American historians who might challenge the "facts" of the events during 1915-21, as presented by the Armenian propagandists. In fact, since the incidents at UCLA, their efforts to intimidate other historians and suppress their views have continued unabated. However, instead of actual terrorism and physical violence, this intimidation campaign has involved sending messages of threat via mail or telephone, intervening with the university administrators to undermine academic careers and seeking to discredit individuals through well-publicized campaigns. More recently, the Armenian propaganda machine has begun yet another campaign designed to prevent free academic debate, discussion and learning at American universities. This time the target is a program to establish Turkish Studies Chairs at several American institutions of higher learning such as Harvard, Princeton, Georgetown, and the University of Chicago. The program, which is partly funded by the Turkish government, seeks to expand the study of Turkish history, society and culture through the establishment of professorships in Ottoman and modern Turkish history.

Armenian propagandists have been very critical of Turkish Studies Chairs on the grounds that they were being established by the Turkish government to present its views on the Armenian question and that they would be filled by individuals who sympathized with Turkey's stand on this issue. As usual, Armenian allegations have large doses of fiction and untruth mixed with the fear that learning more about Turkey and its people might offset the negative propaganda that has been disseminated in this country for decades about the Turks. The charges and allegations are false since the Turkish officials have repeatedly stated that they have no intention to interfere with the selection of professors for these chairs or the contents of the course materials. Furthermore, the university administrators at Harvard, Princeton, Georgetown, and Chicago have also repeatedly stated that the Turkish government has made no attempt to influence their choice of candidates for these positions. Despite the absence of any evidence that would contradict these statements, Armenian propagandists continue to fabricate unfounded allegations based on conspiracy theories. Their objective is to intimidate American universities, this time through orchestrated campaigns rather than terrorism and violence directed at individual professors, to prevent the dissemination of objective and unbiased knowledge about Turkey.

The efforts of the Armenians on this issue are all the more hypocritical since during the past two decades, more than a dozen major American universities have established professorships or programs in Armenian studies with contributions from wealthy Armenian-Americans. Some of these universities, such as UCLA, have gone even further and specifically designated these new programs to support the study of the "Armenian genocide." Clearly, in the distorted world of the Armenian propaganda machine, the establishment of Armenian studies programs where the main focus is on the study of an alleged "genocide" qualifies for genuine academic scholarship whereas the promotion of knowledge and learning about the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey does not.

JOINING THE HOLOCAUST BANDWAGON

Since the 1970s, Armenian writers and propagandists have followed a new strategy to win greater support and sympathy for their "cause." This strategy aims at establishing parallels between the fates of the European Jewry during World War II and that of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire during World War I. By equating the tragedy that fell upon the Jews in the Holocaust and the sufferings experienced by many Armenians in an alleged "genocide," Armenian propagandists seek to exploit the sensitivities of many Americans who are deeply troubled by the horrible events that led to deaths of more than 6 million Jews in Europe at the hands of the Nazis. The efforts of the Armenians to join the "Holocaust bandwagon" and benefit from the sympathies of Americans towards the victims of Nazi violence have included support for "scholarly" studies that seek to establish linkages between the two events, letters to major American newspapers where this linkage is emphasized, grassroots activities that are intended to gain the sympathy and support of the American Jewish community, and repeated use of a statement attributed to Hitler alleging a similarity between the Jews and the Armenians - a statement that has been proven false and without any foundation.

Anyone who is even remotely familiar with the experiences of the Jews in Europe and the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire can easily see that the two have very little in common. Germany's Jews did not rebel against the German government in search of an independent state, they did not begin a campaign of violence, terrorism, and ethnic cleansing against the Germans, the Jews did not collaborate with Germany's enemies during a major war, and few of them managed to live normal lives in Germany while the Nazis embarked on a campaign that was planned to exterminate their race. The case of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire during World War I was strikingly dissimilar: Armenians revolted against the Ottoman state and collaborated with the invading Russian army, Armenian revolutionary organizations engaged in mass violence and terror against innocent Muslim civilians and uprooted them from their homes, and millions of Armenians continued to live in peace in cities and towns in Western Turkey that were not gripped by communal violence. More importantly, there is no question about Hitler's plans to exterminate the Jews or about the horrible Holocaust event.²⁵ There is no evidence, however, that the Ottoman government ever had a similar plan and the Armenian allegations about a "genocide" is strongly disputed by qualified American scholars and experts on Ottoman history.

The efforts of the Armenian writers and propagandists to establish a linkage between the Holocaust and the events of 1915 to gain the sympathy of the American Jewish community conveniently overlook the fact that during World War II, a large number of Armenians living in Germany actively supported Hitler's policies. According to Christopher J. Walker, a pro-Armenian historian and the author of a major study of Armenian history, this support took the form of Armenians fighting in the Nazi armed forces. As Walker puts it:

"Nevertheless, there remains the incontestable fact that relations between Nazis and Dashnaks living in the occupied areas were close and active. On 30 December 1941 an Armenian battalion was created by a decision of the Wehrmacht, known as the 'Armenian 812th Battalion.' It was commanded by Dro, and was made up of a small number of committed recruits and a larger number of Armenians from the prisoners of war taken by the Nazis in their sweep eastward. Early on the total number was 8,000; this number grew to 20,000. The 812th Battalion was operational in the Crimea and the North Caucasus.

A year later, on 15 December 1942, an 'Armenian National Council' was granted official recognition by Alfred Rosenberg, the German Minister of the occupied areas. The 'Council's' president was Professor Ardashes Abeghian, its vice-president Abraham Giulkhandanian, and it numbered among its members Nzhdeh and Vahan Papazian. From that date until the end of 1944 it published a weekly journal, *Arménien*, edited by Viken Shant (the son of Levon) who also broadcast on Radio Berlin."²⁶

The collaboration between the Dashnak Armenians and the Nazis during World War II was accompanied by articles appearing in the pro-Nazi Armenian publications that praised Hitler's policies and made derogatory and anti-Semitic remarks about the Jews. The service of the Armenians to Hitler's efforts to exterminate the Jews came at a time when the Turkish government was giving asylum to many German Jews who were fleeing from Hitler. Given the fact that scores of Armenians expressed blatantly anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi views in this country and in Europe during World War II and large numbers of Armenians served in Hitler's armies, one wonders how without feeling any shame or guilt-the Armenian propagandists today can ask the support and sympathy of the American Jewish community.

Footnotes:

²⁵ For years, Armenian writers have claimed that there were orders sent from Istanbul to Ottoman provincial officials regarding the extermination of the Armenians. The main source of the Armenian claims - the infamous Andonian book - has been proven to be a forgery. Armenian propagandists now admit that there is no evidence to support these claims. See e.g., V.N. Dadrian's letter to the *Journal of Middle East Studies* (July 1997) where he concedes that there is no concrete evidence implicating the Ottoman officials.

²⁶ Christopher J. Walker, *Armenia: The Survival of a Nation* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1990), p. 357.

²⁷ Crenshaw, *op.cit.*, p. 253.

CONCLUSION

The following sections in this publication offer the recollections of those who survived the Armenian atrocities against the Muslims in eastern Anatolia during World War I and a chronology of the incidents of terrorism that were carried out by Armenian terrorists during the 1970s and 1980s. The first is a testimony to the fact that the Armenians were not the only victims of the tragic events that took place more than 80 years ago, and that large numbers of Turks, along with other Muslim groups, also suffered in the communal strife and warfare that began with the insurrection of the Armenians against the Ottoman government. The recollections of these survivors also make it evident that biased and one-sided interpretations of these events, in which the Armenians are portrayed as the helpless victims of a sudden policy change in Istanbul, are simply not corroborated by many who lived through the bloodshed and suffered at the hands of the Armenians. The insistence of the Armenians that a "genocide" was perpetrated against them - allegation that cannot be taken lightly and accepted by any country in the world simply because of the claims made by one of the parties in the ethnic and communal conflict - overlooks the fact that more than a million Muslims lost their lives and close to a million were forced to become refugees largely as a result of the violence caused by the Armenian revolutionary groups and Armenians who fought alongside the invading Russian army.

The second section on Armenian terrorist activities is a stark reminder of how decades-long propaganda against Turkey and the Turks led many Armenians to turn to violence and murder as a means to take revenge and create worldwide publicity for their cause. Armenian terrorism is also instructive in demonstrating the consequences of "educating" young children in the so-called "genocide workshops" where one-dimensional perceptions of the Turks as the "evil enemy," along with moral justifications for seeking revenge from Turkey, are poured into the minds of the teenagers. Studies on terrorist movements show that sustained waves of terrorism, such as the one that involved the Armenian terrorist organizations, are difficult to maintain without a certain level of popular support.²⁷ While the majority of the American public did not condone the assassinations of the Turkish diplomats and the bombing of Turkish consular offices or businesses owned by Turkish-Americans, many in the Armenian-American community did, either openly or indirectly. Clearly, this support, displayed through fund-raising campaigns for the captured terrorists along with meetings and various activities organized by the Armenian churches and community centers throughout the United States, was instrumental in perpetuating the spree of murders targeting innocent civilians.

Turkish-Americans are part of the ethnic mosaic that makes up the United States. As a community, it does not believe in fostering enmity against other ethnic groups in this country and views such efforts as contradictory to the basic founding principles and philosophy of America. The perpetuation of the enmity towards Turkey and Turks by the Armenian propagandists are not in the best interests of anyone living in this country, with the exception, perhaps, of those who thrive on the continuation of historical animosities.

III. Testimonies of Witnesses

Muhammet Resit Güleser

İzzet Cengiz

Seyh Cemal Talay

Huseyin Koca

Bekir Yörük

Sait Aldanmaz

İbrahim Sargın

Ebubekir and Abdulkerim

Ayse Sevimli

Hasan Mehmetođlu

Zekeriya Koc

Haydar İsaogđlu

Cemal Cuvac

Devaz Seyhođlu

Hikmet Saylık

Iso from the Til Village

Mehmet Saar

Police Officer Hasan Çabuk

Kadriye Duran

Haci Sadi Aldanmaz

Kamile Elibol

Birik Asit

Yamin Tosun

Faris Sürüm

Rasit Barıs

Cevahir Kokum

Kaya Celebi

Abbas Güneş

Fevzi Feyyat

Mehmet Taş

Abdurrezzak Ayaz

Oruc Türkeli

Mehmet Hatunođlu

İmam Zeynelabidin

MUHAMMET REŞİT GÜLESER

Father's Name: Abdullah

Mother's Name: Habibe

Place of Birth: Van

Date of Birth: 1900

I was a young student at the Dar'ül-Muallimin school, around 15 or 16 years old during the Armenian massacres, and remember what happened quite well. Before the First World War, we had good neighborly relations with the Armenians (whose population was said to be approximately 17,000).

With the declaration of the constitutional monarchy in 1908, they started to exploit the principles of independence, equality, and justice to their benefit. Their leader in Van, Aram Pasha, was in the delegation that notified Sultan Hamit that he would have to leave his throne. The Armenians set up an underground organization in Van, and dug tunnels which extended from near the Great Mosque (Büyük Cami) all the way to the old section of town. It was even possible to go through these tunnels on horseback. One day the tunnels were inadvertently discovered when a section caved near a guard. Even though Aram Pasha was detained near the Great Mosque based on the intelligence provided by an Armenian after the discovery, he was released without punishment due to the political sensitivities of the time.

In short, the Armenians were very well organized. Already well-established in commerce, they were doing very well financially. After the Armenians and Jews were permitted to join the military, groups of Armenians joined the military during the retreat of the Van division. The Armenians entered the military prepared -- with their own weapons. Our soldiers were carrying German-made primitive weapons that after firing four shots, would drop the fifth bullet. According to what we had heard from Mr. Hacı Latif and others who later returned to Van, the Armenians in the Van division were shooting our soldiers in the back. There were also several cases of Armenian doctors and nurses poisoning our wounded soldiers who were hospitalized in Van after returning from the eastern front.

Regarding the situation in Van, the Russians were approaching from three fronts, Muradiye, Özalp, and Baskale. The Armenians in the city were rebelling and continued an aggressive campaign against the Muslim population for 29 days. We had three barracks, Hacı Bekir, Aziziye, and Toprakkale. Ten soldiers would guard each one. They raided these barracks and slaughtered the soldiers like sheep by slicing their throats. Ali Çavuş was also martyred there. While our weak militia was digging trenches to try to fight, the Armenians made holes in the walls and were firing shots with machine guns, pouring cans of kerosene, lighting fires, and escaping through the deep tunnels. This brutal attack lasted 29 days. The decision to flee was finally made so that the Muslim population would not suffer any more deaths. Those with carts used them; those without were under desperate conditions, but we all joined the exodus. People left their children on the road, others died from hunger and disease.

It should be remembered that the Armenians not only committed large massacres in Van, but in the villages as well. The homes in the villages of Tımar, Baskale, and Özalp were stuffed with hay and set on fire. Those that tried to escape were killed with bullets and bayonets. The inhabitants of a few villages in Zeve organized and fought the Armenians, but almost all of them -- from seven different villages -- were killed. Mass graves are still being uncovered in these villages and a memorial was built.

Of the twelve ships that carried the Muslim refugees from Van, four of them carried government employees and their families. All of the sailors aboard the vessels were Armenians. The Armenian bandits, aided by these sailors, forced the four government employee boats to dock at the Adir island, and killed all of the passengers. As for those in the other eight boats, they were taken to another island near Tatvan where Armenian bandits were waiting, but were able to escape with few casualties because they were armed.

When we left Van, we first went to Bitlis, and later to Diyarbakır. We witnessed the Armenian savagery along the way. Finally, I will tell you about what we saw and heard upon returning to Van. The Armenians applied all types of torture to the inhabitants, God bless their souls. They paraded Isa Hodja, who was over 100 years old, on a donkey through the village, raided and looted homes, and gathered women and girls into Mr. Ziya's home where they repeatedly raped them. They threw the bodies of the dead into wells, and even filled the well of our mosque with their victims' bodies.

When General Cevdet entered Van for the first time, he asked the gendarmes to escort 130 women whose husbands were at the front to Diyarbakır. They had been stranded in Van because they did not have any transportation. About 30 of them stayed in our house. They spun wool to survive. They were also given military rations. They told us that there was no end to the torture and cruelties they suffered at the hands of the Armenian bandits. The Armenians skinned the men, castrated them, and raped and impaled the women.

We returned to Van four years later. We stayed two years initially, but were forced to flee again when the Russians arrived. This time we went as far as Siirt. When we returned 200-250 Armenian families were seeking refuge on the Çarpanak island. They were hoping that the Turks would leave, and that they would resettle in Van. Most of them were artisans. A short time later, a new decree was issued, and they were sent to Revan under the protection of the government. However, Van, raided seven times by the enemy, was completely destroyed except for the Armenian quarters. We had to rebuild the city.

ŞEYH CEMAL TALAY

Father's Name: Cimsid
Mother's Name: Fatma
Place of Birth: Van
Date of Birth: 1901

The Russians were providing weapons to the Armenians. With military assistance from the Russians and encouragement from England, France, and the United States, all of which had consulates in Van, Armenians increased their hostilities in the beginning of 1915. The Russians were secretly providing them with sophisticated arms hidden in food supplies sent from Russia to the port of Trabzon, and from there sent by caravan to Van. The goods on the caravans were distributed in the center of the old city, and the hidden ammunition was secretly distributed to the Armenian militants. The leader of the Armenian rebellion in Van was Aram Pasha, but I don't remember the name of the leader of the Dashnaks. They all had land claims, especially in Van. The 11th squadron was assigned to Van, but went to Erzurum to mobilize. The Armenian bandits were emboldened by this and started their campaign of terror against the Muslim inhabitants.

The militants were launching raids on the Muslim villages and neighborhoods. The only thing we had to fight them with was a militia led by Imam Osman, composed of those either too old or too young to join the army.

Let me tell you a story which I will never forget. I went to a school located near the government mansion. Armenians studied at the same school. Some of the students in the Armenian underground went to get a Muslim student named Rüştü from his home on the pretext of studying. They took him to the İstma bridge near the industrial park. After insulting him, they raped and killed him, leaving his body for his family to find the next day. The family later composed a ballad to honor his memory.

I can remember the beginning of the skirmishes between the Muslims and Armenians. Our militia, which would meet in the Mahmut Aga barracks across the street from the Van State Hospital, was on duty a day before the war with the Armenians started. The Armenians prepared the night before and positioned themselves well. They had dug holes in the State mansion, and when our militia was preparing for morning prayer at a fountain nearby, the Armenians showered them with bullets. Many of our soldiers were killed. The fighting between local Muslims and Armenians had begun. Everyone took to the streets, and mass confusion ensued. Despite this, we got up and went to school. We had two teachers, one from Selanik, one from Edirne. They said "Come on kids, let's all forgive each other, we might not see each other again," and suggested we use the side streets to avoid Armenian bullets. I left school with some friends, but decided to take our regular route. We saw that weapons and munitions were being distributed in front of a munitions storage area for protection against the Armenians. We then noticed a few Armenians creeping up from behind, and notified the man distributing the weapons. He threw down the munitions in his hand and fired on them, and they ran away.

The wars started on April 2-3, 1915. In 1914, the Russians had not been able to penetrate the front line, but they surrounded our soldiers from behind by passing Çaldıran-Bahçesaray, and established a headquarters in the Molla Hasan village.

It was difficult to provide our soldiers with military supplies since the young students and elderly people carrying the equipment could not go further because of the cold weather. Many of them died.

We couldn't go anywhere either. But in the spring the Armenians went completely crazy. On May 10, 1915, the Russians were moving toward Van. On Governor Cevdet's orders we evacuated Van, taking with us what we could carry. During the war, Armenian brutality had reached a stage that no one, including the old, sick, captive, women, or children, could escape. The atrocities reached the degree that even the Armenians' main supporters, the Russians, were trying to prohibit their actions.

My grandmother Mihri couldn't flee with us because one of my uncles was paralyzed from the waist down. Unable to speak because of the shock of what happened in our absence, she later used sign language to explain what had transpired. They shaved my uncle's mustache along with his flesh, and then took them to a house which they used as a detention center and tortured him and the other captives until the Russians arrived.

When we became refugees there were 23 members of our family. We lost most of our family on the road to Bitlis and Urfa. Only two of us returned to Van. Our first stop on the road was Bitlis where we arrived in 11 days, and then went to Siirt, where we had relatives with whom we stayed for a few months. When we heard about the Russian advance, we again fled to Diyarbakır. Our convoy consisted of 250 people. We suffered from hunger and thirst on the way. We went through Kurtalan and Diyarbakır and the village of Kebir, where we didn't stay long, and again took the road to return to Van. When we reached Kurtalan, we learned that the Russians had entered Van again and went to Siirt. In the spring of 1916 we went to Baghdad, but fled to Mardin when the English advanced. In 1917 we arrived in Urfa. The French who entered Urfa started tormenting the Muslims by bringing the Aleppo Armenians to the city. This time we fought for 22 days.

We had left Van in 1915. When we were finally able to return, only two people remained from the 23-member family. Van was totally destroyed. The Armenians burned and demolished everything except for the Armenian-owned homes. In fact, when the Turkish army entered Van, around 2,000 Armenian artisans, expecting retaliation for their repression of the Turkish population, sought refuge on the island of Adır. The Turkish government instead ensured their safe passage to Revan.

BEKİR YÖRÜK

Father's Name: Yusuf
Mother's Name: Gülnaz
Place of Birth: Van
Date of Birth: 1900

Q: Can you tell us as best as you can remember what the Armenians did in Van and Gevas?

A: We lived in the same neighborhoods as the Armenians. We too lived in the Norşin neighborhood and got along well until the Russians intervened. In those days, Armenian youths established committees with Russian encouragement, and started causing trouble. They killed the superintendent of police and threw him in the park. They killed the postman in Hasbağı. They bombed a building now replaced by a bathhouse, and twenty people died in the explosion. When the constitutional monarchy was declared, the mufti and the priest shook hands and extolled the brotherhood of Muslims and Christians. The Mufti cried as he shook hands, but events developed against us. The committee members became increasingly out of control and the rebellion began. We fought the Armenians for 29 days in Hasbağı. We had no weapons. When the division went to Erzurum, we remained completely defenseless.

The Armenians who joined the army after the establishment of the constitutional monarchy used our weapons to shoot at us, and those who remained in the army hit our soldiers from behind. They also bombed the barracks. The young people and the elderly left in the Muslim neighborhoods would take turns guarding against the Armenians. Meanwhile, the Russians were sending them gold to finance their effort.

This struggle lasted 29 days until the arrival of the Russians. The elderly Armenians didn't want this fight because they were the wealthiest inhabitants of the area, and feared sacrificing their standard of living. Armenians owned up to 1,000 stores and sold European cloth in the old part of the city of Van. When these events broke out, inhabitants of nearby villages and towns all fled to Van, and those stores disappeared within two days.

Fifty vessels full of people left Van, three of which carried wounded soldiers. Cevdet Pasha saw the passengers off at the pier. We went to Adır Island, where the Armenians were training underground. We stayed on the island for nine days. The waves destroyed some of the ships with wooden sails. The island had wells and two bakeries. No one brought any supplies from Van. We were hungry and distraught. My elder brother was an officer and came back wounded from Erzurum. My brother realized that the Armenians would cut us off. He convinced his captain, and ten ships left from there, but we couldn't go very far. Thank God we stayed close to shore. The next day we reached Tatvan, but under difficult circumstances. The day we left Van the Armenians had set everything ablaze. There were wounded soldiers from all parts of Turkey in Van, and the Armenians fired on apartments used as hospitals where they were staying. That is why Van is sacred ground with martyrs from 67 provinces [in Turkey].

My uncle, Terren Aga, was very old, and we couldn't take him with us when we left Van. His wife, daughter, and two grandchildren remained with him. Armenian hoodlums beat my uncle and the children with an ax and killed them. His daughter hid in an abandoned American school. When the Armenians found her, they killed her by throwing her from the second floor.

We went to Bitlis from Tatvan where we remained for nearly two months. When the Russians arrived, we again went on the road. We then went to Hizan and Diyarbakır. After we left, the Gendarme commander -- who was crying like a baby -- brought my uncle (who was Deputy Governor Ömer Bey) a report. A soldier named Mansur was also present. When we asked him to explain, he said that three days after Van was emptied they went to pick up the bodies. Hundreds of elderly women were impaled on stakes. They still had their scarves on and looked as if they were sitting. When they got closer they saw that they were killed before being impaled. They saw a woman who was split in two and her unborn child was placed on her chest.

Muslims who witnessed these thousands of examples of inconceivable brutality tearfully reported the incidents to Ömer Bey, who then told Mustafa Kemal. When the Russians finally arrived, they were displeased with the savageness which resulted in the destruction of four-fifths of Van. In addition to those massacred by the Armenians, many people also died as they were fleeing. Many collapsed on the road from hunger and disease. No one was able to take anything with them when they left Van.

When we returned to Van from exile three years later we found the Muslim neighborhoods leveled to the ground, but the areas owned by Armenians were left undamaged. When we returned there were about 2,000 Armenians living in Van who fled to the islands when the Turks started returning. Two years later, the government sent them to Revan.

Q: Did you ever participate in the fighting or use a weapon?

A: No, I have never used a weapon. I didn't have a gun, plus they didn't give me one because I was too young and didn't know how to use it. Instead, I would bring food and water to the combatants.

Q: What kind of equipment were the Armenians using?

A: They had the latest equipment which was provided by Russia and England. They gave them weapons and had them fight us. The Armenians couldn't do anything to us, but when they were armed, the balance was upset.

Q: Did many people die in these and other clashes?

A: Of course, thousands of people died. After fighting for 29 days, the then-Governor Cevdet Pasha commanded us to leave Van when he heard that the Russian forces were approaching. Cevdet Pasha was actually a very courageous man, but we had neither guns nor ammunition, while the Russians were armed with top of the line weapons.

Q: Didn't the Ottoman state take any precautions against the Armenians arming themselves to this extent? Didn't word get around?

A: People knew, and the government knew. Yet the military was on the fighting front, and only a few gendarmes were left in Van. They couldn't do anything about it. The Armenians first shot Police Lieutenant Nuri Efendi, and blew up the Hamitaga barracks. Many soldiers were killed. Then they placed bombs in the Norşin Mosque and Hacı Naci Hodja Mosque. They blew up Hafız Hodja along with his son. Our women were raped, and our children shot.

Q: How was the evacuation carried out?

A: We left from here on 50 ships. That day the weather was stormy and rainy, as if all hell broke loose. The ships ran into each other. They were unable to approach the pier for a long time. The weather hadn't warmed up yet -- I think it was April. We left before the Russians arrived. There were about 250 people in our group, and 60 died. Some died at the hands of the Armenian bandits, others from cholera, disease, and hunger.

My uncle, his family and children, were all cut into pieces with a hatchet under the mulberry tree in our neighborhood. They [Armenians] massacred all those that stayed behind when we left. We lived in the Norşin neighborhood at the time. They burned all of Van.

All of this was planned by the Armenian committees which treacherously manipulated the Armenian population.

Q: Do you remember the names of those committees?

A: Dashnak was the most prominent one. There were others as well, but I don't remember their names now. They received money and gold from Russia and England.

Q: Did the Armenians kill many women and children?

A: The elderly didn't bother much, but all of their young people were armed. They killed whoever they could corner. They killed them and threw them into the lake or into the fire. For example, a woman was baking bread in a nearby village, and had her young child was at her side. The Armenians went into her backyard and asked her what she was doing. When she answered that she was baking bread, they insisted she needed a kebab as well, and pierced her child and threw him into the fire and burned him alive.

What else can I tell you? God knows the extent of what went on. During our escape, we took off on the ships, and stayed around the islands for four days. We couldn't sleep at night because of the wails, crying, and screams we heard all night. These were the cries we heard from surrounding villages: Zeve, Bardakçı, Kalaç, and Molla Kasım. I hope God ensures that we don't have to relive those days when these massacres took place.

Q: Where did you go after the islands?

A: From the islands we went to the Derviş village. It took us all day to get there. Ten ships were tied together at the edge of the lake. We were very frightened. In the morning we left toward Tatvan, and finally reached our destination. We were able to rest there, and later left toward Bitlis.

Q: Do you remember how many people were with you in your convoy?

A: There were between 10 and 20 thousand people in our convoy.

Q: Did many people from your convoy die in the exodus?

A: Of course.

Q: Could you tell us how they died?

A: The women couldn't take care of the children. Some would leave them in remote areas. Hunger and disease were rampant. For example, Ömer Efendi wrapped his child in rags and left him alive under a tree as we approached the Bitlis creek. There were many other children like this thrown into the Bitlis creek, or buried when they died. But Ömer Efendi regretted what he did, and a few days later went to retrieve the child and brought him back alive.

Q: How long were you a refugee?

A: Three years.

Q: What did you find when you returned to Van? How was Van, was there much damage?

A: I saw Van; it was completely destroyed and burned. When we were in Bitlis, the Deputy Governor Ömer Bey was there. He would regularly receive reports on the situation in Van. We would follow the situation of the Russians from there. One day a soldier, Mansur, came to Bitlis. He was from Halep and used to live near the Norşin Mosque. He was in tears as he told us the story of how they entered Van, and saw that the women were lined up in a row with their head scarves still on. As they approached, they saw that they were impaled and killed. They painfully removed them and buried them. The soldiers left all their work and buried them. They then went to another location where the women had been raped and then killed. There was blood everywhere.

A similar incident occurred in the Amik village which is close to here. The inhabitants took refuge in the castle and pulled up the ladder when the Armenians arrived. The Armenians approached and convinced them to let down the ladder because they were now friendly and there was no reason to be afraid. As soon as they ascended the stairs, they separated the children and men and threw them down the hill. Some of the women threw themselves from the castle, while the others were taken to an unknown location.

Q: Did you hear about similar incidents at the time?

A: Of course I did, but what else can I tell you? Dignity, chastity, and integrity all went out the window. We suffered so much, some people even resorted to cannibalism. But we were so compassionate that when we found Armenians hiding on the island, we didn't do anything to them.

Q: Were they the Armenians who stayed when you fled?

A: No, they were Armenians remaining on the island. During the exodus they brought many Turks to this island and killed them. The ship captains were Armenians. Many of our people were maliciously killed in this way on the ships. As I told you earlier, we couldn't sleep because of the wails in those days. When we left, Van was burning, and it was still burning when the soldier Mansur came.

Q: Will you tell us about your situation in Bitlis?

A: When we arrived in Bitlis as refugees, they were angry with us because we abandoned Van. Initially the people in Bitlis were not very kind to us, asking us why we ran away and did not fight the enemy. We answered that we had no other choice because we did not have guns or ammunition. Not long after, the population of Bitlis had to flee as well, and they understood our position. The heat was debilitating. There was no food or water. Cholera and disease were spreading. Many people died. One day we saw that vehicles from Elazig were arriving. The army corps came with Armenian drivers to bring salt to Harput.

Q: Were the drivers Armenian?

A: Yes, Armenian soldiers who were carrying salt. There was a captain leading them, and my brother approached him and asked him to stay and send a telegraph to arrange for a truck to carry us. We obtained permission from Mustafa Kemal Pasha and they started to transport us toward Diyarbakir. There was neither food nor water on the way. Many people died from diseases. At that time, there was a landowner named Mehmet. He has since died, but he was unique. He had fed the army and its horses for a year, and had given the military the keys to his stables. One year later Mustafa Kemal Pasha came, sat across from him, and asked what they owed him. When he said "for what?", Mustafa Kemal explained that the army had depended on him for a year. He responded that they were welcome to the remaining food. Anyway, when he saw us, he gave the order to set up a feast right away. Bulgur rice, lentils, and meat were prepared and offered. Everyone ate to their heart's content.

Let me tell you another story. I saw many of the men who had been tortured by the Armenians with my own eyes. In some places they had no meat on their bones. From hunger they ate human flesh. There was a milkman called Faik whose father was carrying a child when we saw him. When I asked him what he was doing, he said if he didn't carry the child away, they would eat him too.

I hope God doesn't make us live through those days again. Hunger and disease left us with nothing. No dignity, chastity, nothing.

Father's Name: Halil
Place of Birth: Van-Zeve
Date of Birth: 1903

I am from the well-known Zeve village, site of the most rampant Armenian massacres.

Q: How old were you when the Armenians rebelled?

A: I had just turned 11 at the time.

Q: Were your parents alive at the time?

A: Yes, they were.

Q: Were they subjected to Armenian atrocities?

A: I will tell you all about that later. I first want to try to explain the Armenians' position.

We know how untrustworthy the Armenians and Russians were, and about their efforts to attack the Ottoman State from behind by forming bands of rebels. At that time, Russians were paying Armenians a stipend. However, the Armenians were paying the Ottoman State only one gold coin in taxes, while those unable to pay that much were paying five silver coins. There were certain changes during the rule of Sultans Hamit and Reşat. They extended equal rights to the Armenians, declaring that they would be equal to Muslims, like brothers. They passed a law lifting the tax imposed on them, and made them equal to us. There was jubilation in the streets. Armenian priests and our religious leaders hugged and kissed. At this time it was also decided that Armenians would serve in the military with us and study in our schools. The Armenians were thrilled with these changes. As soon as they had the opportunity, they established committees and asked for money from France and England and arms from Russia. They figured they could cooperate with the Russians, receive military supplies from them, and attack the Ottomans from within while the Russians could advance from the outside.

What did the Russians do? They constructed storage bins out of the stove pipes and stove metal. These bins were three feet long and one and a half feet wide, and filled with arms and munitions. Some of our supplies including kerosene came from Russia at the time. The Russians delivered these military supplies to the Armenians by hiding them in the bins and covering them with kerosene containers. Having armed the Armenians in this way, the Russians sent a member of the secret revolutionary society from Russia. His name was Aram, and he was blind in one eye. A Russian Armenian, they named him Aram Pasha. Then they brought someone named Antranik to the Muş area, and called him Antranik Pasha. Plus, there was an Armenian revolutionary committee leader nicknamed Şahin in the Karagündüz village of the Erçek region. They would set up committee organizations and head for the Turkish borders. They crossed into Turkish villages where they would attack and kill Turks, and then retreat. They carried weapons and bandits to Karagündüz on horseback.

Q: Do you remember the revolutionary committees in the region and the names of their leaders?

A: I named some of them a little earlier. I don't remember any other names. They armed themselves with the help of the Russians, and came with their horses. They created storage areas in the Sisanan village, and moved to a lake village which was completely inhabited by Armenians who had moved into the village earlier. On the lake there were enormous ships which could carry 500-600 people. These ships would carry arms and ammunition to Adilcevaz, Ahlat, Ercis, and Gevas. Some would later be sent to Tatvan, Mus and Bitlis. The Armenians armed themselves well with these supplies, and started to form guerilla groups. More specifically, they organized fighters and hid them on the islands of Akdamar, Çarpanak, and Kadir. These fighters later scattered throughout the area, insulting and provoking the public. After a while, they decided to get along with the Russians. After the Russians declared war on the Ottoman Empire, all of our soldiers left the area. Some went to the Caucasian front line, while others went to the Iranian front line. The Armenian soldiers accompanied our soldiers. After the two sides started fighting, our soldiers noticed that they were being shot from behind. The doctors could not understand why soldiers who should be hit from the front were hit from behind. Then they realized that Armenian soldiers would kill ours whenever the opportunity arose. We lost perhaps thousands of our soldiers in this way, but it was too late when it was discovered. Some of the traitors were found, while some joined the Russian fighters. This war lasted two and a half years. Our soldiers were in terrible shape, and were forced to retreat. The Russian military started to advance. When they arrived at the Çaldıran plains, they came across the Hamidiye regiment which was formed during the reign of Sultan Hamit and was composed of tribes. The Russians used the Hamidiye organization for their own means, telling them to provide soldiers to defend the area, while they would provide munitions and arms.

A soldier who heard that the Russians arrived in Çaldıran ran to his village (Derebey) and told the village headman that it was futile to work in the fields since the Russians had already arrived in Çaldıran, which meant they would be in the village either that day or the next. He told the villagers they would all be killed if they didn't flee. Hearing this, the villagers gathered together, took some food and whatever they could carry, and left toward Van. They first reached the Zorava village, which is Circassian. When the inhabitants asked them what was going on, they told them that they were headed to Van because the Russians had entered Çaldıran and were advancing toward Muradiye.

Hearing this, the villagers in Zorava joined the refugees. Later there were eight villages which joined this caravan to Van; Hakis, Zorava, Derebey, Şih Ömer, Şihkara, Sıhayne, Hıdır, and Göllü. They had no idea that Van was emptied and that its inhabitants had migrated. When they arrived at the Everek plains, they saw some Armenians who asked them in Armenian: "Where are you mindless people going?" to which they answered, "We're going to Van. We will go wherever the inhabitants of Van go." To this the Armenians showered them with insults and added "Turks left Van over six or seven days ago, and are refugees. The era of Cevdet Pasha has been over for a long time. The Aram Pasha Administration has been formed. All of the wounded, hospitalized, women and children in Van were killed. Mosques were torched, barracks burned. We cut up all of the Muslims in Van. There were only 20-30 women remaining, and we gave them to Aram Pasha." To this, Circassian Ibo said that they would become prisoners, and proposed that they go to Zeve, which was very close to the lake. He suggested they could find a ship there and save the women and children.

By the time this group of refugees reached our village (Zeve), we saw that there were over 2,000 of them. When we asked them what happened, they responded, "We were fleeing to Van, but Armenians preempted us and told us that the inhabitants of Van had migrated, so we came here to acquire a ship in the hopes of saving our women and children."

It was spring, and it was not easy to settle the refugees in our small village, but we did our best. We settled them in homes, tents, and barns. There were more than 2,000 of them, and they stayed with our villagers, who numbered about 500. In addition, soldiers disbanded from the army came home to our village. You should have seen them. They had long beards, their uniforms were torn, they were full of lice. We settled them, too. One was my brother Necip, my cousin Mustafa, my brother-in-law Mehmet, my cousin İlyas, Recep, son of Şaban, Mustafa's son Seyyat, and Emrah's son Şükrü. They were emaciated -- just skin and bones. They took off their clothes and burned them and pulled off the lice. My uncle Yusuf was a good barber. After scrubbing their heads with hot water, he shaved them with a razor. Believe me, because of the lice, blood was dripping from their faces and eyes. They were somewhat more comfortable after that.

Two days had passed. On the third day, the village Hodja began his morning call to prayer. Those that wanted to pray went, others went to their jobs. There was a river in the middle of our village. It flows all the way from the Iranian border, and becomes a lake in the spring when the snow melts. But we were never sure exactly where this water came from. One day we heard a woman's voice from the other side of the river calling for someone to carry her to our side. On hearing this, my uncle grabbed his horse, followed the sounds, and what did he see, but Esmâ, the daughter of Ahmet. He was amazed when he saw Esmâ, who had married into the Molla Kasım village. She promised to tell her story after my uncle helped her cross the river. He helped her onto the saddle and brought her to this side of the river. At this time the villagers had finished their morning prayer and had gathered around them. She told them to fend for themselves, that Hamit, Molla Kasım, and Ayanos had been killed, and that the perpetrators would be in our village any day now. The Hodja addressed the crowd with "Friends, we are Muslims. It doesn't fit our religion for us to die needlessly. We have about 60 weapons, 2 chests full of ammunition, and eight or nine soldiers with guns and bullets. Let's defend our village. My father's cousin, Hodja Osman who served with Cevdet Pasha had sent 60 guns and the ammunition."

There were hills near our village, below the bridge. There were plains on the top, and grasslands below. The villagers took their positions on the top part of the hills, and waited for the Armenians to advance. When the Armenians surrounded the village on three fronts and attacked, our villagers were prepared. They fought the Armenians until noon. When our side charged them, the Armenians were startled. Some of them fled to Mermit village, while others went to Vadar village. After they fled they started to regroup. There were other Armenian villages such as the enormous Alay village comprised of 400 homes. They gathered together all of the Armenians, and again started a battle which continued until the end of the mid-afternoon prayer. After the mid-afternoon prayer, there were up to one hundred horses speeding down Erzurum Street which originated in Van. The villagers thought that they were Ottoman soldiers who came to their assistance after hearing gunfire, but soon saw that they were Russian Armenians who heard the gunfire and came to the village. The fighting started again, and our villagers started to run out of bullets. The Armenians saw this as an opportunity and entered the village by killing the Turks who were guarding it. The village was burning, and herds of people numbering two or three thousand started to flee. The Armenians were throwing small children in the air and piercing them with bayonets or sticking them in the stomach with bayonets. The children let out shrill cries and fell to the ground like baby birds. In desperation, some of the women and young girls threw themselves into the river, while others lit fire to bails of grass and threw themselves into the bonfire.

They captured Corporal Seyyat alive, laid him on the ground, undressed him, and skinned him alive. They also carved out his shoulders and carved into his sides, taunting him by saying that Sultan Reşat promoted him and gave him a medal. The Armenians also set fire to the grass and threw some

of our women and children into the fire and burned them alive. They sliced the throats of the rest of the survivors as if they were sacrificial lambs. Not one child survived. After massacring the entire village, they killed the five most attractive women; my cousin Seher, Esmâ, the headman's wife, a distant relative Hayriye, my aunt Ayşe, and Güllü. Then they left. I'll explain to you how I survived even though the Armenians vowed to continue the massacres until we were all dead. My father was very well known, and he had extended much kindness to the Bardakçı village. My father had once saved the life of Kırbe, and his son Asvador was among the Armenians. Although at the time my father was in Iran as a reserve officer, Asvador came to us during the massacre. Asvador told the Armenians not to touch me, my mother, and one of my sisters and saved our lives. After the Armenians left, Asvador took us out of hiding. The wounded were moaning from pain, begging for someone to wrap their wounds or give them some water.

Asvador brought us to the Bardakçı village where we stayed for some time. My cousin Sema in Bardakçı would swear to us that in the evening the Armenians would come and pick out ten or eleven women out of the 150, and rape them until the morning. The women would be covered with blood, and after they were dropped off they were unable to even sit.

Meanwhile a Russian government was established in Van and Aram Pasha became its leader. Aram Pasha's government proclaimed that any refugees in need of food or water were welcome in Van. My father at this time was in the Haçik village where he and my uncles were on Halil Pasha's boat. From there they went to a village in the Hosap region. When my uncles heard the proclamation they went to Van. They were shocked to see that the city was burned and completely destroyed. The city used to be at the foothill of the castle. Everything was completely destroyed: the buildings, barracks, mosques, bathhouses, and government buildings.

My father was from the Haçbahan neighborhood where there were Armenian homes and stores. Coincidentally, Asvador ran into him on the street. After the customary greeting, my father asked him if he had any news about our village. Asvador responded that they had slaughtered all of Zeve, but that his younger wife, child and daughter were safe with him. He volunteered to hand us over to my father. My father acknowledged the favor by Asvador, but feared that the Armenians would kill him if he went to the village, so he suggested that Asvador bring us to him instead so that he could take us away. When Asvador came to see us that night, he told us that he ran into my father, and that we should prepare ourselves so that he could take us to him. In the morning he loaded us onto an ox cart, took us to Van, and delivered us to my father. I will never forget that day. My father took us to Hosap from there. We didn't stay long because the Armenians were raiding a village a day. Many people were fleeing either toward Iran, Mardin or Diyarbakır to save their lives.

Q: Mr. İbrahim, can you tell us about what happened in Van. Apparently the first revolt took place there, where the castle was toppled by cannon fire, the city was completely destroyed, and an Armenian government was set up. Since you were in Zeve you may have seen the troubles in Van. Do you have any knowledge of the incidents in Van?

A: They used cannon fire to burn the castle. At that time we were in the village of Bardakçı, and could see the fire in Van from there. Mosques, buildings and barracks were burned. After capturing the castle, they aimed some of the cannon fire downhill. The mosque near the castle also was burned and destroyed, as well as the Hamitaga barracks. They butchered almost all of the Muslims there – only a few women survived. After the Russian government was established, these women complained to the Russians about the Armenians, and asked for protection because they

trusted the Russians more. The Russians had the women guarded and did not violate their virtue, but the Armenians raped our women and massacred the children and elderly.

Q: Mr. İbrahim, is it possible that one of the reasons that the Russian soldiers did not touch our women was the possible presence of Turks in the Russian army?

A: Yes. There were Crimean and Caucasian soldiers and officers. They protected our women because they too were Muslims. In fact, they even sent them back to their villages including the Molla Kasım village. During the massacres they could only send 30 of the 150 women. They planned to stay in the Molla Kasım village until the Ottoman military arrived. However, they were subject to even further hardships. When the Russians retreated, the Armenians stayed behind. The Armenians suggested that the Russians leave their weapons, ammunition, cannons, and supplies, so they could fight the Ottoman government. When the Russians left all of their equipment to them, the Armenians became even more ruthless and continued the massacres. When our army starting arriving from Bitlis to Gevas and clashing with these Armenians, the Armenians headed to Van toward Muradiye and Kars. They ultimately went to Russia and Iran. Only a handful of Armenians remained behind. They stayed on small islands in Lake Van such as Çarpanak.

Q: Were there any Armenians in your Zeve village?

A: No, none.

Q: Where were you at the time that the Armenians established an Armenian government with the Russians?

A: We were in Zeve at the time.

Q: How many people from Zeve survived?

A: In addition to myself, six women were saved from Zeve, and that was only because of a good deed my father had done earlier. Everyone else was murdered, including many women and children.

Q: They say that a mosque near the Van castle was burned. Was this mosque in Van or Zeve?

A: It was in Van, but mosques in Zeve were burned down as well. In Van they burned other mosques such as the Kayaçelebi, Ulu, and Hüsrev Pasha, as well as many smaller mosques. You can still see all of their traces.

Q: Were there any people inside the mosques in Van when they were burned down?

A: Without a doubt.

Q: How about in Zeve?

A: Many had gone into the mosque for protection. Among them were uncle Hamza, Derviş, and Derebeyli. I don't remember the names of the others except for a great personality in Zeve whose name you may have heard; Sultan Hacı Hamza. He built the first Derviş lodge in the area.

Q: Isn't it true that during the massacres the Turks sought refuge in the lodge thinking that they would not be killed?

A: They sought shelter in the tomb, not the lodge.

Q: They say that the Armenians burned down the tomb, is that right?

A: It is true. They set fire to the tomb too, and thought everyone inside had been killed, but three people survived. Unfortunately, mosques, tombs made no difference to them. They burned them down with everyone inside. I hope God will protect us from similar events in the future.

AYŞE SEVİMLİ

Father's Name: Derviş
Mother's Name: Hayriye
Place of Birth: Van-Zeve
Date of Birth: 1897

When the villagers heard that the Armenians were approaching, they took as many precautions as possible. They dug positions in the hills. The inhabitants of seven villages filled up our village. There was little room in the village to maneuver around the people and carts. On the day that we heard the Armenians had almost reached the village, the men ran to take their positions and begin fighting. We had no ammunition or weapons assistance. When the Armenians entered our village, some of our men died fighting; others were burned in their homes. I hid with my mother and some others in a barn further away from the fighting. I got under a large basket. The Armenians killed everyone they could find and also fired at the barn. A bullet hit my mother's scarf, but she was not hurt. I know of only two other women who survived.

The Armenians were in Bardakçı before coming to our village. My God, when we went out at night, blood, gunfire, moaning, and wailing filled the air. I witnessed them torture people by cutting "pockets" out of skin while mockingly telling them they were decorating them with medals. When we approached the Bardakçı village, I saw that on the other side of the brook, in the field near Mehmet's house they had tied the arms of five men together and were shooting at them. When they fell to the ground, they stabbed them with bayonets. My mother handed them all of her money and valuables so that we would not be hurt. They then brought us to Van, and tortured the prisoners in unmentionable ways. We stayed in the military barracks for four months. We later became refugees, and remained as such until April 1918.

ZEKERİYA KOÇ

Father's Name: Yakup
Mother's Name: Nadide
Place of Birth: Van-Ayanis
Date of Birth: 1908

When the Armenian incidents broke out we were in our village, Zeve, Mollakasım and Ayanis were the villages in the region inhabited entirely by Muslims. There were five or ten Armenian homes in the other villages. Before these problems broke out, we had excellent relations with the Armenians. We got along particularly well with Armenian-inhabited Alaköy. We would invite each other to banquets, and there were no hostilities between us.

Then when everything started and the residents of Van fled, we decided to migrate as well. We got together, filled four carts as much as possible, and got on the road. As we were leaving the village, a man came from Van, and asked us where we were going. When we told him, he urged us to stay, saying he had cannons, guns, and military supplies. On his encouragement, everyone returned home. Three days passed. On the fourth day, we were at my grandmother's. I was standing and eating a piece of buttered bread my grandmother prepared for me. Three villagers were there helping us out. We heard one gunshot, and the men said "This noise is from Armenian guns, it buzzes like tin. Our weapons clatter. Something is going on."

Meanwhile someone came from Mollakasım, stood on the hilltop of our village, and yelled "Why are you still around? Kurds raided and plundered Alaköy, and the Armenians are attacking villages." Right after this my cousin Dursun showed up. An elderly woman asked him why he came. He had a bullet through his thumb and said, "They destroyed the village and I ran away. Before the villagers had a chance to organize, the Armenians surrounded the village. The Armenians captured our livestock near the cemetery and took them to Alaköy. The Armenians went into the village and separated the men and stuffed them into a room. Their leader was Hamados Pasha, who had paid Iranian Kurds to fight with him. He told his fighters to separate all males over the age of seven, and add them to the men to be burned.

They spoke Turkish almost as well as we did. At that time I was seven years old. My mother immediately wrapped a scarf around my head, put a loose dress on me, and pulled me toward her. I survived, but they picked out four or five people from among us and took them away near the men. As soon as they added them to the men they poured gasoline on the crowd and lit a fire. The screams emanating from there reached the skies. They rounded up the women and took them outside. They would mock us by saying "ladies why don't you sit here and rest. Look how nicely the dogs are at each other's throats." The "dogs" they referred to were someone's son, husband, father or uncle, crying "oh my God" in agonizing pain. They made us sit there for up to an hour. When we walked by the cemetery, one of the Armenians began singing a ballad mocking us.

At that moment we saw that the Armenians had shot my mother's cousin with her child still nursing on her breast. Then an Armenian came and killed the child with a bayonet. They killed a lot of people in that area. Those that could run away escaped, those that couldn't had gas poured over them and were burned. We were forced to sit there for quite a while.

Hamza, Hacı Ümmet's uncle lived in our village. He always carried a dagger. The Armenians were going to carry him away and kill him, but he ran toward them. He was either going to kill them or be killed. He could not overcome them. Before they killed him they carved out "pockets" in his thighs and placed his hands inside. Excuse my language, but they cut his organ and placed it in his mouth, and cut his nose and placed it in his behind.

They then took us to a hilltop in Alaköy before taking us into the village. There they packed us into a barn. The children in the group were starving and began to wail from hunger. The Armenians cut off the hands, feet, and other appendages of the dead men, cooked, them, and brought them as food. The children could not understand, but the women said that it was preferable to starve, and had to explain this to the children. When nightfall came, they flooded the barn with water. The women had placed the children on their shoulders and were shouting. After some time they emptied the water out of the barn by opening a trench. The next day the women were escorted out, and dried their clothes on rocks outside the village. The women of Mollakasım lived a little further down than us. The Armenians had killed the men in the village there and imprisoned the women.

In other words they were raiding Muslim villages, killing the men, and imprisoning the women. In Alaköy they led us onto the road toward Van. When we arrived at the Mermit stream, some of the women threw themselves into the water rather than die in the hands of their captors. The infidels shot them from behind and killed some of them. They broke the arms and bashed the heads of some that wanted to jump into the water. I was with my mother, aunt, and grandmother. My mother was still nursing my sister. When my mother wanted to throw herself into the water and kill herself, my grandmother held onto her and would not let her go. The Armenians put blockades by the stream to prevent people from jumping. The next thing we knew, an Armenian came to us and asked my grandmother who we were, and from which village we came. My grandmother was rude at first, but told him when he insisted. When she responded that we were from the village of Ayanıs, and that my grandfather's name was Muhittin, her sons Yakup and Niyazi, he grabbed her and said he would never want or permit harm to come to us. We were stunned. He then told us a story of when they were coming from Bahçesaray to Van in eight wagons. My father stopped some men who wanted to kill the Armenians from doing so. Instead, he escorted them all of the way to Van, then he turned around and came back to the village.

That man gave us some bread, old cheese, and yogurt. Well into the morning they took us from there and brought us to Bardakçı. At night we slept in the plains of the village with armed guards at our sides. What harm could women inflict anyway? There were about 700-800 of us. Then in the morning they woke us, and took us to the foot of the castle in Van. There the governor of Van, Cevdet Pasha, had a three-story detention center. They brought a lot of people there before us. One of the women who was there gave birth to a baby. The Armenians threw the child off the roof of the building, and the child was lost. We stayed there for five days. In the afternoon they let us go out in the fields, and people gathered whatever they could find to eat.

After five days, they brought two more groups of people. In the afternoon they moved us to Hacı Bekir's detention center near the old Governor's home. They had also brought the inhabitants of the Muslim village Pürüt there. Before they passed out bread, they added sulphur and other things to it. Up to 70 people a day died as a result. The Armenians dug ditches along the wall across from the barracks and brought in the dead on stretchers and threw them there. Here too, we ran across one of the Armenians which my father had saved. That Armenian fed us for a few days. People were attacking the food.

One week went by, and they told us the Russians had arrived. One day a major, a captain, and two soldiers came into the barracks and counted and recorded the prisoners. The next day we were fed rice with meat, and taken outside where there were Russian guards. The Russians asked about our villages, and told us they would take us there. When we all wanted to go to Mollakasim, they accepted. In the morning they loaded us onto 70 to 80 wagons and took us to Mollakasim. After arriving, we stuck together out of fear of the Armenians. We picked a leader from among us, and lived that way until the Turkish army came to Van. After some time, we rehabilitated the villages which the Armenians had burned and plundered.

CEMAL ÇUVAÇ

Father's Name: İbrahim

Mother's Name: Fidan

Place of Birth: Van-Köprüköy

Date of Birth: 1905

When the Armenian riots broke out we were living in Köprüköy. Our relations with the Armenians in surrounding villages weren't bad. In fact, they were quite good. But before the inhabitants of Van became refugees, Armenian fighters began shooting at the Muslims. Their leader was Aram the Blind. Our youth had all joined the army because of the declared mobilization. In fact, my three brothers were martyred while serving as soldiers in Erzurum. There were old people like me and children left in the village. Men older than sixty were serving as militia. We hadn't heard that the inhabitants of Van had fled -- we didn't know, so we stayed. One week we stayed in the sehayne village. When we learned that the Russians were approaching from this side, we fled to Van, but heard that Van was being evacuated. We got caught in the crossfire.

When we were between the villages of Kalecik and İskele, the Armenians of Kalecik started to fire on us. We didn't know where to go. Armenians captured Van, and the Russians were behind us. If we didn't flee, the Armenians would cut us up. At the end we decided to flee to Iran, because Hacı Nebi from sıhkara had served as a soldier on the Iranian border and said he knew the way and we could easily reach Iran. The inhabitants of the village met at the top of the hill and divided into two. Half of us joined the Gülsünler villagers and took the road to Iran, while the others stayed. During this time Halil Bey's forces were losing and retreating, so we couldn't go to Iran either. So we took to the Nardis mountains and went to Siirt via Hosap and Hasir. We spent 32 days traveling in the mountains. We suffered from hunger and thirst. We slaughtered a few animals we had with us, and ate grass to survive. But we owe the soldiers for the fact that we arrived safely in Siirt. They fought during the day, while at night we would advance in their shadow. We fled without taking anything with us.

Those who stayed behind went to the village of Zeve along with the inhabitants of seven villages. All but a few of them were massacred by the Armenians. I knew Hamza who was among the survivors. He was from the village of Amik, but now he's dead as well. Only one or two women and children survived. They raped and killed the women in their custody. Hamza would tell us about it. They would throw children into the air and pierce them with bayonets. They stuffed most of the people into homes and committed mass massacres before setting the homes on fire.

There were 18 people in our family who became refugees, but only my father and I survived. The rest died on the road. We went to Siverek and Urfa via Siirt and Diyarbakır. We were in Urfa for three years. When we returned to Van, the Muslim villages were burned down and destroyed. For example, while Hıdır, and our village Gülsünler were completely burned down, not one house in the Armenian village of Muprutepe was destroyed. We stayed a while in that village, then rebuilt our own village. We were able to return to our village with Mr. Abdurrahman. But I can't explain in words what the Armenians did to us. The inhabitants of Van, Bitlis and Muş all fled, while those that stayed were massacred. When we returned around 1,500-2,000 Armenians had remained. When the Turkish army entered Van they sought refuge on the island of Çarpanak. The government took care of them for one and a half to two years, and later sent them to Revan. But we never retaliated for the repression we suffered. In fact, we fed them for two years.

HİKMET SAYLIK

Father's Name: Ziver

Mother's Name: söhret

Place of Birth: Van-Gülsünler

Date of Birth: 1901

I am from the village of Gülsünler, which used to be called Sıhkara. We left the village when the Armenians raided the villages and started massacring the Muslim population. We were going toward Van, but the Armenians stopped us before we arrived. We had no choice but to return. About 300 people from the village gathered in Zeve, while an equal number returned to the village. We fled toward Hosap as a group. Turkish soldiers were in Hosap, and they told us to leave as soon as possible and get out of the line of fire. In spite of the difficulties we faced, we went as far as Siirt. Many of the refugees suffered and died due to widespread hunger and disease. From there, we arrived in Diyarbakır, Mardin, and finally in Adana. We then went to Konya, because the French had occupied Adana. The government then sent us to Mersin, but when the Turkish military took back Van we returned. But Van and its villages were completely ruined: quiet, burned, and destroyed. Three hundred people were martyred in our village. They gathered the people in houses and burned them alive. The inhabitants of Van fled, and those that remained were cut up by the Armenians. When we returned, not all of the Armenians had left. Some of the villages, such as Alaköy remained as they were, and the Muslims did not hurt anyone there. The government later sent the Armenians to Russia. Many members of my family were martyred in this village including my mother, father, brother Mustafa, and other relatives. Around 30-40 families fled with us, but only ten families returned. Those that stayed and those that went to Zeve were all massacred. I found the skeletons of nearly 200 Muslims killed by Armenians. I buried them here, but could not afford to provide headstones. This includes the graves of my mother and father as well as many relatives. The Armenians had burned them alive.

MEHMET SAAR

Father's Name: Tevfik
Mother's Name: Rukiye
Place of Birth: Van-Göllü
Date of Birth: 1901

I am from the Göllü village. The Armenians revolted when the army in Van retreated toward Erzurum. Our mothers and fathers were all slain by Armenians. My father, a gendarme sergeant, was among those killed. The villagers in Mollakasım, Amık, sıhayne, Göllü, Hıdır, Kurtsatan, and Köprüköy were also murdered. Part of our village hid in Zeve and were later killed, but we were able to escape. Armenians tortured and inflicted all types of cruelties on the people they kidnapped. They cut up pregnant women and removed the unborn children with bayonets. They raided and burned all of the Muslim villages, murdering men, women, young and old. The Muslim population which fled the villages I named tried to escape by crossing the bridge on the Ablengez River. The Armenians demolished the bridge, and threw the bodies of their prisoners into the river. In the spring when the snow melted, the bodies were emptied into the lake. During the day, my mother, my two sisters, and I would lie low and advance slowly by the crops on the river, and at night we would stay in the hills. We knew if the Armenians found us they would kill us. My mother died before we reached Diyarbakır. I later lost my two sisters, and was left all alone. I stayed in Diyarbakır for three years, and returned to my village the fourth year. Since Van and the Muslim villages were all burned and destroyed, we settled down in an Armenian village since they remained intact. We later returned to our villages which we rebuilt with our own hands.

Words cannot express the torture we suffered at the hands of the Armenians. We lost our homes, families, and possessions. After losing my mother, father, and two sisters, I also lost my cousin and other relatives who were trying to escape to Tatvan by ship with thousands of other people. All of the passengers on the ship were brutally slaughtered and dismembered by the Armenians near the Parkat village near Adilcevaz.

Father's Name: Hamid
Mother's Name: Nigar
Place of Birth: Van-Kavunlu (Çoravanis)
Date of Birth: 1904

I was ten years old when we became refugees. Before we fled, Değirmen was an Armenian village which included 80 Armenian families and three Muslim Turkish families. One day the Armenians gathered the three families, cut them up, and tossed them into a well. They tortured and killed the young men by cutting "pockets" into their thighs and crucified them by nailing them to the wall by their foreheads. Roughly 30 young people died this way. A woman whose father-in-law lived in the Değirmen village came to tell a cleric in our village what was going on in Değirmen. After this, conflicts arose with the Armenians living in our village, and a few Armenians were killed. After what happened in the Değirmen village, a weapon was distributed to every home in our village as a precaution. My father was the headman of our village. Since the surrounding villages were Armenian, the Muslim population feared that our village would be attacked, and gathered in the mosque. We filled sacks with sand and used them as barriers.

During this time, two young Armenians were locked into a home because our villagers could not bear to kill them. But they dug a tunnel under the house, and fled to Değirmen village carrying news. Then the inhabitants of three villages, Değirmen, Farh and another Armenian village raided our village. The fighting lasted for more than an hour. The Armenians controlled the bridge above the stream, and invaded Ziyaret as well. The stream overflowed with melted snow, and it was pure chaos when we tried to cross the stream. When my mother entered the water, it reached her chest. Naturally, people broke their arms, legs, or heads, while children were carried away by the water. It was hell, pure hell. The Armenians were throwing the dead bodies onto heaps of wheat. The bodies had piled up like hills. My father jumped on his horse and went to Van from Akköprü. Since Sihke was an Armenian village, they didn't give him permission to pass through. My father explained the situation to the governor of Van, Cevdet Pasha and asked for his help. One hundred soldiers came to our rescue, and the Armenians fled. We hid in the village of Dirandaz which was Muslim. After spending the night there, my father went to Van in the morning and asked those entering the city if we should return to our village. They said that we shouldn't, so we were forced to become refugees. My sisters and I wore men's clothing and hit the road.

We were going towards Edremit when the Armenians raided Van. The city was burning, and the houses were in flames which reached the sky. We reached Edremit, but they raided that too. We went from there to Bitlis, from Bitlis to Siirt, to Diyarbakır, and then to Siverek. We stayed there three years. There were eight people in our family who became refugees. On the way, my brother Ali was captured. The rest died on the road. Only my mother and I were able to return to Van. We weren't the only ones affected. The inhabitants of Van, Edremit, and Van's Muslim villages all became refugees. Those that didn't run were killed at the hands of the enemy, while most of those that got away died on the road.

A few years later, my mother and I returned to Van, and what did we see? There were ruins everywhere, a few people, but they were all hungry, thirsty, and miserable. Neighborhoods and houses were empty. There was no bread, wheat, or anything. We were compelled to return to the village of Çoravanis. The wheat there was starting to mature. We cracked the bitter seeds, boiled them, and drank the water. The Armenians took whatever furniture, goods, animals, or whatever

they could find, and destroyed our houses as well. A man on a horse who saw us alone in the village told us that there was a grain storage area near the pier. My mother and I went to get 60 kilos of flour there, but it was later stolen. The Armenians had not yet withdrawn completely. There were bandits everywhere. One time my mother and I went to the Erek mountain to gather pieces of metal which we wanted to trade for bread with the soldiers. We ran into six Armenians who were going to kill us, but when it suddenly started to rain and hail, we ran away and hid in a cave. We barely saved our lives.

We suffered considerably. Three years later my brother died in captivity. We were told that the Armenians were going to kill him, but the Russians objected. They had made him build roads in Armenian villages by hand. We rebuilt our homes, planted our fields, and started anew.

KAMİLE ELİBOL

Father's Name: Ali

Mother's Name: Kisma

Place of Birth: Van-Ercis-Gölağzı

I am from the Gölağzı village of Ercis, which is now a neighborhood of Ercis. I was ten years old when the Armenians raided our village. We had no early warning or intelligence that the Armenians and Russians would invade. One day we were told that Ercis was destroyed, and that the Russians had invaded. Those that heard the news in time fled, but we were caught by surprise. We too gathered our belongings and joined the refugees. When the Armenians invaded, those that were able to get away did -- those remaining were all killed. Many men were able to get away, but the women and children were caught. They were collected and brought to the castle. My God, they raped the children, then they killed them. They killed so many people that they piled the bodies onto ships and threw them into the Lake Van. Of course, I had relatives that died too. The relatives on my father's side whose names I can remember are Celal, Cemal, Ali, and Nurettin. We first ran away to Ahlat, and from there to Tatvan, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Adana, and Konya where we stayed about ten years. When we returned, Ercis and Gölağzı were burned and destroyed. The Armenians left nothing, they destroyed everything.

YAMİN TOSUN

Father's Name: Osman

Mother's Name: Hanım

Place of Birth: Van-Ercis -Haydarbey

I am from the Haydarbey village. We became refugees when the Armenians revolted and the Russians came. We moved to Urfa, where my mother, father, and sibling died because of the famine that year. When the Russians retreated, Armenians took their place, but the Turkish army pushed them back to Revan. We returned to our homes, and found Ercis, the Muslim village and our village completely burned down and demolished.

RAŐIT BARIŐ

Father's Name: Basu

Mother's Name: Cevahir

Place of Birth: Van-Ercis-Yukarı IŐıklı

Date of Birth: 1901

I am from the Yukarı IŐıklı village of Ercis. After the mobilization was declared, the Russians arrived. Armenians had already rebelled by then, and we could only defend ourselves from them for a month, after which we fled. I remember that my father was wounded at that time. The Armenians shot him, shrapnel split his head, and he was severely hurt, but did not die. We first went to Bitlis, Mardin, and Diyarbakir. When we returned to our village it was completely ruined.

KAYA ÇELEBİ

Father's Name: Vehbi
Mother's Name: Cemile
Place of Birth: Van
Date of Birth: 1925

Kaya Çelebi retells the stories told by his mother Cemile (1884-1984).

Q: When did your mother pass away?

A: She passed away a month ago at the age of 100.

Q: Can you tell us, without editorializing, or becoming emotional, what your mother said about the incidents in Van, the Armenian revolt, and the reason that it happened?

A: You know the reasons. The Armenians lived under the protection of the Ottoman State for 600 years, and had every privilege. They took advantage of this land and of us. They rose to high positions including ministers in government agencies. There was no pressure on them. However, this favorable treatment caused a reaction. I predict that they got the idea of forming their own state.

Q: Do you remember your mother's description of the development of the revolt in Van and the accompanying incidents?

A: I can tell you about it. Their only goal was to establish an Armenian state in eastern Anatolia with Van at its center. Revolts and terrorist incidents started to take place everywhere. These even started before the First World War, but the war was an opportunity for them to collaborate with the Russians. The Armenians in Van and Erzurum ensured the Russian entry into Van by leading them to the city after the start of the war. Naturally, with the Russian occupation, many Turks became refugees. In fact, they had previously sent a division in Van to Erzurum, and Van was left without the presence of soldiers. Van's leaders at the time went to the governor and asked him how he permitted the departure of a division with the presence of an Armenian threat. The governor responded that he could defend the city with a squadron, since the opposition was not even a state. Despite all the insistence, the division was sent to the front from Van. The public became worried and held a meeting. They sent the division off, crying and screaming, as if they knew what fate was awaiting them. Armenian brigands took advantage of this situation and positioned themselves. Van was occupied by Russian forces on May 20, 1915. Their terror continued for two years, ten months, and eleven days until April 2, 1918. Given the oppression, the governor decided to evacuate Van.

Q: Since the revolt started in April, and the occupation was in May, can you tell us about the beginning of the revolt as described by your mother?

A: There were rebellions earlier as well, but the initial large revolt was in April. The then-governor Cevdet Pasha saw that the situation had deteriorated, and commanded that all women, children, elderly, men and women board ships docked in Lake Van. Anyone that could carry a weapon was already in the army – most of them on the Erzurum front. Those that were in Van could not have defended themselves. The ships were full when they left, but since the owners were Armenian, they carried the passengers to the side of the Çarpanak island and killed many of them. This was

later discovered, and the public then opted for land transportation. My mother was pregnant, and had three other children, 10, 7, and 5 years old. That day my mother gave birth. When we learned that the Russians had started to advance from Çatak, she wrapped up the child without recovering, and hit the road even though she was ill. She was trying to follow a group to Edremit. Although she was slowing down the crowd of 60-70 because she did not feel well, they waited for her. My grandfather was a retired police officer, and my father was a manager in Gürpınar. My grandfather was with my mother and helped her, because many people were too weak to carry their children. For this reason there were many abandoned children on the road. In fact, my grandfather thought it was best to leave the child, but when my mother refused, he had no choice but to give up.

As the crowd left for Edremit, 7 guards were provided for protection. However, 20-30 Armenian bandits cut them off around Edremit, and fought with the guards. When the guards lost, the crowd was taken hostage. The men were shot on the spot, and my grandfather died on my mother's lap. Two of the bullets scraped my mother's shoulders, and the scars remained for the rest of her life. After killing the elderly men in cold blood, the Armenian bandits gathered the women and children, and told them that they would be taken back to Van. After insulting, torturing, and hitting them with the butt of guns, they took them to an area outside of Van where they asked them to wait because they would take them to the American Embassy. However, they explained that they could not take the entire group at one time because the Russians would kill them if they saw them, so they would take them in groups of three or five. The bandits started leading small groups through the trees. Among them was my mother's mother-in-law and other relatives. Soon shots were heard, and the group thought there was a skirmish. In fact, when they were out of sight, Armenians killed them and put them in sacks. Another group was taken away, and again, shots were heard. When the next group was taken, my mother was left behind since she had a small child. However, they took away my siblings and two grandmothers, and killed them as well. Meanwhile, an Armenian girl approached my mother. My mother said she was their gardener's daughter. My grandfather was one of the outstanding citizens of Van.

Q: What was your grandfather's name?

A: It was Mahmut. The Armenian girl asked why my mother was sitting around. She responded that she would be taken to the American Embassy, just like her mother, mother-in-law, children, and other relatives before her. The girl revealed that they were all taken further down the road to be killed, and offered to take my mother to the Embassy since she was considered a family friend.

My mother then followed her and fled to the American consulate without being discovered among the trees. She sought refuge there for some time, but the Russians claimed the refugees as their prisoners, and took all of the women, with the understanding that they would be led to Batum and Tiflis. They hit the road under Russian military surveillance, and traveled with horses and donkeys.

Q: Was this group massacred as well?

A: Armenian bandits stopped them as well, and tried to take them away by force. The Russians did not permit them, but there were casualties in the process.

Q: Was your mother saved?

A: My mother was saved, and went as far as Tiflis where Azeri Turks lived. They distributed one or two people per home, and my mother was placed in a Turkish home. She did not know her children

were killed, and told the man of the house that her children were sent to the consulate in Batum. She asked to be taken there so that she could look for them. Because the gentleman was well off, he was able to send her to Batumi shortly, where she visited all of the orphanages. Despite her endeavors and search, she was unable to locate her children or relatives, and had to give up. These orphanages were established by Azeri Turks, and took care of all refugee children. When they discovered that my mother could read and write, they made her manager of one of the orphanages. My mother was around thirty years old at the time, and managed the orphanage for about three years. She cared for and taught the children. Finally, after three years, Van was liberated by the Turks on April 2, 1918. A truce was later signed, and prisoners were exchanged. That is when my mother arrived in Istanbul on a ship called "Nurcemal". After an exhaustive search, she found some relatives, and settled down near them. Meanwhile, my father looked for my mother in Batum. After learning from the prisoners that she had gone to Istanbul, he travelled there and found her. Five years later, my father opened a tea house and took a civilian job with the military. He joined a group in Besiktas which took officers to the independence struggle in Anatolia. They carried men at night in boats and ships. He thereby helped Atatürk by supplying him with very capable commanders.

Q: Do you remember what your mother told you about the atrocities the Armenians committed in Van?

A: She said this about the massacres: Instead of taking them to the American consulate, they stuffed many Turks into homes, poured gasoline on them, and burned the inhabitants alive. The other massacres took place in the Zeve village near Van. The Armenians raided this village. Of course, there were no men that were able to fight in this village, they were all at the front. There were only women and the elderly, who tried to defend themselves with weapon scraps. But when they ran out of ammunition, the Armenians entered the village. Some of the Turks hid, and hoped they would not be hurt, but the Armenians started to kill women, children, the elderly, and anyone who crossed their paths. They burned some of them alive, and raped the women. Some women could not tolerate what was happening, and threw themselves in the river hoping to preserve their dignity. They took their lives without surrendering. As a result, more than 2,000 people died.

We built a monument to the martyrs in Zeve to commemorate these incidents. We unveiled it in 1973 at the 50th anniversary of the Republic. We tried to publicize the massacre to the world in this way.

Father's Name: Hacı

Mother's Name: Zekiye

Place of Birth: Van-Gevas

Date of Birth: 1906

Q: Could you tell us about the period of Armenian revolt, and its causes?

A: The Armenians started to revolt against the Turkish nation and the Muslim nation. They were getting support from Yerevan, as well as from Russia and from Armenians in Russia. They were cutting up the Turkish people without remorse. For example, they hanged and cut up the inhabitants of the Arkalan village. They skinned them alive, and killed the gendarmes. Hursit Aga, a community leader, was killed the first day. The villagers were spared no cruelties. A massacre to this extent wasn't even witnessed in the first days of history.

Q: Do you remember other incidents like this one?

A: Of course, there are more. For example, we had a village called Müküs, whose name has changed to Bahçesaray. Bahçesaray is in the Kırmızıköprü region. They used swords to wipe out the entire village. Families left all of their possessions behind and fled. Those that couldn't run were killed. The residents of three or four of the neighboring villages were unable to flee the Armenian massacres.

Q: Wasn't there a national force to protect these villages?

A: No, there was nothing. No weapons. The troops had gone to war. The Russian war had started, and the youth had joined the army. Then old men like me, women, and children stayed behind. In fact, during the exodus, it was women, not men who were carrying what they could from their homes. Women and children were left to do all of the work. I was around eight or nine years old at the time, and remember quite well. We went to Resadiye. My father later caught up with us when he was on leave from the army, and helped us out for a while.

At that time when the Turkish men were being drafted, there were a lot of Armenians. In fact, some of the villages were completely occupied by Armenians. Turks were located closer to the center of town. There were a few Turkish families left in some of the Armenian villages, but at the first opportunity they migrated to places where Turks were a majority.

The Armenians cut off the roads. In Gevas we could not go out and act comfortably. The country was at war, and the Armenians saw that as their opportunity and started a civil war. They raided many villages. In some, there were only three or four homes that survived. In the village of Dereagzı, they cut up all of the inhabitants by sword.

Q: When you fled the village, who was with you?

A: My mother, my father, and two uncles were with me. Van was evacuated on the rumor that the Russians were approaching, but of course, there were some that stayed. We left from there, and joined the refugees on the road. Many did not have any belongings with them. Some had one or two donkeys

with them loaded with what they could carry, food and drink.Q: Were there many elderly women and men with you? Were there many children?

A: There were lots of children. Of course, many died in front of our eyes, some of which were either thrown in the lake or left behind. Some were left behind because they could not be carried. I remember very well. A woman wrapped her daughter in a red dress, kissed her several times, and threw her in the lake. Some died because of hunger and disease. Some were successful in carrying their children even though they were hungry and destitute.Q: Did you come across any Armenian rebels during your flight?

A: No, disease and weather conditions hurt us more.

Q: How did you acquire food and drink?

A: We had brought some with us when we left. It was spring, however it was not possible to find water. I remember well, it was May 16th.

Q: Could you tell us about those that left Van on ships?

A: Yes, some came to Tatvan on boats.

Q: Could you tell us about their experiences?

A: They too left Van because the Russians were approaching, but because the captains of the ships were Armenian, many were killed on the islands. Only a few were able to get away. Anyway, after Armenians occupied Van, those that stayed were killed and cut up too.

Q: How long were you refugees?

A: Three years, after which we returned to Van. We reaped the crops that the Armenians had left. This time they ran away.

Q: Do you remember what Van was like then?

A: The homes belonging to the Muslim Turks were all burned and destroyed, while some of the Armenian homes were still painted and furnished. The animals and belongings they were unable to carry were left to us.

Q: What else can you tell us?

A: I remember that we went to Resadiye and came back to get wheat. We wanted to get some wheat to take to the mill. A crowd appeared, declaring that the Russians were coming. When we tried to return, the Turkish soldiers on the road did not let us. Then Halil Pasha's division made several gains against the Russian army. After the cannon ball noise died down, the division commander gave us permission to continue. We continued our journey with horses laden with food. Our army, praise God, was later victorious.

Q: Did you ever face death during your journey?

A: No, we were never attacked on the road, but those who fled on boats were in a terrible situation. Someone called Sait told us about it. He said he fell asleep, but when he awoke he saw that the ship had approached an island, and asked the captain why this was so. He told the captain there were Armenian brigands on the island, which the captain denied. They didn't believe him. The Armenians on the island then started to shoot at them. Many people were shot and died, but Sait and others were able to get away.

There are so many stories, but which one should I tell? I hope God doesn't make us relive those days.

ABDURREZZAK AYAZ

Father's Name: Ömer Çavus

Mother's Name: Emine

Place of Birth: Van-Gevas

(Recounting the experiences of his father who died at 75 years old.)

Q: Can you tell us about the Armenian revolt and massacre which took place before your father died?

A: My father was an artillery man who defended Van when the Russians were advancing. In fact, they were able to keep the Russians back for some time with cannon fire. Yet later, the Russian military again went on the attack. As a result, the inhabitants of Van fled, and those from Gevas later also became refugees. When the Russians entered, they burned and destroyed the place as they had done to Van, including crops and trees. Those on the road were starting to die because of hunger and disease. Neither the army nor the refugees had anything to eat. My father had told me about their situation with great sorrow. He said he was very strong, so he returned to Gevas with his weapon and a sack with the hopes of finding food to carry back. He found a dark cloud over the city, with everything burned. He couldn't find anything to eat. When he went to the creek, he saw a Russian horse which had died. Their horses were very large. It was infested with worms because it had laid there for a while, but undamaged parts remained. He cut off those parts, put it in the sack, and brought it to his group. They ate off of that for a while.

Q: Did he ever mention the massacre when he returned to Gevas?

A: Of course he did. He saw many corpses. All those who stayed behind were killed. They even burned the animals and trees.

Q: Did the Russian military come that far?

A: They came as far as Bitlis. Their army and cannons passed through these hills. The Russians attacked the population from one side, and the Armenian brigands from the other. He said they went as far as Siirt, and returned when the Russian army retreated. Everything was damaged or destroyed. They harvested what the Armenians had sowed. Slowly but surely they reestablished themselves, but came across many human bones when digging up covered pits. He would always cry when telling stories of suffering, but cut it off by saying "I hope God keeps us from those experiences again."

MEHMET HATUNOGLU

Father's Name: Veli Çavus

Some of us young people, and the elderly able to fire a gun went up to the mountains to defend ourselves against the Armenian massacres. We learned that the Armenians burned Ercis, along with the old Karayusuf Pasha Mosque, sükrü's home, and many other buildings with our women and children inside. We chose the most courageous among us and sent them down to the city at night to learn what was going on. I can't tell you what I saw, it was so hideous. They [Armenians] planted a stake every fifty meters on the Pulus (now Çınarlı neighborhood), and Ercis -Egans road, and impaled the elderly taken

from the mosques on these stakes. They all died in a pool of blood. Then we went into the large Çavuşoğlu barn, and saw people sliced up and laying in blood, most of which were relatives or people we knew. They were beaten and killed with axes, shovels, and cleavers. They placed a basket over the head of Haydar Imam, and impaled him. We thought that no one was left alive, but later learned that Kıçe, who worked as a maid with the Armenians, survived but had lost consciousness.

The Armenian simo had a beautiful daughter who was very helpful to Muslim Turks. She would bring them water and intelligence. According to rumor, she was in love with a young man named Emin. She was caught bringing news to the Turks the day the barn was raided, and she too was killed. There were about twenty or twenty five people in the barn. Some of them were taken to the pilgrimage in Haydarbey after we returned from exile. Other bodies which started to rot were covered by wicker, dirt, and herbs by a group of women. Until recently this was a place where people visited martyrs and prayed. After some time, no one took responsibility for the site, and it fell into disrepair.

IZZET CENGİZ

Father's Name: Mehmet
Mother's Name: Ifakat
Place of Birth: Bitlis-Ahlat-Adabag
Date of Birth: 1906

I am from the Adabag village of Ahlat. We used to have Armenian villages nearby: Karnuç, and on this side of Ahlat, Agag, Kızva , Zi ga g, Sivot, and Tevot (on the outskirts of Nemrut mountain).

I was about six or seven years old, and remember the Armenians rebelling. From what I heard, I remember that the Armenians set up committees, brought in fighters, and massacred Muslims who boarded Armenian-run ships on the Van lake. From time to time they robbed and plundered our village too. When events started to take place where we lived, they kidnaped my grandfather Derviş who was in Kotan. There is a stone quarry facing Mecca, where three men attacked my grandfather with the intention of cutting him up. He saw that one of them was Serop who worked with him for three years. My grandfather asked him if he was killing him because he took care of him for three years. Serop let him go, saying he was going to cut him up thinking he was Nadir. Yet shortly after, my grandfather became very ill with fear and died soon after.

One evening some young visitors came from Kotan, and were having dinner with us. My father had recently returned from a trip and was sitting with them. Soon after, my uncle Osman came in, and asked my mother for some bread for a caravan which came to the village. When my mother brought him some, he said it was not enough, and told her to round up all she had and follow him. Since our village isn't really on the road to anything, my father became suspicious of the caravan story. He followed my uncle to see what is going on. At the edge of the castle he saw a ship with Armenian bandits near the shore. They were roasting a cow which they caught while it was grazing near the castle. They had secretly set up an ambush and were waiting.

When my uncle had gone out to look for the animals, they cut him off, asking for bread, but demanding that he tell no one. They told him they would return his cow if he did as they said. My father went and got my cousins Davut and Hursit, so they could all go and keep watch at the castle. They also sent a messenger to Ahlat to tell the army. At daybreak they fired at the ship and sunk it. When the Armenian issue flared up in and around Van, it really became heated around here.

We left our village once, anticipating the arrival of the Russians who came to Deliklitas (Bitlis). We went as far as Kurtalan, also known as Zoh, and stayed about three months. We returned to the village when we heard that the Russians had retreated. The crops had dried up, and there was no feed for the animals. The villagers then gathered their animals and sent them to Diyarbakır. A shepherd called Ahlatlı Sadık came to the village to pick up his herd. The Russians arrived before he could leave, and we all became refugees again. Since the Rahva grassy plains were covered with snow, the villagers used the back roads. My mother's uncle was ill, and could only walk with crutches. He had three sons, who left with my other uncles and my brother. My mother sewed her valuable jewelry onto the clothing of my brother. She never told him, but always worried that he may lose it. I stayed in the village with my mother and her uncle. My cousins were going to bring a sled because of the snow, and all the children remaining in the village were going to leave on it, including my grandmother, my little cousins, and others.

One day while we were waiting for the sled, Armenians dressed in Russian military uniforms raided the village. They gathered us all in front of our house, and surrounded the village. We had no weapons, we were all women and children. They threatened us, and the Armenian revolutionary committee leaders placed a guard with us and went to pillage the other homes. I was standing near my mother at the edge of the wall. Before I knew it, my mother was slowly creeping around the wall, and then she ran. I was only a child. I thought for a moment, and ran after her by following her footsteps. When we had cleared the village, I started to cry because I was afraid. As I approached the rocks overlooking the lake, I saw that my mother was standing at the edge of the rocks and was going to throw herself into the water. I started to scream as loud as I could, asking her what she was doing. She told me to go back, saying that they would not hurt me since I was a child, but that they would soil her innocence. When I told her I would jump after her, she changed her mind and returned. She carried me on her back and we went and hid in an area used as a wool storage center by our neighbors. When I tried to cry once, my mother covered my mouth. She said I didn't let her kill herself and escape, and we couldn't let the Armenians discover us.

We stayed there until late the following day. My mother asked me to go check on the dog quietly. If it was resting, she said, there were no foreigners in the village. But if it was up and barking, it meant the Armenians were still there. I went out, saw that the dog was laying down, and told my mother. She got out, and saw that my grandmother, who had been wounded by a bullet on the lower right side of her body, was looking for us. It turns out that an Armenian knew my father, and wanted to mock her by asking her where he was. She answered that her son had been martyred, and added that if he were alive he surely would protect her. With that, the Armenian fired at her. The bullet hit her right cavity, near her stomach. Even though my grandmother told him to shoot again because she was still alive, the Armenian answered that this was enough for her, and walked away. We learned from my grandmother that my aunt Vahide was injured, a woman named Hasret jumped in the lake and was shot by the Armenians, and another woman from another neighborhood died when her arm was torn off.

We were miserable in a village burned, destroyed, and pillaged. We boiled the bones of dead animals and drank the water. We survived for three days by eating the snow at the edge of the rocks. After four days, the Russian soldiers arrived, took us captive, and brought us to Agri. There were roughly 70-80 military prisoners along with us. They left my mother's uncle behind with the promise of sending a vehicle to pick him up later. My mother laid out half of a blanket under him, and covered him with the other half. She also left a small bundle of money with him.

Later during the journey, she saw that same bundle of money being carried on the money belt of a soldier. When she asked what happened to her uncle, he replied that he wasn't there when they returned -- he seemed to have disappeared. We never learned what happened to him. There were many Armenians in the Russian army, and they were hurling insults at the captives. There was an older prisoner named Mr. Sadık among us, who noticed that one of the Russian soldiers was reading the Koran. Mr. Sadık, who spoke Russian, asked him why. The soldier said he was a Turk from Kazan, and a Muslim. He asked us to appeal to the highest Russian military official in Agri's Yögürtyemez village for protection from the Armenian massacres.

They later handed us over to a Tatar guard. Among the prisoners from my village whose names I remember were my mother, my aunt Mahi (whose child they took from her arms and we never heard of again), my aunt Gülsüm, her daughter Hayriye, Mr. Sadık, his wife Zeliha, their daughter Selvi, their daughter-in-law Nergis, and my cousin Mikail.

The Russians settled us in the Yekmal village of Agri, where we stayed three years. When they retreated during the Russian revolution, they left all of their belongings to the Armenians. We later settled in the Sofyan village. An Armenian named Agop from the Kazer village sent us word that we needed to be prepared against an Armenian group advancing before the Ottomans. He said he was Muslim, but planned to go with them because he feared that they would hurt him otherwise. On this news, we went to the Birikan village. Men who could carry weapons in the Birikan and Sofyan villages put up a good fight against the Armenians from Sofyan. But in the Gilasor village, the Armenians loaded the Muslim population into two homes and burned them. The same things happened in the village of Lesko.

HÜSEYİN KOCA

Place of Birth: Bitlis-Ahlat

Date of Birth: 1904

I am from Ahlat. I was a child during the mobilization years. The Armenians formed committees and massacred people. But they did it more around Van than Bitlis or Ahlat. We were forced to become refugees because of the Armenian revolt against the Muslim population. We went to Diyarbakır where we stayed for one year, and later went to Batman where we stayed four years. My brother was in Nusaybin. My sister and I were the only members of my family who survived when we went to Batman. The rest died on the road during the flight.

SAİT ALDANMAZ

Father's Name: Bahri

Mother's Name: Nigar

Place of Birth: Bitlis

Date of Birth: 1900

I was fourteen years old during the mobilization. Armenians insulted us in every way. With my own eyes, I saw an Armenian poke a dagger into a woman's stomach and pull out her child. They killed 15-20 people with bayonets in my neighborhood of Ersan. When the Russians arrived, the Armenians helped them. The Armenians who arrived with the Russians attacked our soldiers under the Hormuz police station. We saw the bodies which were left on the snow. These incidents took place during the second migration of September, 1916. We fled one other time in July 1915, and stayed in Gorlar for a month. When the Russians were unable to penetrate Bitlis, we returned. Only 45 families fled. We left everything behind -- our home, our animals, our barn – and they were all destroyed. Among the ruins of every home, in the fields, and in the farms were the bodies of people killed with the Armenians' bayonets. We applied for permission to bury them. The soldiers dug ditches and the bodies were buried there. There were thousands, not hundreds of bodies, because five-ten people were killed in each home with bayonets.

Places of Birth: Bitlis-Kolpiç

Dates of Birth: 1900-1901

We had been out of the village when some of the villagers went to Bitlis. When they returned, they told us about the fall of the city. When we learned that the enemy was advancing from the Tatik plains, some of our men went there with the goal of stopping them. Others went toward Karcıgan. When it was clear during our fight with the enemy that we would not last long, we immediately fled to save our families. At this critical time, the Russians and a large number of Armenians were charging toward our village from two different directions.

They started to kill people and burn their homes. One hundred and fifty people were killed with swords. As we escaped, Armenians named Bidet, Arsak from the Orans village, Sandir from the Herit Armenian village, and Krizikio from the sube village were chasing us and cursing our Muslim religion as well as hurling insults at our prophet.

The Russians and Armenians had tortured the population so much that on our return, no one could hold back the tears. Naked men and women were tied to each other and hanged from trees. Dead mothers who had their heads and breasts cut still held their lifeless children in their arms. They had kidnapped the young and beautiful women. The bandits also took the furniture they could use with them, and burned the rest.

Place of Birth: Bitlis

Date of Birth: 1890

I was on duty at night around ten o'clock when the city of Bitlis was invaded and occupied. My sister came and told us that the city was invaded by the enemy. When we went out on the street, we saw the people running. We heard thousands of guns and machine guns. I was forced to go to Arapköprüsü, a half an hour away from Bitlis to save my family.

Behind us, the Russian forces and Armenian brigands were killing all of the Muslims who were trying to save themselves by stopping them with a forceful bullet. On the other side, the Russian Cossacks were trampling them with their horses.

The mixture of screams, hopelessness, and the children's wails were emanating from all sides. It was a miracle that a small group like ours survived. While we were running away, assistant police chief Mehmet Vehbi was shot and wounded.

All those that were left behind were the victims of Russian and Armenian impetuosity. Among the ill-fated victims were the following people I knew: Van Assistant Chief of Police Mr. Vefik, Police Officer Ali, Assistant Superintendent of Police Mr. Süleyman, Remzi, and Sait who were from Van but were serving in Bitlis, Bitlis policemen Mr. Hamdi and Mr. Resul, Bitlis Courthouse Records Administrator Saban Vehbi, and Hoca Ishak's son, Abdurrezzak.

Place of Birth: Bitlis

Date of Birth: 1898

In February 1916, I was in a village of Bitlis called Tako. When I saw a convoy of inhabitants from Bitlis on the road, I asked them why they were leaving. They told me that the city was unexpectedly invaded by Russian and Armenian forces, that these forces were composed mainly of Armenian soldiers, and that they were killing all Muslim men, women and children that they came across.

When I sent word, Ali, the son of Süleyman, who lived in Bitlis' Hersan neighborhood, told me the following story. He said his brothers Ismail and Halil were killed by Armenians in front of their door. The wife of my brother, daughter of Yakup, was forcibly taken away. His brother-in-law, Hacı Ali's son Yusuf was also killed, and his cousin Mercan was taken away by bandits who later committed an outrageous murder. His neighbor seyh Harzan was ill and was killed in bed, and his wife semo and one of their servants were also killed. Recep, the son of Mustafa who had come to visit the seyh, also faced the same fate. They killed Hasan, the son of Kilincizade near his home, even after collecting a large ransom. Many people were forced into carrying heavy objects for long distances barefoot and without any head coverings despite the snow and brutally cold weather. Among them was Ahlatlı Nigar, a woman around 80 years old, Tero's sick wife Bezirgan, Halil, the son of Ismail, Mehmet, the son of Ahmet, his brother Mithat, and his uncle seyh Hafi, who was around 50 years old. After this news, I did not have the courage to go to Bitlis, and returned to my village Tako.

DEVAZ SEYHOĐLU, ÖMER MUSTAFAOĐLU, TAYYİP ABDULHAMİTOĐLU

Place of Birth: Bitlis

Dates of Birth: 1897-1899-1901

On July 12, 1915, the platoon commander in Kotum warned the village elders that the Russians and Armenians were approaching the village. The inhabitants prepared to flee toward Bitlis. A half hour before reaching the Armenian village of Dog, a few hundred Armenians and Kazakhs attacked the refugees. Even though they raised their arms to surrender, men, women and children were brutally murdered. Only 30 of them survived.

Dates of Birth: 1896, 1898, 1899, 1902, respectively.

The Armenian bandits, who were supported by the Cossacks during the Russian assault, were leading the greater Russian army. They were responsible for attacking the villages and creating confusion. The inhabitants of the attacked villages were hiding on the trails so that they would not be followed by the bandits, but they were discovered and carried away by the Russian soldiers. The stronger men were taken into Russia as prisoners of war by the Russian army. But the Muslims taken away by the Armenians and Cossacks were massacred without exception.

The remaining were led on a march with thirty guards in April, 1916. The sergeant and some of the guards were Armenians from the Caucasus. On the first day, they continued to walk, but when they reached the trail on the second day, the sergeant said to one of the guards in a low voice in Armenian, "let's kill them." Haydar from Derbo who understood Armenian, relayed the death command to his friends, and suggested that it was better to attack the guards than die like sacrificial lambs.

When they reached Sahniyan, the smell of death permeated the air. Bodies torn into pieces were laying on the side of the rocks. Everyone felt that death had arrived. Despite this, they attacked the guards. Six prisoners died, but some guards also lost their lives.

POLICE OFFICER HASAN ABUK

Father's Name: Yusuf

Place of Birth: Bitlis

Date of Birth: 1896

The Armenians committed tremendous cruelties in Bitlis. I was in Bitlis at the time. I had graduated from the Sultan high school there. When the war broke out, I was drafted. After fighting in Erzurum and Pasin, I fell into the water in Bitlis on the way to Baghdad, and stayed in Bitlis because I became ill. That is how I witnessed the atrocities first-hand.

Most of the population had fled before the occupation, but those that remained were subject to the massacres. The Armenians killed Mr. Polat and his family. Women and girls were rounded up by the Armenians and taken to the Aynel Barut mosque where they were killed after being raped repeatedly.

SADI ALDANMAZ

Father's Name: Bahri

Place of Birth: Bitlis

Date of Birth: 1902

We left Bitlis before the Russians occupied the city. I was 13 years old at the time. There were up to 100 children left on the side of the road on the snow from Arapköprüsü to Duhan. Those that stayed in the city were subject to a frightful massacre. The Armenian commander Antranik bayoneted 16 women and children with his own hands. The Armenians were committing atrocities [in Bitlis] before the Russian invasion as well, but after the occupation, the crimes accelerated. As far as I remember, 9 year old Hatice who lived in the Hersan neighborhood was taken from her mother's arms by the Armenians, and viciously raped without reference to the fact that she was a child. Hako was the Armenian who took this child from her mother and raped her. He was known as cold blooded Hako.

Place of Birth: Bitlis

Date of Birth: 1890

In anticipation of the Russian advance toward Bitlis, a battalion of 200 Armenians in Siirt led by a Turkish commander came to Bitlis. They were going to defend Bitlis against the Russians. The front of Ulu Mosque was an open bazaar at the time, and the Armenians rested there. The commander was the only Turk in the army. The commander staying at the old Hazro Inn next to the Alemdar bridge. A Turk was guarding the front of the commander's home. In the morning the guard excitedly knocked on the commander's door, saying not one soldier remained in the city. When the battalion commander arrived at the bazaar, he saw that not one of the Armenian soldiers were there. He later learned that they went toward Bashan to join the Armenian Russian forces. They later joined the Russian forces and participated in the massacres in the city.

I witnessed three events during the Bitlis occupation which I will never forget. First, the Russian soldiers housed more than 200 women, children, and elderly in Hamza and sükrü Çelebi's home, and placed an Armenian soldier to guard the door. At night this soldier notified his friends, and they at night went to the home, and took the women they liked. After taking advantage of them, they killed them at the side of a brook.

A Russian commander made a surprise inspection visit. An older woman told him that while they numbered 200 when they arrived, 80 were taken away at night by Armenians, and only 120 remained. The Russian commander then replaced the Armenian guard at the door with a Russian one.

Second, there was a pregnant woman who lived in a home in the Dilan neighborhood with her three children. When the Armenians entered their home, they made a bet as to whether she was carrying a boy or girl, and slit her stomach with a bayonet.

Thirdly, before the Russians came to Bitlis, ten Armenian families came to my home, and said that they wanted to go to the mosque and convert to Islam. We took them to the mosque, and they converted. We started to see them more often, and help them. After the Russians came to Bitlis, they asked us to take them to the Russian soldiers in exchange for money. When I asked them why they wanted to go there, they answered that they were Armenian, and were never Muslims.

FARIS SÜRÜM

Father's Name: Kasim

Place of Birth: Bitlis-Cevizyatagi

Date of Birth: 1904

Around the time that Bitlis was going to be saved from the Russians, we were continuously fighting. During this time the Russians and Armenians would cut up anyone they found in the city. There was a two story house in the Mermutlu neighborhood, next to Sütlü Bulag. The Muslims hid there out of fear. Those barbarians cut up all of the defenseless people there. I don't know the exact number, but there were so many Muslims killed that the blood was flowing from the door. They carried the bodies to the second floor since there was not enough room for them on the first floor.

When we later took back Bitlis from the Russians, we started to follow the Russian forces. The enemy was retreating toward Ahlat. When we arrived to the Zigag village near Ahlat, we couldn't hold back our tears in the face of the brutality we witnessed. The Armenians had planted sharp metal poles, and impaled pregnant women stomach first on those poles. Some of the poles went into their stomachs and out of their backs. I will never forget this savageness until I die.

CEVAHIR KOKUM

Father's Name: İbrahim

Place of Birth: Bitlis-Hizan-Çökekyazı

Date of Birth: 1899

When the Russian forces entered Bitlis in the beginning of March, we were forced to become refugees. We abandoned our homes and marched toward Hizan. We came across hundreds of people who fled like us on the road. They were so frightened that they crawled under or into any structure they could find on the road. Meanwhile, we were being followed by Armenian bandits. When seyh Selahattin heard of this, he came to us and asked that all men able to fight follow him. On the way, he asked us to light a fire under a bush so that those who saw it would think that we were a large group. We later learned that in a subsequent fight the Armenians lost and that seyh Selahattin lost an eye to an enemy's bullet.

Meanwhile, hunger had reached a peak level. We sent a convoy of 12 men and 4 women to Hirit (Çökekyazı) village to get food. They were cut off by Armenians in the Müskünüs (Düzköy) village. Although the women were successful in escaping, the men were caught by the Russians. These 12 men were tied to each other, a "pocket" was cut out of their skin on their legs, and their hands were placed in these pockets. Their organs were cut off and placed in their mouths. Unsatisfied by this brutality, they built a fire in the middle of the rest of them, and killed them all with a thousand and one torture methods.

My cousin Hüsniye was unable to escape and got stuck in the city. They killed her six children, and when they were taking her away on horseback, she jumped from the horse and ran toward the fields. Unfortunately, she was caught by the Armenians, who raped and killed her.

Were all the Armenians so barbaric? Weren't there any good ones? I am sure there were. My deceased grandmother would always talk about an Armenian named Manik. When talking about him, she would also pray in thanks for all that he had done.

Manik worked as a servant for Hacı Yusufzade. This Armenian saved my grandmother and her other relatives from the Armenian massacre. Let's hear the story from Hanife Boran.

"I, my father Hase, my uncle Süleyman, and my aunt Felek were left among the enemy, but our Armenian servant Manik saved us from the Russians and Armenians.

"One day an Armenian general came to our home and asked us for some milk. Since it was winter, we were feeding our animals a bitter plant, a taste which naturally was reflected in the milk. When the Armenian general drank the bitter milk, he ordered to have my uncle Solomon murdered as punishment. They tied my uncle to two side by side steel doors, and fiercely tortured him by opening and shutting the door. Unsatisfied with this, they took him away. Manik went and got my father.

"A few days later they picked out and took away all of the pregnant women among us. We later learned that they tied them all to poles, bet on whether they were carrying boys or girls, and killed them by cutting them open. Manik was unable to do anything about this, he simply was not powerful enough.

"They later took us from the Avih neighborhood to the convent of Emin Efendi in the city. They taped red crosses to our arms. Manik immediately took them off our arms. When we later asked him the meaning of that, he said the crosses marked those that would be taken to Russia. One day, Manik came running to us. He said the home we were in was going to be hit by Russian cannon fire. When he brought us to another house, he kept us hidden by following the sewers. Manik would leave in the day, and return at nightfall with all of the bread, sugar, and other food supplies he could find. When we asked why he was doing this, he replied that he could not betray us after eating our bread for so many years.

"One day, Manik came to us excitedly and said that the Russians had emptied the city, and that it was not right for him to stay after everything that the Armenians had done, and that he would emigrate to Russia with the rest of the Armenians. We sat and cried, since Manik was the only adult left with us. His leaving would mean that we were left all alone. Manik left, but we did not forget him or what he did.

"We can only thank Manik and those like him. We have nothing else to say."

(The Massacre in Twenty-Five Villages in Kars)

May the soul of Kara Kazım Bekir Pasha rest in peace. He was the liberator of the eastern cities, a high level official, a loyal and devoted person. We were from the village of Isek. The Armenians fooled us. Claiming there was peace, they gathered the inhabitants of 12 villages together, they cut off the men's paths with bayonets, and gave the women bayonets and swords. In the village of Kalınagaç they forced the women to cut off their own men's heads with bayonets, tortured people by cutting their faces and legs, and stuffed them into barns. After burning the barns, they chased on horseback after those that had run away to the creeks and hills. When they caught them, they killed them. The survivors went south to Kagızman. The Armenians intercepted them in the Kilahna village of Kagızman, telling them there was peace, and they would be accompanied to the Ottoman state. They offered money to many of them, telling the Muslims who had escaped to the hills that they would be given livestock and houses if they would come down. Then they started the murders. They killed the Muslims with axes, bayonets, and shots in the mouth, and set fire to their clothing. The Muslims united in Kagızman's Kızilveren village, where the Armenians spoke to them and convinced them that they would be taken to the Ottoman State, and their weapons were taken from them. The Armenians later stuffed them into barns in Kızilveren village, and killed thousands of men. They cut their legs, arms, beat them, and cut off their heads with swords. They then burned down the barns. May God bless this army, this nation, and Kara Kazım Bekir Pasha's soul, the liberator of the Eastern cities. We owe our lives to him. We now look forward to our country, our religion, and our rights. We will never forget the pain Armenians caused us, and the hurt in the hearts of our children. Armenians caused great damage, gave women swords, made them cut off their husband's legs, hands, and cheeks. They burned men alive.

An Armenian clergyman in the Devletli village, who read the bible, appealed to his people to cease such behavior, which damaged the Armenians' pride. They took him and his family to a barn at the foot of the village, asked him why he did what he did, and burned him and his entire family alive. The clergyman was a man of God, his heart ached at the massacres, and he cried. As he cried, the Armenians gathered more people, filled them into his barn, and burned it down. My name is Elzade sahin. I am from the Karacaören village. We can never forget this pain, and should construct a monument at the graves of these men. They should never be forgotten. I am aware of 25 villages which ache with this pain, and with this cry.

The Armenians shot an outstanding individual in the Deli Ahmet village named Kaba Mustafa. If this man had not been killed, this Turkish nation, and this city would not have been massacred. The Armenians told him that they wanted peace, and that they would make him a leader. For this reason, they met him at the station where they talked for a while. They made a pact that there would be peace, and to celebrate they engaged in target practice. A very skillful gunman, Kaba Mustafa hit a bull's eye. The Armenians then backed up the target. As he was preparing to fire again, four Armenian fighters, using a special bullet, fired at one time, and his lungs were destroyed. His last request was that a forest should replace where his blood was spilled. You may have seen a small forest by the Deli Ahmet station. It was sowed on that man's blood, and the Turkish nation welcomes the fact that his wishes were heeded.

ABBAS GÜNEŞ

Place of Birth: Kars-Hakmehmet

Date of Birth: 1897

The Armenians came to our village of Hakmehmet. They called out to the leaders of the village, promising peace. They gathered us in a mosque, inviting all men, women, and children. After searching us, they took the jewelry from the women. At night they led us like a pack of animals out of the village. They again searched us, saying that they would kill anyone who hid money. Some villagers turned in their money, others did not. They ordered us to split into two groups and advance toward the villages ahead. We started walking when an Armenian approached on horseback, and recommended that we hurry, because the other Armenians would kill us. We continued on the road. Women unable to carry their small children left them at the foot of trees or rocks, or in ditches. The children were crying. We reached the Iranian villages on foot. We later heard that the remaining villagers were murdered. Some of them were shot, others killed with swords, and then all thrown into a well.

MEHMET TAŞ

Place of Birth: Kars-Esenbogaz

Date of Birth: 1902

(Mehmet Tas pointed out the scars on his face). When the Armenians raided our village, we all sought refuge in the nearby forest. They fooled us into coming back to the village, stuffed us into a barn, cut us up, and burned us. An Armenian saw me, swung the sword to my face, and threw me into the fire. I immediately stood up and fell again among the dead. The soldiers came that night. I don't remember anything else because I was very young, but my foot was burned.

Place of Birth: Kars-Hakmehmet

Date of Birth: 1899

There were no Armenian homes in our village at the time. Then Armenians and Muslims became enemies, and the Armenians arrived in Kars. They didn't have any possessions or homes then, but they came and stayed in our village. The Armenians had a wise man named Dikran who also stayed in our village. The oldest was their leader.

My mother would make bread, and I stayed near her. One day, I went outside to play with the children and have a good time. I heard that the Armenians surrounded the village. I asked myself why this was so, since Armenians lived among us as well. They told us to gather our belongings so that we could make peace. I went home to tell my mother. She had baked bread, and two armed Armenians came and told us to gather the bread and go inside. We did as they said. It was either the first or second day of our religious holiday. We had meat too, but they left nothing. They took us away.

There is a home in the village where they put all the women, men and children from the village. They put the older boys and men in one room, and the younger ones with the women. I was with my mother. We had a few gold coins which my mother placed at the baseboards of the walls, because they would come and search the homes and confiscate any money. We had nothing else. Nightfall came and it became dark. They treated us like a herd of sheep. We were women and children. They put two Armenians on each side of us who led us by poking us with bayonets. They took us out of the village, and would stop and check us from time to time for money. My mother threw the coins on the ground which was made of dirt and stepped on them. They took us to the fields in the middle of the village, and told us to divide into two and march toward the next village. Armenians on horses arrived, and they told us they would take us back because the other Armenians would kill us. We continued to march, while they returned. They stood and waited for a while, and then left. There were many small children with their mothers. Those unable to carry the children left them behind. Mothers were carrying one child in their arms, one on their backs, and holding the others by the hand. A few children were left by rocks or ditches.

We went to Iranian villages, and later learned that they massacred those that stayed behind, including my father, and threw the bodies into wells. Some were killed by bullets, some by sword, and some were thrown into the wells alive. Those wells were old and deep, but they threw them all in there. We stayed in Iran for eight to ten years. Our villagers later returned, but of course my father was killed by the Armenians.

İMAM ZEYNELABİDİN

Place of Birth: Kars

Date of Birth: 1908

I am 82 years old, and witnessed the Armenian massacres. The Armenians raided the refugee tents of Mr. Abdullah, and killed him and many other people whose names I do not know. Since Mr. Abdullah's second wife Zeytun was very attractive, they took her away and killed him. One day, they gathered the Muslims from Digor, and placed the men in Laz Hasan's house. The women were put in the ditch near Hacı Aziz's home. They fired into the ditch and killed more than 400 Muslims that way. As for the men, they would take them out two by two and cut their heads off with axes. From Mr. Halil's family, they killed him, his sons and the rest of the family. I know their names because we were relatives. Yusuf, his son, father of Esen, the mayor, was wounded but able to save himself. His brothers Asaf, Arslan, and Tahir all died. They stole a lot of personal property. All the people sought refuge in the mountains. The elderly and sick that were left behind in the village were all killed. I can't tell you all of the terrible things the Armenians did. Thank God for our soldiers who saved Kars.

I. Armenian Terrorism – A Chronological Rundown

January 27, 1973 Santa Barbara, California |

The Armenian Gourgen Yanikian, a U.S. citizen, invites the Turkish Consul General, Mehmet Baydar, and the Consul, Bahadır Demir to a luncheon. The unsuspecting diplomats accept the friendly invitation. Gourgen Yanikian murders his two guests. He is sentenced to life imprisonment.

April 4, 1973 Paris

Bombings at the Turkish Consulate General and the offices of Turkish Airlines (THY). Extensive damage.

October 26, 1973 New York

Attempted bombing of the Turkish Information Office. The bomb is discovered in time and defused. A group calling itself the "Yanikian Commandos" claims responsibility. They want the release of the double murderer of Santa Barbara, Gourgen Yanikian, who insidiously murdered two Turkish diplomats.

February 7, 1975 Beirut

Attempted bombing of the Turkish Information and Tourism Bureau. The bomb explodes while being defused. A Lebanese policeman is injured. The "Prisoner Gourgen Yanikian Group" claims responsibility.

February 20, 1975 Beirut

The "Yanikian" group demanding the release of the double murderer of Santa Barbara strikes again. Extensive damage is caused by a bomb explosion at the THY offices. ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia) also claims responsibility for the bombing.

October 22, 1975 Vienna

The Turkish Ambassador, Danis Tunaligil, is assassinated in his study by three Armenian terrorists. ASALA claims responsibility.

October 24, 1975 Paris

Ambassador İsmail Erez and his driver, Talip Yener, are murdered. The ASALA and the JCAG (Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide) dispute responsibility.

October 28, 1975 Beirut

Grenade attack on the Turkish Embassy. The ASALA claims responsibility.

February 16, 1976 Beirut

The First Secretary of the Turkish Embassy, Oktar Cirit, is assassinated in a restaurant on Hamra Street. The ASALA claims responsibility.

May 17, 1976 Frankfurt, Essen, Cologne

Consulates General in Frankfurt, Essen and Cologne are the targets of simultaneous bomb attacks.

May 28, 1976 Zurich

Bomb attacks at the offices of the Turkish Labor Attache and the Garanti Bank. Extensive damage. A bomb in the Turkish Tourism Bureau is defused in time. Responsibility is claimed by the JCAG.

May 2, 1977 Beirut

The cars of the Military Attache, Nahit Karakay, and the Administrative Attache, İlhan Özbabacan, are destroyed. The two diplomats are uninjured. Credit is claimed by the ASALA.

May 14, 1977 Paris

Bomb attack at the Turkish Tourism Bureau. Extensive damage. The "New Armenian Resistance Group" claims responsibility.

June 6, 1977 Zurich

Bomb attack at the store of a Turkish citizen, Hüseyin Bülbül.

June 9, 1977 Rome

Assassination of the Turkish Ambassador to the Holy See, Taha Carım. He dies soon after the attack. The JCAG claims responsibility.

October 4, 1977 Los Angeles

Bomb attack at the house of Professor Stanford Shaw, who teaches Ottoman history at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA). Responsibility is claimed by an "Armenian Group of 28."

January 2, 1978 Brussels

Bomb attack at a building containing Turkish banking services. The "New Armenian Resistance" claims credit.

June 2, 1978 Madrid

Terrorist attack on the automobile of the Turkish Ambassador, Zeki Kunalalp. His wife, Necla Kunalalp, the retired Turkish Ambassador Beşir Balcıoğlu die immediately in the rain of gunfire. The Spanish chauffeur, Antonio Torres, dies of his injuries in the hospital. ASALA and JCAG claim responsibility.

December 6, 1978 Geneva

A bomb explodes in front of the Turkish Consulate General. Extensive damage. The "New Armenian Resistance Group" claims responsibility.

December 17, 1978 Geneva

A bomb explodes at the THY Bureau. ASALA claims responsibility.

July 8, 1979 Paris

The French capital experiences four bomb attacks in a single day. The first is at the THY offices; the next at the offices of the Turkish Labor Attache; the third in the Turkish Information and Tourism Bureau. A fourth explosive, intended for the Turkish Permanent Representative to the O.E.C.D., is defused before it explodes. The JCAG claims responsibility.

August 22, 1979 Geneva

A bomb is thrown at the car of the Turkish Consul General, Niyazi Adalı. The diplomat escapes unhurt. Two Swiss passers-by are injured. Two cars are destroyed.

August 27, 1979 Frankfurt

The offices of THY are totally destroyed by an explosion. A pedestrian is injured. The ASALA claims responsibility.

October 4, 1979 Copenhagen

Two Danes are injured when a bomb explodes near the offices of THY. ASALA claims credit.

October 12, 1979 The Hague

Ahmet Benler, the son of Turkish Ambassador Özdemir Benler, is assassinated by Armenian terrorists. The murderers escape. JCAG and ASALA claim responsibility.

October 30, 1979 Milan

The offices of THY are destroyed by a bomb explosion. ASALA claims responsibility.

November 8, 1979 Rome

The Turkish Tourism Office is destroyed by a bomb. ASALA claims responsibility.

November 18, 1979 Paris

Bomb explosions destroy the offices of THY, KLM, and Lufthansa. Two French policemen are injured. Responsibility is claimed by ASALA.

November 25, 1979 Madrid

Bomb explosions in front of the offices of TWA and British Airways. ASALA, in claiming responsibility, states that the attacks are meant as a warning to the Pope to cancel his planned visit to Turkey.

December 9, 1979 Rome

Two bombs explode in downtown Rome, damaging the offices of PAN AM, British Airways and the Philippine Airways. Nine people are injured in the terrorist attack. A "New Armenian Resistance Movement" claims responsibility.

December 17, 1979 London

Extensive damage is caused when a bomb explodes in front of the THY offices. A "Front for the Liberation of Armenia" claims responsibility.

December 22, 1979 Paris

Yılmaz Çolpan, the Tourism Attache at the Turkish Embassy is assassinated while walking on the Champs Elysées. Several groups, including ASALA, JCAG and the "Commandos of Armenian Militants Against Genocide" claim responsibility.

December 22, 1979 Amsterdam

Heavy damage results from a bomb explosion in front of the THY offices. ASALA claims credit.

December 23, 1979 Rome

A bomb explodes in front of a World Council of Churches Refugee Center, being used as a transit point for Armenian refugees from Lebanon. ASALA claims credit for the attack and warns the Italian authorities to halt "the Armenian diaspora."

December 23, 1979 Rome

Three bomb explosions occur in front of the offices of Air France and TWA, injuring a dozen passers-by. ASALA claims responsibility, stating that the bomb was placed "in reprisal against the repressive measures of French authorities against Armenians in France" (i.e., questioning suspects, carry out investigations, etc.)

January 10, 1980 Teheran

A bomb which explodes in front of the THY offices causes extensive damage. ASALA claims responsibility.

January 20, 1980 Madrid

A series of bomb attacks, resulting in numerous injuries, occurs in front of the offices of TWA, British Airways, Swissair, and Sabena. The JCAG claims credit for the attacks.

February 2, 1980 Brussels

Two bombs explode within minutes of each other in front of the downtown offices of THY and Aeroflot. The "New Armenian Resistance Group" issues a communique in which they claim responsibility for both attacks.

February 6, 1980 Bern

A terrorist opens fire on Turkish Ambassador Doğan Türkmen, who escapes with minor wounds. The would-be-assassin, an Armenian named Max Klindjian, is subsequently arrested in Marseilles and returned to Switzerland for trial. The JCAG claims credit for the attack.

February 18, 1980 Rome

The offices of Lufthansa, El Al and Swissair are damaged by two bomb attacks. Telephone messages give three reasons for the attacks: 1. The Germans support "Turkish fascism"; 2. The Jews are Zionists (ASALA); 3. The Swiss behave "repressively" towards the Armenians.

March 10, 1980 Rome

Bomb attacks on the THY and Turkish Tourism Bureau offices on the Piazza Della Republica. The blasts kill two Italians and injure fourteen. Credit for the attack is claimed by the "New Armenian Resistance of the Armenian Secret Army."

April 17, 1980 Rome

The Turkish Ambassador to the Holy See, Vecdi Türel, is shot and seriously wounded. His chauffeur, Tahsin Güvenç, is also slightly wounded in the assassination attempt. JCAG claims responsibility for the attack.

May 19, 1980 Marseilles

A rocket aimed at the Turkish Consulate General in Marseilles is discovered and defused prior to exploding. ASALA and a group calling itself "Black April" claim credit for the attack.

July 31, 1980 Athens

Galip Özmen, the Administrative Attache at the Turkish Embassy, and his family are attacked by Armenian terrorists while sitting in their car. Galip Özmen and his fourteen-year-old daughter, Neslihan, are killed in the attack. His wife, Sevil, and his sixteen-year-old son, Kaan, are wounded. Credit for the double killing is claimed by ASALA.

August 5, 1980 Lyon

Two terrorists storm into the Turkish Consulate General in Lyon and open fire, killing two and injuring several other bystanders. ASALA claims credit for the attack.

August 11, 1980 New York

An "Armenian group" hurls paint bombs at the Turkish House across from the United Nations, home of the Turkish Representations in New York.

September 26, 1980 Paris

Selçuk Bakkalbaşı, the Press Counselor at the Turkish Embassy, is shot as he enters his home. Bakkalbaşı survives but is permanently paralyzed as a result of his injuries. ASALA claims responsibility for the attack.

October 3, 1980 Geneva

Two Armenian terrorists are injured when a bomb they are preparing explodes in their Geneva hotel room. The two, Suzy Mahseredjian from Canoga Park, California, and Alexander Yenikomechian, are arrested. Their arrest leads to the formation of a new group called "October 3," which subsequently strikes at Swiss targets.

October 3, 1980 Milan

Two Italians are injured when a bomb explodes in front of the THY offices. ASALA claims credit for the attack.

October 5, 1980 Madrid

The offices of Alitalia are rocked by a bomb explosion which injures twelve individuals. The ASALA claims responsibility for the attack.

October 6, 1980 Los Angeles

Two molotov cocktails are thrown into the home of the Turkish Consul General, Kemal Arıkan. He survives with injuries.

October 10, 1980 Beirut

Two bombs explode near Swiss offices in West Beirut. A group calling itself "October 3" claims responsibility for these bombings as well as others on the same day against Swiss offices in England.

October 12, 1980 New York

A bomb placed in front of the Turkish House explodes. Four passers-by are injured. JCAG assumes responsibility.

October 12, 1980 Los Angeles

A travel agency in Hollywood, owned by a Turkish-American, is destroyed. JCAG claims responsibility.

October 12, 1980 London

The Turkish Tourism and Information Bureau's offices are damaged by a bomb explosion. ASALA claims credit.

October 12, 1980 London

A Swiss shopping complex in central London is damaged by a bomb blast. Callers claim the explosion was the work of "October 3."

October 13, 1980 Paris

A Swiss tourist office is damaged by a bomb explosion. "October 3" again claims credit.

October 21, 1980 Interlaken, Switzerland

A bomb is found in a Swiss express train coming from Paris. Luckily, it does not explode. "October 3" is believed to be behind the action, which could have caused a catastrophe.

November 4, 1980 Geneva

The Swiss Palace of Justice in Geneva is heavily damaged by a bomb explosion. Credit is claimed by "October 3."

November 9, 1980 Strasbourg

Heavy damage results from a bomb blast at the Turkish Consulate General. The attack is claimed by ASALA.

November 10, 1980 Rome

Five people are injured in attacks on the Swissair and Swiss Tourist offices. ASALA and "October 3" claim credit.

November 19, 1980 Rome

The offices of the Turkish Tourism Bureau and those of THY are damaged by a bomb explosion. ASALA claims responsibility.

November 25, 1980 Geneva

The offices of the Union of Swiss Banks are hit by a bomb explosion. Responsibility is claimed by "October 3."

December 5, 1980 Marseilles

A police expert defuses a time bomb left at the Swiss Consulate in Marseilles. "October 3" claims responsibility.

December 15, 1980 London

Two bombs placed in front of the French Tourism Office in London are defused by a Scotland Yard bomb squad. "October 3" claims the bombs are a warning to the French for assistance they have rendered the Swiss in fighting Armenian terrorism.

December 17, 1980 Sydney

Two terrorists assassinate Sarik Ariyak, the Turkish Consul General, and his bodyguard, Engin Sever. JCAG claims responsibility.

December 25, 1980 Zurich

A bomb explosion destroys a radar monitor at Kloten Airport, and a second explosive planted on the main runway of the airport is defused. "October 3" claims credit for these attempted mass-murders.

December 29, 1980 Madrid

A Spanish reporter is seriously injured in a telephone booth while calling in a story to his paper about the bomb attack on the Swissair offices. "October 3" claims responsibility.

December 30, 1980 Beirut

Bomb attack on the Credit-Suisse offices. ASALA and "October 3" fight over who gets the credit.

January 2, 1981 Beirut

In a press communique, ASALA threatens to "attack all Swiss diplomats throughout the world" in response to the alleged mistreatment of "Suzy and Alex" in Switzerland. On January 4, ASALA issues a statement giving the Swiss a few days to think things over.

January 14, 1981 Paris

A bomb explodes in the car of Ahmet Erbeyli, the Economic Counselor of the Turkish Embassy. Erbeyli is not injured, but the explosion totally destroys his car. A group calling itself the "Alex Yenikomechian Commandos" of ASALA claims credit for the explosion.

January 27, 1981 Milan

The Swissair and Swiss Tourist offices in Milan are damaged by bomb explosions. Two passers-by are injured. "October 3" claims credit for the bombing in a call to local media representatives.

February 3, 1981 Los Angeles

Bomb-squad officials disarm a bomb left at the Swiss Consulate. The terrorists threaten in anonymous phone calls that such attacks will continue until Suzy Mahseredjian is released.

February 5, 1981 Paris

Bombs explode in the TWA and Air France offices. One injured, heavy material damage. "October 3" claims credit.

March 4, 1981 Paris

Two terrorists open fire on Reşat Moralı, Labor Attache at the Turkish Embassy, Tecelli Arı, Religious Affairs Attache, and Ilkay Karakoç, the Paris representative of the Anadolu Bank. Moralı and Arı are assassinated. Karakoç manages to escape. ASALA claims responsibility.

March 12, 1981 Teheran

A group of ASALA terrorists try to occupy the Turkish Embassy, killing two guards in the process. Two of the perpetrators are captured and later executed by the Iranians. ASALA claims credit.

April 3, 1981 Copenhagen

Cavit Demir, the Labor Attache at the Turkish Embassy, is shot as he enters his apartment building late in the evening and is seriously wounded. Both ASALA and JCAG claim the attack.

June 3, 1981 Los Angeles

Bombs force the cancellation of performances by a Turkish folk-dance group. Threats of similar bombings force the group's performances in San Francisco to be canceled as well.

June 9, 1981 Geneva

Mehmet Savas Yergüz, Secretary in the Turkish Consulate, is assassinated by the Armenian terrorist Mardiros Jamgotchian. The arrest of the ASALA terrorist leads to the formation of a new ASALA branch called the "Ninth of June Organization," which will be responsible for a new series of attacks.

June 11, 1981 Paris

A group of Armenian terrorists, led by one Ara Toranian, occupies the THY offices. Initially ignored by the French authorities, the terrorists are only evicted from the premises after vehement protests from the Turkish Embassy.

June 19, 1981 Teheran

A bomb explodes at the offices of Swissair. The "Ninth of June Organization" claims responsibility.

June 26, 1981 Los Angeles

A bomb explodes in front of the Swiss Banking Corporation offices. Again the work of the "Ninth of June Organization."

July 19, 1981 Bern

A bomb explodes at the Swiss Parliament Building. "Ninth of June" claims responsibility.

July 20, 1981 Zurich

"Ninth of June" strikes again. A bomb explodes in an automatic photo-booth at Zurich's international airport.

July 21, 1981 Lausanne

Twenty women are injured as a bomb laid by Armenian terrorists explodes in a department store. "Ninth of June" claims responsibility.

July 22, 1981 Geneva

A bomb explodes in a locker at the train station. Authorities suspect "Ninth of June."

July 22, 1981 Geneva

An hour later, a second bomb explodes in a locker at the station. Police cordoned off the area following the first explosion, thereby preventing injuries from the second.

August 11, 1981 Copenhagen

Two bombs destroy the offices of Swissair. An American tourist is injured in the explosion. "Ninth of June" claims responsibility.

August 20, 1981 Los Angeles

A bomb explodes outside the offices of Swiss Precision Instruments. The attack is claimed by "Ninth of June."

August 20, 1981 Paris

Explosion at Alitalia Airlines. "October 3" is back in action.

September 15, 1981 Copenhagen

Two people are injured as a bomb explodes in front of the THY offices. Police experts manage to defuse a second bomb. Credit is claimed by a "Sixth Armenian Liberation Army."

September 17, 1981 Teheran

A bomb explosion damages a Swiss Embassy building. ASALA's "Ninth of June" claims responsibility.

September 24, 1981 Paris

Four Armenian terrorists occupy the Turkish Consulate General. During their entry into the building, the Consul, Kaya Inal, and a security guard, Cemal Özen, are seriously wounded. Terrorists take 56 hostages. Özen dies of his injuries in the hospital. The terrorists are ASALA members.

October 3, 1981 Geneva

The main post office and the city courthouse are hit by bomb explosions. An ASALA member is scheduled to go on trial for murder in the courthouse. "Ninth of June" claims credit for the attacks, which leave one person injured.

October 25, 1981 Rome

An Armenian terrorist fires at Gökberk Ergenekon, Second Secretary at the Turkish Embassy. Ergenekon is wounded in the arm. ASALA claims credit in the name of the "September 24 Suicide Commandos."

October 25, 1981 Paris

Fouquet's, the fashionable French restaurant, is the target of a bomb attack. A group calling itself "September-France" claims the attack.

October 26, 1981 Paris

The same group is behind the explosion of a booby-trapped automobile in front of "Le Drugstore."

October 27, 1981 Paris

"September-France" carries out a bomb attack at Roissy Airport.

October 27, 1981 Paris

A second bomb explodes near a busy escalator at Roissy Airport. No one is injured. "September-France" claims responsibility.

October 28, 1981 Paris

The same group is responsible for a bomb attack in a movie theater. Three people are injured.

November 3, 1981 Madrid

A bomb explodes in front of the Swissair offices, injuring three persons. Considerable damage to nearby buildings. ASALA claims responsibility.

November 5, 1981 Paris

A bomb explodes in the Gare de Lyon, injuring one person. The attack is claimed by the Armenian "Orly Organization."

November 12, 1981 Beirut

Simultaneous bomb explosions occur in front of three French offices: the French Cultural Center, the Air France offices and the home of the French Consul General. The "Orly Organization" claims responsibility. This organization owes its name to the fact that the French police arrested an Armenian at Orly Airport in Paris because of forged papers. The idea now is to "bomb him free."

November 14, 1981 Paris

A bomb explosion damages an automobile near the Eiffel Tower. "Orly" claims responsibility.

November 14, 1981 Paris

"Orly" launches a grenade attack on a group of tourists disembarking from a sightseeing boat on the River Seine.

November 15, 1981 Paris

"Orly" threatens to blow up an Air France airplane in flight.

November 15, 1981 Beirut

Simultaneous bomb attacks are carried out against three French targets: the "Union des Assurances de Paris", the Air France offices and the "Banque Libano-Française". "Orly" is responsible.

November 15, 1981 Paris

A McDonald's restaurant is destroyed by "September-France."

November 16, 1981 Paris

A bomb injures two innocent bystanders at the Gare de l'Est. "Orly" claims responsibility.

November 18, 1981 Paris

"Orly" announces that it has planted a bomb at the Gare du Nord.

November 20, 1981 Los Angeles

The Turkish Consulate General in Beverly Hills suffers extensive damage. The JCAG claims credit.

January 13, 1982 Toronto

An ASALA bomb causes extensive damage to the Turkish Consulate General.

January 17, 1982 Geneva

Two bombs destroy parked cars. The ASALA "Ninth of June Organization" claims credit.

January 17, 1982 Paris

A bomb explodes at the Union of Banks and a second is disarmed at the Credit Lyonnais. "Orly" claims responsibility.

January 19, 1982 Paris

A bomb explodes in the Air France offices in the Palais des Congres. "Orly" claims responsibility.

January 28, 1982 Los Angeles

Kemal Arıkan, the Turkish Consul General in Los Angeles, is assassinated by two terrorists while driving to work. Nineteen year old Hampig Sassounian is arrested and sentenced to life.

March 22, 1982 Cambridge, Massachusetts

A gift shop belonging to Orhan Gündüz, the Turkish Honorary Consul General in Boston, is blown up. Gündüz receives an ultimatum: Either he gives up his honorary position or he will be "executed." Responsibility is claimed by the JCAG.

March 26, 1982 Beirut

Two dead, sixteen injured in an explosion at a movie theater. ASALA claims credit for the attack.

April 8, 1982 Ottawa

Kani Güngör, the Commercial Attache at the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa, is seriously wounded in an attack by Armenian terrorists in the garage of his apartment house. ASALA claims responsibility.

April 24, 1982 Dortmund, West Germany

Several Turkish-owned businesses suffer extensive damage in bomb attacks. The "New Armenian Resistance Organization" claims responsibility.

May 4, 1982 Cambridge, Massachusetts

Orhan Gündüz, the Turkish Honorary Consul General in Boston is assassinated. The murderer is still at large.

May 10, 1982 Geneva

Bombs explode at two banks. The attacks are claimed by an Armenian "World Punishment Organization."

May 18, 1982 Toronto

Four Armenians are arrested for trying to smuggle money out of the country. The money was extorted from Armenians, a common practice throughout the world. In the course of the investigation, it is discovered that the terrorists fire-bombed the house of an Armenian who refused to make his contribution to Armenian terrorism.

May 18, 1982 Tampa, Florida

Attack at the office of Nash Karahan, the Turkish Honorary Consul General.

May 26, 1982 Los Angeles

A bomb damages the office of Swiss Banking Corporation. The suspects: four Armenians accused of involvement in ASALA.

May 30, 1982 Los Angeles

Three members of ASALA are arrested when planting a bomb in the Air Canada cargo-office.

June 7, 1982 Lisbon

The Administrative Attache at the Turkish Embassy, Erkut Akbay, and his wife, Nadide Akbay, are assassinated in front of their home. JCAG claims responsibility.

July 1, 1982 Rotterdam

Kemalettin Demirer, the Turkish Consul General in Rotterdam, is shot down by four Armenian terrorists. An "Armenian Red Army" claims responsibility.

July 21, 1982 Paris

Sixteen injured in a bomb explosion near a cafe in the Place Saint-Severin. Credit is claimed by the Orly Organization. "Orly" complains that the French do not treat the arrested Armenian terrorists as "political prisoners," but rather as ordinary criminals.

July 26, 1982 Paris

"Orly" is responsible for injuring two women in an explosion in Paris' "Pub Saint-Germain."

August 2, 1982 Paris

Pierre Gulumian, an Armenian terrorist, is killed when a bomb he is making explodes in his face.

August 7, 1982 Ankara, Esenboga Airport

Two Armenian terrorists open fire in a crowded passenger waiting room. One of the terrorists takes more than twenty hostages while the second is apprehended by the police. Nine people are dead and eighty-two injured—some seriously. The surviving terrorist, Levon Ekmekjian is arrested and sentenced.

August 8, 1982 Paris

A bomb is defused in time. "Orly" regrets the discovery.

August 12, 1982 Paris

Terrorists open fire on a policeman assigned to protect the offices of the Turkish Tourism Attache. Luckily, he escapes without injury.

August 27, 1982 Ottawa

Colonel Atilla Altıkat, the Military Attache at the Turkish Embassy, is assassinated in his car. JCAG claims responsibility.

September 9, 1982 Burgaz, Bulgaria

Bora Suelkan, the Administrative Attache at the Turkish Consulate General in Burgaz, is assassinated in front of his home. The assassin leaves a message "We shot dead the Turkish diplomat: Combat Units of Justice Against the Armenian Genocide." An anonymous caller claims that the assassination is the work of a branch of the ASALA.

October 26, 1982 Los Angeles

Five Armenian terrorists are charged with conspiring to blow up the offices of the Honorary Turkish Consul General in Philadelphia. All belong to the JCAG.

December 8, 1982 Athens

Two Armenians on a motorbike throw a bomb at the offices of the Saudi Arabian Airlines. The bomb hits a power pylon, explodes and kills one of the terrorists. His accomplice, an Armenian from Iran named Vahe Kontaverdian is arrested. It is later revealed that ASALA ordered the attack because Saudi Arabia maintains friendly relations with Turkey.

January 21, 1983 Anaheim, California

Nine "sophisticated" pipe bombs are confiscated from an Armenian bakery after one of the detonators goes off and causes fire.

January 22, 1983 Paris

Two terrorists attack the offices of THY with hand grenades. No one is injured. ASALA claims credit.

January 22, 1983 Paris

French police defuse a powerful explosive device near the THY counter at Orly airport.

February 2, 1983 Brussels

The offices of THY are bombed. The "New Armenian Resistance Organization" claims responsibility.

February 28, 1983 Luxembourg

A bomb placed in front of Turkey's diplomatic mission is defused. The Armenian Reporter in New York reports that the "New Armenian Resistance Organization" is responsible.

February 28, 1983 Paris

A bomb explodes at the Marmara Travel Agency. Killed in the explosion is Renée Morin, a French secretary. Four other Frenchmen are wounded. A few minutes after the attack, ASALA claims responsibility.

March 9, 1983 Belgrade

Galip Balkar, the Turkish Ambassador to Yugoslavia is assassinated in central Belgrade. His chauffeur, Necati Kayar is shot in the stomach. As the two assailants flee from the scene, they are bravely pursued by Yugoslav citizens. One of the terrorists shoots and wounds a Yugoslav Colonel, and is in turn apprehended by a policeman. The second terrorist opens fire on civilians who are chasing him, killing a young student and wounding a young girl. The two terrorists, Kirkor Levonian and Raffi Elbekian, are tried and sentenced.

March 31, 1983 Frankfurt

An anonymous caller threatened to bomb the offices and kill the staff of Tercüman newspaper, a Turkish daily.

May 24, 1983 Brussels

Bombs explode in front of the Turkish Embassy's Culture and Information offices and in front of a Turkish-owned travel agency. The Italian director of the travel agency is wounded. ASALA claims credit.

June 16, 1983 Istanbul

Armenian terrorists carry out an attack with hand grenades and automatic weapons inside the covered bazaar in Istanbul. Two dead, twenty-one wounded. ASALA claims responsibility.

July 8, 1983 Paris

Armenian terrorists attack the offices of the British Council, protesting against the trials of Armenians in London.

July 14, 1983 Brussels

Armenian terrorists murder Dursun Aksoy, the Administrative Attache at the Turkish Embassy. ASALA, ARA and JCAG claim responsibility.

July 15, 1983 Paris

A bomb explodes in front of the THY counter at Orly airport. Eight dead, more than sixty injured. A 29 years old Syrian-Armenian named Varadjian Garbidjian confesses to having planted the bomb. He admits that the bomb was intended to have exploded once the plane was airborne.

July 15, 1983 London

A bomb, similar to the one that exploded at Orly, is defused in time. ASALA claims responsibility for both attacks.

July 18, 1983 Lyon

A bomb threat is made by ASALA against the Lyon railroad station.

July 20, 1983 Lyon

Panicky evacuation of Lyon's Gare de Perrache following a bomb threat from ASALA.

July 22, 1983 Teheran

"Orly" carries out bomb attacks on the French Embassy and Air France.

July 27, 1983 Lisbon

Five Armenian terrorists attempt to storm the Turkish Embassy in Lisbon. Failing to gain access to the chancery, they occupy the residence, taking the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) and his family hostage. When explosives being planted by the terrorists go off, Cahide Mihçioğlu, wife of the DCM and four of the terrorists are blown to pieces. The DCM, Yurtsev Mihçioğlu, and his son Atasay are injured. The fifth terrorist is killed in the initial assault by Turkish security forces. One Portuguese policeman is also killed and another wounded. The ARA claims responsibility.

July 28, 1983 Lyon

Another bomb threat on Lyon-Perrache railroad station. ASALA claims responsibility.

July 29, 1983 Teheran

A threat to blow up the French Embassy in Teheran with a rocket attack causes Iranian officials to increase security at the facility.

July 31, 1983 Lyon and Rennes

Bomb threats from Armenian terrorists force the emergency landing of two domestic French flights carrying 424 passengers.

August 10, 1983 Teheran

A bomb explodes in an automobile at the French Embassy. ASALA claims credit for the attack.

August 25, 1983 Bonn

A whole series of bomb attacks against offices of the French Consulate General claim two lives and leave twenty-three injured. ASALA claims responsibility.

September 9, 1983 Teheran

Two French Embassy cars are bombed. One of the bombs injures two embassy staff members. ASALA claims credit.

October 1, 1983 Marseilles

A bomb blast destroys the U.S., Soviet and Algerian pavilions at an international trade fair in Marseilles. One person is killed and twenty-six injured. ASALA and "Orly" claim credit.

October 6, 1983 Teheran

A French Embassy vehicle is bombed, injuring two passengers. "Orly" claims responsibility.

October 29, 1983 Beirut

Hand-grenade attack on the French Embassy. One of the ASALA terrorists is arrested.

October 29, 1983 Beirut

The Turkish Embassy is attacked by three Armenian terrorists. One of the assailants, Sarkis Denielian, a 19 years old Lebanese-Armenian is apprehended. ASALA claims responsibility.

February 8, 1984 Paris

Bomb threat on an Air France flight to New York.

March 28, 1984 Teheran

A timed series of attacks is carried out against Turkish diplomats:

Two Armenian terrorists shoot and seriously wound Sergeant Ismail Pamukçu, employed at the office of the Turkish Military Attache;

Hasan Servet Öktem, First Secretary of the Turkish Embassy, is slightly wounded as he leaves his home;

İbrahim Özdemir, the Administrative Attache at the Turkish Embassy, alerts police to two suspicious looking men. They turn out to be Armenian terrorists and are arrested;

In the afternoon of the same day, Iranian police arrest three more Armenian terrorists outside the Turkish Embassy;

An Armenian terrorist is killed when a bomb he is attempting to plant in the car of the Turkish Assistant Commercial Counselor explodes prematurely. The dead terrorist is later identified as Sultan Gregorian Semaperdan (ASALA).

March 29, 1984 Los Angeles

ASALA sends a written threat, saying they will assassinate Turkish athletes who take part in the Olympics.

April 8, 1984 Beirut

ASALA issues a communique warning that all flights to Turkey will be considered military targets.

April 26, 1984 Ankara

The Turkish Prime Minister, Turgut Özal, receives a threat warning him that if he goes ahead with a planned visit to Teheran, ASALA will schedule a major terrorist operation against his country.

April 28, 1984 Teheran

Two Armenian terrorists riding a motorcycle open fire on Işık Yönder as he drives his wife, Sadiye Yönder, to the Turkish Embassy where she works. Işık Yönder is killed, and ASALA claims credit for yet another senseless murder.

June 20, 1984 Vienna

A bomb explodes in a car belonging to Erdogan Özen, Assistant Labor and Social Affairs Counselor at the Turkish Embassy in Vienna. Özen is killed and five others seriously wounded, including a policeman. ARA terrorists claim credit for the crime.

June 25, 1984 Los Angeles

A news agency office in France receives a letter threatening to attack all governments, organizations and companies which assist, in any way whatsoever, Turkey's team at the Los Angeles Olympics.

August 13, 1984 Lyon

A bomb explodes in a Lyon train station causing minor damage. ASALA claims credit.

September 1984 Teheran

Several Turkish owned firms in Iran come under attack after receiving warning letters informing them that they are to be targeted. The first victim is the Sezai Türkes Company. A Turkish employee is injured while fighting the fire caused by the explosion. A chain of smaller scale acts of intimidation follows.

September 1, 1984 Teheran

Iranian authorities expose a plot to assassinate İsmet Birsal, the Turkish Ambassador to Teheran.

September 3, 1984 Istanbul

Two Armenian terrorists die as one of their bombs goes off too soon. The ARA claims credit.

November 19, 1984 Vienna

Evner Ergun, Deputy Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations, Vienna is assassinated while driving to work. The assassins leave a flag with the initials "ARA" on his body.

December 1984 Brussels

Authorities are able to thwart a bombing attempt at the residence of Selçuk Incesu, Turkish Consul General.

December 29, 1984 Beirut

Two French buildings in East Beirut are bombed. ASALA claims credit.

December 29, 1984 Paris

Following an ASALA threat to blow up an Air France plane, police increase security at the Charles de Gaulle Airport.

January 3, 1985 Beirut

The offices of Agence France Presse are extensively damaged when a bomb explodes.

March 3, 1985 Paris

An anonymous caller to Agence France Presse threatens to attack French interests throughout the world upon the indictment of the three terrorists who participated in the Orly attack.

March 12, 1985 Ottawa

Three heavily armed terrorists storm the Turkish Embassy, killing a Canadian security guard in the process. After blowing up the front door, the gunmen enter the building. Ambassador Coskun Kırca manages to escape but suffers extensive injuries. The wife and daughter of the Ambassador, who were taken hostage, are later released, and the terrorists surrender. ARA claims responsibility.

March 26, 1985 Toronto

A threat to blow up the city of Toronto's transit system leads to chaos during the rush hour. An "Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Our Homeland" claims responsibility for the threat.

November 1985 Brussels

A special anti-terrorist security squad of the Belgian police exposes and arrests three Armenian terrorists with Portuguese passports. They were planning an attack on Turkish officers at NATO headquarters.

November 28, 1985 Paris

French police arrest the leader of the terrorist organization—the "Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia-Revolutionary Movement" (ASALA-RM)—Mr. Monte Melkonian, a U.S. citizen. In Melkonian's apartment, police confiscate weapons, explosive devices, arrival and departure information on Turkish ships scheduled to visit France and a picture of Turkey's Ambassador to France, Adnan Bulak.

December 1985 Paris

Forty-one shoppers in two of Paris' leading department stores (Gallerie Lafayette and Printemps) are injured (twelve seriously) when nearly simultaneous bomb explosions rip through the stores. In the ensuing panic, some 10,000 Christmas shoppers flee into the street. The Armenian Reporter, published in New York, reports in its December 12th issue that French law enforcement authorities are concentrating on ASALA as the most likely perpetrator. ASALA later takes credit for the two bombings.

November 23, 1986 Melbourne

At 2:15 a.m. a bomb explodes in front of the Turkish Consulate General. One dead -presumedly the perpetrator- and one Australian injured.

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