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"THE ARMENIAN REPUBLIC"

By Simon Vratzian

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Enclosed in Chakhan's letter

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Translated by Chakhan

Page 54: As a result of the revolution and turmoil in Russia, the Russian Army started to disintegrate on the Turkish Front. Disregarding orders of the commanders, soldiers were deserting their positions by the thousands and ten-thousands, and heading towards Russia where "they were distributing land", looting and wiping everything on the way like locusts.

Page 58: On December 13, 1917, the commander-in-chief of the Caucasian Army, with his order No. 136, allowed the formation of ~~the~~ "Armenian Corps" to fill the vacuum followed by the retreat of the Russian army. He ordered General Thomas Nazarpikian, one of the best soldiers of the Russian army, to be commander-in-chief. General Vishinski was his chief-of-staff.

Page 60: A division was formed of western(Turkish) Armenians. Antranig Pasha was appointed its commander.

Page 63: On December 4, 1917, armistice was proclaimed between Russia and the Axis Powers. Fighting ceased on the Russo-Turkish front, which extended about 500 kilometers - Black Sea - Erzincan - Van.

Page 85: In mid-January 1918, Wahib Mehmed Pasha, in order to protect Mohammedan inhabitants against "Armenian atrocities", moved his armies eastward towards Ardahan, massacring the inhabitants of Christian (Armenian) villages on the way.

War had started between the Turkish army and the Armenian Corps.

Page 90: In the evening of Jan. 31, 1918, the Armenian forces, together with the Armenian population, evacuated Erzincan, and, with unspeakable hardships, retreated towards Erzurum. Armenian soldiers and refugees from other places joined the retreating masses. The Kurds were attacking from right and left and the terrible cold and storms were hampering the retreat. 40 % of the soldiers and half of the refugees were killed, wounded or afflicted by frost-bite. Understandably, the enraged masses in their turn were hurting the Mohammedans on their way by every means. Between Erzincan and Erzurum, not a single Mohammedan village was left intact. They were burnt or destroyed completely. Their inhabitants fled or were massacred.

Page 92: The commander of the Erzurum area was Antranig. A brave combatant, ~~and~~ an admirable ~~commander~~ leader; ~~and~~ an expert in guerilla warfare, Antranig, after wearing his general's epaulets, lost much of his charm. In spite of his epaulets, the Russian army officers/ continued to regard him as a mere chief, incapable of directing large army units.

After fierce fighting, during which Antranig demonstrated great personal heroism and intrepidity, the Armenian forces evacuated the city and retreated.

Page 103: After the fall of Sarikamish/ on April 7-8, 1918, the Armenian National Council held a meeting in Alexandrapol.

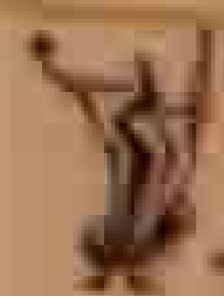
Page 105: On April 9, 1918, the Trans-Caucasian ~~Assembly~~ "Sa'im" (parliament in Tbilisi where the Georgian, Azerbaijan and Armenian nationalities had their representatives) proclaimed Trans-Caucasia an independent republic.

Page 114: On May 11, 1918, took place the opening ceremony of the Conference of Batum between the Turks (Wahib Pasha) and the delegation of the Trans-Caucasian Republic.

The Turks dictated very heavy turms on Trans-Caucasia, particularly Armenia. Alexandrapol (nowadays Leninakan), Akhalkalak, Chirag and the great part of the Etchmiadzin district were to be detached from Armenia and annexed to Turkey. Armdnia was being virtually wiped out.

German general Von Losov who was attending the conference cabled his government on May 12: "... The purpose of the Turks is to annihilate the Armenians of Trans-Caucasia . . . etc."* (* I. Lepsius, Deutschland Und Armenaa, Berlin, 1919).

Page 115: In the evening of May 14, 1918, the Turks presented an ultimatum, and, without waiting for the answer (Vratzian says "We had not translated the ultimatum yet") attacked Alexandrapol. The Armenians retreated.



Page 138: After the fall of Kars and Alexandrapol part of the Armenian Army retreated towards Yérévan and on May 19, 1918, reached SARDARABAD * (near Yérévan).

* At Sardarabad, Bash-Abaran and Kara-Kilisa were waged a series of battles against the Turks which are generally considered as the most important and significant in Armenian history since the Battle of Avarayr in 451 A.D. The victorious battle at Sardarabad laid the foundations for Free and Independent Armenia.

Battle of Avarayr: In the year 301 A.D. King Dertad proclaimed Christianity as the state religion of Armenia. In 451 A.D. the Persians wanted to convert the Armenians to sun-worshippers. A battle was waged at Avarayr between 66,000 Armenians and 300,000 Persians. The Persians, using elephants in the battle, defeated the Armenians. Vartan the Hero, their leader, was killed in action. Armenian princes continued the struggle and christianity was saved in Armenia.

Catholicos Vasken the First, in a speech at Montebello, Calif., this summer, referred to the Battle of Sardarabad as our "Second Avarayr".

The Armenian government, last year, inaugurated the huge and beautiful monuments in memory of the Battle of Sardarabad.

Every Armenian who pays a visit to Armenia visits the monument at Sardarabad. This summer, more than 500 visited Armenia from Beirut alone.

A. C.

Page 139: The population prepared to flee - but where to flee! All the roads were blocked. Liberty or death! There was no other alternative!

General Nazarpekian made an appeal to the army. The soldiers stopped retreating.

The entire population around Ararat, women, girls and the clergy included, stood to fight as one man.

Page 140: General Sigilian had 10,000 soldiers in his army (the Turks had 35,000 soldiers - this information is from another page. A.C.). It was divided into two parts: One part was commanded by Dro, and the other by General Daniel Beg Piroumian. General Sigilian was commander-in-chief.

On May 23, Gen. Sigilian gave the order to attack.

On May 24, the Turks started to flee. Victory was ours.

Page 142: Receiving reinforcements, the Turks counterattacked. Fighting lasted for a few days. On May 28, 1918, the Turks retreated on all the fronts. ("The fighting at Sardarabad impressed the delegates at Batum greatly" - this line is from another page).

Page 143: As General Sigilian was preparing to advance towards Alexandrapol, telegram was received from Batum that a peace treaty is signed. Gen. Nazarpekian was ordering a cease-fire.

Page 156: Thus, according to the "Treaty of Batum" between Ottoman and Armenian delegations (May 30-June 4, 1918), Armenia became an independent republic.

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Page 217: On December 13, 1918, war broke out between Armenia and Georgia because of border disputes (Each side claimed that Akhalkalak and Lori was its territory).

Page 232: Mass arrests and terrible persecution of Armenians took place all over Georgia. (Something similar happened between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the summer of 1919 because of Nakhichevan and Gharapagh districts. A.C.).

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(In late 1920, the Kemalists made a fresh attempt to obliterate Armenia completely).

A.C.

(P.T.O.)



Page ~~464~~ 462: Moustapha Kemal was hesitating to take decisive action. On the other hand, Kyazim Karabekir was demanding to declare war on Armenia immediately.

Page 464: Henceforth, what went on between Ankara and Kyazim Karabekir Pasha? "Journal d'Orient" of Istanbul, in its October 19, (1920) issue tells:

"Commander of Erzurum's 15-th Division Kyazim Karabekir arrived at Ankara on September 7. The next day, Moustapha Kemal presided over a meeting of the Supreme Military Council ... (etc).

"And yet, there was still one problem which was not clear for Moustapha Kemal: In case of an attack against Armenia, what position would Georgia take, which, as it is known, had a small but well-organized army ... (etc).

Page 466: On Sept. 23, 1920, without declaring war, the Turkish army started a general attack on Armenia.

In order to justify the attack, the government of Ankara published the following communiqué:

Page 466: " ... According to official statistics issued by the Mohammedan Union of Yerevan and which have been dispatched to representatives of Allied Powers in Caucasia and Istanbul, - these documents have yet to be discovered - until the end of 1919, only in regions within Armenia, 199 Turkish villages have been burnt and most of their inhabitants massacred. Only a small part have succeeded in taking refuge in Azerbaijan ... (etc.).

" ... With the help of these guns and ammunition which the American and European ~~powers~~ imperialists are so generously giving to the Tashnaks, the latter were able to extend the massacres and looting up to the Ottoman borders. Our clansman and our coreligionist brothers started to flee to our country by the thousands ... (etc.).

Page 473: Georgian political circles received the news of Turkey's attack on Armenia with contempt, except for the extreme nationalists, who thought that Kemal's attack gave them a chance to solve the problem of the disputable border provinces of Akhalkalak and Lori. The government party's "ERTOPAT" journal (No. 2279) wrote: "That Kemal Pasha hates Armenia, is no secret to anybody. But we could never imagine that the communists would demean to the extent of extending their hand to that man" (* It is true that the communist government of Russia flirted with Kemal during those days. A.C.)."

Page 475: What was the attitude of the Allies towards the Turkish aggression? ... We did not receive any tangible assistance from the Allies, except the one million Pounds worth of ammunition and military clothing which England sold to us. After the start of the war, Armenia again applied to the Allies. The answer was the same. Sympathetic words but no practical assistance.

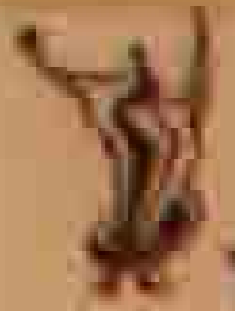
Under such circumstances started the Turko-Armenian war. Armenia was all alone by itself, in the true sense of the word.

Page 481: Only in Kars, the Armenians gave a toll of 6000 victims to Turkish bestiality.

Page 484: The Armenian government applied for a truce and on November 22, 1920 ceded to the Turks whatever they demanded. The Armenian government simultaneously applied to Moscow to use its good offices and intervene on behalf of the Armenians (during the talks).

Page 484: The Allies, still, had nothing to say. Only England's representative Stokes gave a clear answer on behalf of the Foreign Office: England can help in no way; The Armenians have no other way out but to be reconciled with Soviet Russia - as the lesser of two evils.

To be reconciled with Russia? But where is she, that Russia, and what could she do under the circumstances ... (etc.).



Page 488: Katchaznoui (the Prime Minister) resigned and suggested on his part that Minister of Agriculture and State Property Simon Vratzian be a candidate to take over the prime-ministership ... (etc.).

Page 489: ... We knew that Turkey was going to move on us one day to give us the last blow. But we could not imagine that it would come so fast and so soon!

Page 498: After coming to power, he (Simon Vratzian) immediately contacted Lecran (Soviet Russia's envoy to intervene on behalf of Armenia during the peace talks). The government's aim was to secure close friendship with Soviet Russia. It was clear to everybody during those days that Armenia had either to side with Russia or be a toy in the ~~xxx~~ hands of Turkey - if not be exterminated completely ... (etc.).

Lecran suggested that Soviet troops should enter Armenia.

Page 499: Vratzian had objections to Soviet troops on the ground that in case of sovietization, Armenia would be cut completely with Europe or America, from where she was receiving provisions ... (etc.).

Page 500: On November 29, 1920, a group of Armenian Bolsheviki from Baku entered the Armenian village of Ichévan and proclaimed Armenia a Soviet Republic* (The Tashnaks fled the country).

* Free Armenia had an area of 50,000 sq. Km. (5 times the size of Lebanon). Kemal's general Kyazim Karabekir occupied four-fifths of this, namely, 40,000 sq. Km. The Bolsheviki (The Red Army entered Armenia when it was proclaimed a Soviet Republic) partitioned the occupied territory with the Turks. That is to say, they took back 20,000 sq. Km. and left Kars and Ardahan to Kemal. Now Armenia has an area of 30,000 sq. Km (3 times the area of Lebanon).

A.C.
