



# CRAG Report

Campaign for Recognition of the Armenian Genocide

Spring 2002

## European Parliament Votes to Reaffirm Armenian Genocide

In a landmark vote, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on EU policy in the Caucasus, on February 28, in which it reaffirmed that Turkey must recognise the Armenian genocide of 1915 before it can join the European Union - as initially stated by Parliament in 1987.

The resolution also calls upon Turkey to lift its blockade of Armenia.

"Turkey is a recognised candidate to join the EU since 1999," said Nicolas Tavitian, Director of the European Union office of the Forum of Armenian Associations in Europe. "It is now clear that the position it established long ago, in 1987, still holds. If Parliament has its way, Turkey cannot join the EU unless it ends its campaigns of denial of the Armenian genocide and makes its peace with history. We hope the Turkish government will hear this principled message and 'create the basis for reconciliation' as called for by the European Parliament."

The text that was adopted was proposed to Parliament by Swedish Green MEP Per Gahrton. An amendment to delete the mention relating to the genocide was defeated by the over-

(see VOTE, page 2)

## 'April 24' Activities to Feature Book Launch, Talks, March

### April 2002 Timetable

- April 9** - Talk by Carlos Bedrossian, "The Armenian Genocide: A Military Perspective". Hayashen, 7pm.
- April 14** - Book Launch and signing, "Merchants in Exile: The Armenians in Manchester, 1835-1935" Hayashen, 2pm
- April 15** - "Komitas: An Odyssey of Armenian Music in the Last 100 Years"; discussion, mini-concert, and musical collage; Armenian Institute Event, St Peter's Church, 90 Kensington Park Road. 8pm. Tickets £8.
- April 19** - **Spring Remembrance Concert**, Wigmore Hall, 36 Wigmore St, W1; 7.30pm; tickets £10
- April 24** - **Requiem Service**, St Sarkis Church, Kensington, 6:30pm.
  - **Vigil** outside Turkish Embassy, 6pm - 10pm
- April 25** - **Genocide Photo Exhibition & Talk** Foyer Welsh Assembly Building, Cardiff; 12.30.
- April 27** - **March**, Marble Arch to Cenotaph, 1pm.
  - "**Out of Darkness**," a YaD production, including Nouritza Matossian, & Helin Avedissian. 8:15pm, ICA, The Mall, London, SW1; £8.

Going from strength to strength, CRAG has organised and is co-ordinating and co-operating with others to offer a very adventurous programme for the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, this month.

In addition to the March and Vigil, this year will also see a Remembrance concert, a book launch and talks. Mass attendance will lend support to CRAG's efforts.

The month's events will begin on April 9 with a talk by Carlos Bedrossian, at Hayashen, Acton, starting at 7pm. Bedrossian's illustrated talk will discuss "The Armenian Genocide: a Military Perspective," and will trace the 1915 genocide back to the beginnings of the new Turkish nation-state, and Turkey's entry into WWI on the side of Germany. As part of the concept of Total War, Turkey saw its Armenian minority as an internal foe and a threat to its stability. This, in turn, justified the mobilisation of the political, military, economic and informational elements of national power to eliminate the threat, by destroying its Armenian population. Similar dynamics and some of the Turkish techniques were

(see APRIL 24, page 3)

## CRAG Drafts New Constitution

As it comes to most organisations, so it has come to the Campaign for the Recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Building on its achievements and past successes, CRAG has drafted a new constitution in order to give itself

a new structure and a higher level of professionalism.

"We are probably the only organisation in the entire Armenian Diaspora to devote itself solely to the political recognition of the Armenia Genocide," said Dr Rostom Stepanian, chairman of CRAG, "and we have felt that we have now had enough experience to realise that a clearly defined structure is needed on which to grow."

The Chairman explains that the many volunteers have achieved much, as people did what had to be done, "and the results of the last two years are a credit to their efforts."

By fully defining its purposes and its

(see CONSTITUTION, page 3)

## BBC, Carlton TV to Cover Genocide Recognition

Genocide recognition will get two major boosts this month when the BBC and Carlton Television both will remember the events of 1915.

Throughout the month, Carlton will run a three-minute "spot" at various times of the day and evening.

The first Carlton spots will be on Thursday, April 4 at 1.28pm and 3.03pm, and on Friday April 5, at 1.28pm. Check the CRAG web-site for the times for the following weeks.

In explaining its intent, Carlton has said: "Across the world, Armenian family trees hang in front rooms as a

(see TV, page 2)

### Thank You

This cost of producing this issue of the **CRAG Report** has been paid for by the family of the late Vahram Grigorian, an active member of CRAG, who died suddenly in December.

The CRAG committee wishes to express its thanks to Mrs Hourik Grigorian and daughters Karineh and Alenoush for their generosity.

## MEP Lord Bethell Deceives Constituents on Recognition Vote

The London MEP Lord Bethell was caught out by CRAG while trying to deceive his constituents, who contacted him regarding the European Parliament vote that called on Turkey to recognise the Armenian Genocide.

The British Conservative MEPs were the only party within the European Parliament to vote as a group against recognition.

However, even more troubling than this was the deceitful response to his constituents from Lord Bethell who, though voting with his Conservative colleagues, tried to indicate, after the vote, that he supported recognition.

Sent on Friday, March 1, after the vote, this hypocrite writes:

***Like most students of the history of the Eastern Mediterranean, indeed like most intelligent people who have read about the events of those days in the early part of the 19th century [he means the 20th century!], when whole Armenian communities were destroyed by the Turkish authorities or their armies, I recognise Turkish actions as an attempt at genocide against the Armenian people in those regions and send my full support to your efforts to highlight this terrible historical event. I look forward to the day when a full recognition of these crimes by the Turkish government and public opinion will enable the Armenians and the Turks to be reconciled and to live as neighbours.***

More honest, however negative, is this response from Theresa Villiers MEP who outlined the Conservative position stating that.

***We do not consider it helpful to confidence building and amicable regional relations to make a specific reference to a particularly controversial and disputed episode of history, as this sensitive matter, no matter how tragic, refers to an incident which happened over 80 years ago.***

CRAG contacted Lord Bethell so as to give him an opportunity to issue an apology to his constituents. He has of yet not responded.

CRAG has prepared a response which it will offer to all of Lord Bethell's constituents who wrote and received this reply. He must not be permitted to get away with it.

Also, CRAG is preparing a reply for

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whelming majority of 391 votes to 96. This amendment, which would have destroyed the intent of the Gahrton Report, was proposed by the European Liberal Democrats and a few independent members—supported, it is sad to say, by British Conservatives. In its place, this group would have included language that urged Turkey and Armenia to reconcile their “historical differences” and work toward improving their cultural, economic, and diplomatic ties.

The vote came after a long campaign of information and explanation by Armenian groups on the contemporary implications of the Armenian genocide for peace in the Caucasus. The EU office of the FAAE, the Armenian National Congress (ANC) and the representatives of the Republic of Armenia in particular co-operated closely in the first joint effort of its kind at the European level. The bulk of the effort of educating decision-makers however was carried out by Armenian communities and associations throughout Europe.

By coincidence, the debate on the Armenian genocide took place shortly after a discussion on the International Criminal Court in which a number of speakers, including EU Commissioner for enlargement Günther Verheugen, repeated that “there can be no peace without justice.” A principle no doubt carried over into the debate on peace in the Caucasus.

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constant memorial to those who died in the Armenian genocide in 1915. April is the month in which they are remembered. In London their memories are a lesson in a society still trying

the British Conservative European Parliament Group. Therefore, anyone who has a letter of reply from any MEP should contact the CRAG office.

An interesting sidelight is that in 1987, it was the British Conservatives in Brussels who led the way for the Genocide-recognition statement. Admittedly, when the news reached Margaret Thatcher, she was so angered that she dismissed the leader of the British Conservatives who was, because they were the largest single party in the Parliament, also head of the Conservative Group.

## Book on Manchester Armenians Discusses Genocide

“Merchants in Exile: The Armenians in Manchester, England, 1835-1935,” by Joan George, while obviously not solely about the Armenian Genocide, is well worth reading because in discussing the history of the first Armenians in this country, it touches on the three tragic episodes of Genocide by the Turks in the reactions of, and its effect on, the Armenians in Manchester.

Joan George's book coincides with the development of the Armenian unrest in the Ottoman Empire (where most Manchester Armenians came from). Soon the Hamidian massacres of 1894-96, the Adana massacres of 1909, and the Genocide of 1915 compelled Manchester Armenians to get further involved in Armenian national affairs.

It is fascinating to see how the Manchester community played a prominent role in keeping the Ottoman Armenian issue alive in British consciousness with press campaigns and lobbying aimed at British officials.

Equally interesting is to learn how early Lord Bryce became involved with the Armenians and how consistent was his fidelity to the cause of the Armenians. Much as William Gladstone is revered among the Armenians, it would appear that Lord Bryce is worthy of more reverence.

Joan George will discuss and sign her book at its official launch, April 14, at Hayashen, Acton, from 2 to 4pm.

Copies of “Merchants in Exile” are available from Garod Books Ltd., PO Box 2735, Reading, RG4 8GF, or email garod@gomidias.org

Joan George, *Merchants in Exile: The Armenians in Manchester, England, 1835-1935* (Princeton and London: Gomidas Institute Books, 2002), xviii + 279 pp., maps, photos, illust., ISBN 1-903656-08-7, £16.

to overcome racial intolerance.” The spots will include an interview with 96-year-old Genocide survivor, Armand Keshishian.

“Correspondent” the BBC's flagship weekly international current-affairs programme, will feature a 45-minute documentary, reported by Fergal Keane. The programme has been in the making since last November, and will deal mainly with the political issues surrounding the denial of the Armenian Genocide and also why people still seek recognition. It was Keane, it will be remembered who at the first Holocaust Memorial Day Observance, openly referred to the Armenian Genocide, despite the Government's deliberate attempts at omitting any reference to the Armenian Genocide. It is expected to be screened on Sunday 26th May at 7:15.

## **CRAG Submissions to Foreign Affairs Committee is Adopted into Official Report**

CRAG's two documents submitted to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee hearings on Turkey have been accepted and will appear as Appendices in the Committee's final report.

The Committee held hearings in February and March at which all the witnesses were pro-Turkish, except for Amnesty International whose "brief" was narrowly limited to a specific kind of human-rights violation.

All the others who testified - including the Foreign Secretary Jack Straw - were pro-Turkey, and their testimony could be summarised as "What the Hell, nobody is perfect," as Committee MPs questioned them about Turkey's many short-comings. None of the witnesses came remotely close to challenging Turkey's qualifications for entry into the European which was, ostensibly, the purpose of the hearings.

Following the first hearing, attended by members of CRAG, it was decided that a counter argument had to be prepared, and with the co-operation of Christopher Walker, such a document was submitted in time for the second hearing, and it was obvious that the MPs had read it from their questions.

Following the second hearing, when more time was available before the Foreign Secretary's appearance, a 20 - page document was submitted, which will soon be available on the CRAG website.

What the final report will say is unknown, at this time, but it will probably fall on the side of "give Turkey whatever it wants." It is hoped that when the report is presented to the full House of Commons, other MPs will take the time to read CRAG's two submittals.

Thanks to CRAG's efforts, the independent Lobby for Cyprus also submitted papers to the Committee, reflecting the Greek Cypriot views regarding Turkey. Both of these papers will also appear as Appendices. The Lobby seeks the reunification of the island of Cyprus and demands the removal of the Turkish Army from the illegally occupied north of the island, the repatriation of the Anatolian colonists back to Turkey, and the return of all refugees to their homes.

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to recur later in the Third Reich, thus providing some analogies between the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust.

On the 14<sup>th</sup>, also at Hayashen, there will be a launch of a new book. Called "Merchants in Exile: The Armenians in Manchester, 1835-1935," it is written by Joan George, who was born in Manchester, and it describes the lives of the Armenians in the city to which they first came in this county. As the title suggests, it was the merchant who came first—either as a representative of his Ottoman-based firm or to set out on his own. They were for the most part, textile merchants. This book launch and signing will also be taking place at the Armenian Apostolic Church in Manchester between 3:00 - 5:00pm on Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup> of May.

On the following day, the 15<sup>th</sup>, there will be a presentation on the life and work of Komitas Vartabed, at St Peter's Church 90 Kensington Park Road, Notting Hill, that will include a talk by Levon Chilingirian, a performance of some of Komitas's works by Virginia Kerovpyan, and musical collages by Michael Fahres, from The Netherlands. Tickets are priced at £8.

A Spring Remembrance Concert, "In Memory of Armenian victims of 1915," will be held at Wigmore Hall, on April 19, beginning at 7.30pm. Sponsored by the Benlian Trust, the concert will feature Hasmik Hattagortsyan, soprano, and the Con-Tempo String Quartet.

On April 24, there will be a Requiem Service at St Sarkis Church, Kensington, beginning at 6:30pm., also from 6:00 - 10:00pm there will be a Vigil outside the Turkish Embassy in London, 43 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PA. The nearest tube station is Hyde Park Corner.

On April 25, at Cardiff, there will be an exhibition of Genocide-related photos in the Foyer of the Welsh Assembly Building, under the co-sponsorship of Assembly Members Cynog Dafis and Richard Edwards.

This year's March, will take place on Saturday, April 27. Beginning at Marble Arch, at 1:00pm the route will proceed down Park Lane, along Piccadilly, across Trafalgar Square and on to the Cenotaph. This year, CRAG is hoping for an assembly of 1000 people, and the Armenian Community is urged to spread the word among its

## **CRAG Needs Your Help!**

As this **CRAG Report** shows, CRAG has been very active in its drive to gain recognition of the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide. However much that has been done, more can be done, but, as with all campaigns, much funding is needed.

And, however much CRAG depends on volunteers to do the day-in/day-out work, there are the inevitable expenses that go with maintaining an office, duplicating literature, meeting with MPs and MEPs, and the myriad of other tireless work that is necessary if the Armenian Genocide is to be finally recognised in this country.

With this **Report**, there is a reply envelope. Please use it to make a generous donation.

Also, donors are being sought to cover the £700 cost of producing the **CRAG Report**. Your generosity will be acknowledged in the Report.

## **CONSTITUTION**, from page 1

aims, CRAG hopes that it will be able to attract more active volunteers as well as the all-important financing, as the Community clearly understands what CRAG will and will not try to do.

CRAG's efforts are to seek the recognition in this country of the historic fact of the Armenian Genocide, and it will co-operate with any other group - Armenian or non-Armenian - that seeks the same. The new Constitution, however, accepts that for the major goal to be achieved, it may be necessary to work with organisations on the Continent, especially in Brussels, to achieve the kind of pressure that will ultimately convince the British Government to accept what its archives and its Parliamentary records say.

Copies of the Constitution may be had by writing to the CRAG office or are available on the [www.24april.org](http://www.24april.org) website.

As funds are urgently needed, perhaps the request can be made using the enclosed envelope to also donate.

Armenian and non-Armenian friends.

Later that evening, YaD, a Jewish Diaspora organisation is hosting an event titled 'Out of Darkness' at the ICA which gives contemporary artistic and musical expressions to communities that have suffered genocide. It will feature Noritza Matossian and Helin Avedissian.

# Per Gahrton receives typical Turkish abuse for his views

Per Gahrton, the Swedish MEP responsible for the Report calling on the European Parliament to ask Turkey to recognise the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide [see story on page 1], visited Turkey after the February 28 vote in the European Parliament and was surprised by the Turkish reaction. He shouldn't have been, as the Turks are the most thin-skinned people in the world, and virtually anyone who has ever said the words "Armenian Genocide" has been on the receiving end of Turkish insults, threats, and vituperation. Here is a condensed report that appeared in the Turkish Daily News.

## **A Program for Peace, Not Ill-Will Against Turkey By Per Gahrton MEP**

When I arrived in Istanbul to speak at a seminar for Turkish journalists at the Swedish Consulate, in the afternoon of February 28th, only hours after the adoption by the European Parliament in Brussels by an overwhelming majority of my report on the relations between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, I knew of course that my report has caused some debate in Turkey, just it had in the three South Caucasus states, as well as in other neighbouring countries.

My report is an effort to outline a EU-policy to contribute to peace and prosperity. My main point is that the countries of the region should start regional co-operation, maybe a kind of Stability Pact for Caucasus, in order not to be ruled by external super-powers. . . . But to my surprise the sharpest reaction has come from Turkey, regarding one part-sentence of one paragraph! At my arrival in Istanbul I was asked about one and only one detail of my report: Why had I asked Turkey to recognize the genocide on Armenians during the First World War? Why am I an enemy against Turkey? Why do I try to sabotage Turkey's entry into the EU? And so on.

I got the opportunity to give my version to several TV-channels and newspapers and take for granted that what I said was also conveyed to the public. However when back in Brussels I found a press release from the Turkish-Armenian Women Communication Group, dated March 4th, which made me very sorry. It says that a planned visit by this group to Yerevan to celebrate the International Women's Day, March 8th, has been postponed because of my (and the European Parliament's) "ill will," which is designed to "hinder" Turkish-Armenian co-operation, that my (and the European Parliament's) "ultimate goal" is to ensure that the relations between Turkey and Armenia "are hindered and interrupted." Why? Because I and the EP have mentioned a simple historical fact, that Armenians in Turkey during the First World War were the victims of massacres on such a large scale that they logically are labelled "genocide," although this word was not invented until 1943, in a book by Raphael Lemkin.

The Turkish Nation however has reasons to be proud of the aftermath of the mass killings of Armenians by the Ottomans. On July 5, 1919, the Turkish Military Tribunal condemned the former Prime Minister Talaat Pasha; the former minister of War, Enver Effendi; the former Minister for the Navy, Djemal Effendi; and Dr Nazim, the former minister of Education, to the strongest punishment of the law (death) for their crimes during the war. One of the grounds for this harsh penalty, according to the verdict, published in the Official Gazette no 3604, was: "They created an even greater atmosphere of harassment of the non-Islamic elements of the land, the Armenians in particular, who had hoped, from our precious Constitution, for justice and peace. . . . They even raised national and racial issues among the Moslems of the land, they promoted divisiveness and conflict and jeopardized Ottoman unity.

"It is obvious that the massacres. . . were organized and perpetrated by the leaders of the Ittihad and Terakki Party. . . . [N]o steps were taken to prevent their repetition; nor were arrangements made for the punishment of the original criminals. . . . [T]he Ittihad and Terakki Party had even before the declaration of war organized bandit bands in Trebizond which entered Russian territory and committed acts of aggression. . . . As a result countless numbers of Ottoman subjects have perished. . . ."

Why does the Turkish-Armenian Women's Communication Group argue as if this verdict has never been made? Why don't Turks point at this verdict and say: "Yes, there was a genocide of Armenians during World War One, perpetrated by a criminal regime whose leaders we condemned to the strongest penalty of our law?" Why aren't Turks proud to be, to my knowledge, the first country in history where a regime of warmongers and murderers, is brought to trial--and that by a Turkish Court, not a court of those who won the war?!

Most countries, including my own Sweden, have very black periods in their history. . . .

From this perspective, the prevailing attitude in Turkey, from the government that chose to "slam" the EP resolution. . . to most opinion-makers and politicians I have met, is an enigma. I have been the object of a campaign by letters, e-mail and visits from all kinds of Turks, including diplomats, who have asked, begged, even threatened, that my report would cut links between the EU and Turkey.

One interesting example is a book I received from the Turkish Delegation to the EU, "The Armenians of the Late Ottoman period" (ed by Turkaya Ataöv, Ankara 2001). It is very interesting and written in a semi-scientific style. Its purpose is to prove that no genocide happened. One contribution, by Justin McArthy, questions the number of Armenians in Turkey that died during World War One--1.5-million, a common figure given by Armenians, cannot be true, he says. In 1912, according to McArthy there were 1,465,000 Armenians in Ottoman Anatolia. After the war there remained in all Turkey 70.000 only. But no genocide? No, says McArthy, because "only" 584.000 died, the rest, 810,000, had fled. And those who died were victims of "total war in which no quarter was given." So only some 5% of the pre-war Armenian population remained in Turkey. But no genocide?

But the result was that Turkey was almost totally cleansed of Armenians, of which hundreds of thousands died because of the centrally decided "relocation." The Turkish Military Court issued a death penalty for those responsible for this "relocation." Obviously the Court of 1919 understood better than some Turks of to-day that causing hundreds of thousands of deaths and the almost total extermination of an ethnic group in a country is a major crime irrespective of if this has come about only by killings or also by cleansing, irrespective of if all killings have been committed directly by gunshots or beatings or indirectly by starvation and illness caused by forced "relocation."

The Ottoman regime of World War First wanted to rid Turkey of Armenians. It succeeded. But the responsible were punished by a Turkish Court. Why is this simple fact to-day denied by a country that claims to be a democracy, mature for membership in the European Union?

Anyhow, the European Parliament's call upon Turkey to recognize the Armenian genocide is not a condition for EU membership, but just friendly advice. The best would of course be for Turkey to come to an agreement with the Armenians as soon as possible. . . .

## 2nd National Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration Highlights Armenian Genocide Recognition Campaign

Although second annual Holocaust Day Observance didn't get the massive coverage of last year's observance, the Armenian community managed to spread the word farther and to more audiences than it did last year.

This year's national observance did not centre in London, and was decidedly low-key, with the government saying, "Make it local." And, local it was for the Armenians, too, with events in Wales, St Albans, three London boroughs, a Synagogue, as well as being included in the "official" observance in Manchester. Almost all the events were sponsored by, or had the active participation of, CRAG.

Three activities involved Prof Vahakn Dadrian--at the House of Commons, at the London School of Economics, and at the Conference, "Generations of Genocide," sponsored by the Weiner Library and the Institute of Contemporary History--may rightly be considered the highlights of the recognition campaign because they appealed to three distinctly different audiences.

Pairing with Dadrian at all three events was Dr Yair Auron, the noted scholar and authority on the Jewish Holocaust, who has written on both Genocides.

In the government's official observance program, in Manchester, under the control of the Home Office, the British government came as close as it has ever done to "recognise" the Genocide, when the Armenians were the only people to be included with the Jewish genocide. Although the program was decidedly reduced, the Armenian effort stood out significantly.

### MANCHESTER

Ara Nahabedian spoke movingly about his family's escape from Turkey. He discussed his life as a refugee in Britain, "as my ancestors were persecuted because they were Armenian and yet, in this free society, we will lose this identity that they upheld. All this loss will be in vain," he concluded, "if their sufferings are ignored."

He was followed by a non-Armenian member of the Choir of the Armenian Church in Manchester, Kate Whitney, who sang "Groong." Oliver Langford, a British-Armenian violinist later performed "Tsirani Tsar." The significance of these two works, by Gomidas Vartabed, may have been lost on the audience, as the composer was one of the "victims" of the Genocide, though he survived another 20 years after his arrest and mistreatment in 1915.

### EDUCATION PACK

It should be noted that a substantive section on the Armenian Genocide was included in the official "Holocaust Memorial Day Education Pack," which has been distributed to schools throughout Britain and, Yes, the word "genocide" is used. The text of the Armenian section is included on the CRAG website ([www.24april.org](http://www.24april.org)).

### CARDIFF

At the Welsh Centre for International Affairs, archival historians Hilmar Kaiser and Ara Sarafian discussed different aspects of the Genocide under the general heading of "Britain and the Armenian Genocide, 1915-18," covering the history of the Genocide, its organization, the role of Turkey's allies, and what the outside world knew of the

events.

For its part, the audience showed particular interest in the current denial of the Genocide by both the Turkish government and the British government, and wondered how, in the face of so much evidence, both governments can take such a stance. The answer they received from the speakers was that Turkey had powerful lobbyists in the West, such as defense contractors and tobacco interests, as well as their embassies.

Many in the audience had scant knowledge--if any--of the Genocide but came to conclude, at the end of the program, that if more people in the country knew of the Genocide they would insist that Turkey make amends with the Armenians,

One member of the audience summed up the general consensus of the capacity audience, when he said "Turkey wants us to forget what happened to the Armenians. If Turkey gets away with it, so will others in the future."

The discussion was sponsored jointly by the Welsh Centre and the Gomidas Institute.

### ST ALBANS

At St Albans, the message of the Genocide took a more religious form, as befitting a service and photo exhibition in the great Cathedral. Prior to the official opening of the exhibition, there was a Midday Office and Requiem Service offered by His Grace Bp Nathan Hovhannisian, and assisted by Abp Yegishe Gizirian, Rev. Shnork Bagdasarian, Deacon Ararat Terterian, and the choir of London's St Sarkis Church. Also present and participating was the Bishop of St. Albans, and representatives of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the British Orthodox Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Indian Orthodox Church, and the director of Churches Together in Britain.

The more than 200 worshippers then moved to the North Transept of the Cathedral for the ceremony to open the exhibition. It was formally opened by Canon Anders Bergquist, of St Albans. Then followed brief talks by the Mayor of St Albans, the Bishop of St Albans, and Roupen Galichian, on behalf of the Armenian community.

The exhibition, called "Armenia: Survival of a Nation," comprised three maps and 66 photos covering the Armenians in Anatolia before the Genocide, the Armenians in Anatolia during the Genocide, the Armenians in Anatolia after the Genocide, Armenian monuments in Anatolia and in Iran, Armenia today, and the London Armenians. The Genocide photos included some by Armin Wegner and some from Maria Jacobsen the Danish missionary. The most poignant photos were the "before and after" pair of photos that showed the state of Armenian churches and monasteries in Anatolia in the mid-20th century and the same sites today, showing how the Turks are destroying the heritage of the Armenians. In contrast, the pairs of photos of churches in Iran show the reverse--how reconstruction is being carried out today to preserve the Armenian heritage.

An interesting sidelight to the St. Albans exhibition is the reaction of Turks. After an advance story of the exhibition had appeared in the local newspaper, a local Turkish merchant came to the Cathedral, harassed the Armenians setting up the exhibition,

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protested to the Bishop, and then, obviously, notified the Turkish Embassy in London, because two "journalists" showed up and, in the guise of getting a story, also protested. Later, they attended the opening and were conspicuous with camera and pen. Their protests may have achieved some success because the only references to "genocide" in any of the speeches was by Galichian.

In his brief talk, he reminded his listeners about Armenian history and the Genocide, and quoted David Marshall Lang, who wrote, in his book "Armenia, the Cradle of Civilization," "The Armenian is one of nature's individualists, a leaven for the conformist mass of the human race. Logically, he should have given up the struggle and lain down to die long ago. But, he refuses and still refuses to surrender, and here lies the key to understanding the nature of this dogged, invincible, little people, whose contribution to human civilization is out of proportion to its numerical strength." Galichian then closed with the words of Paruir Sevak, "We are here, we will be and we shall yet flourish."

The exhibition was organized by the Cathedral's Justice & Peace Committee and the Dean of the Cathedral, working with the Armenian Diocese.

A fine booklet with a brief history of Armenia, by Christopher J. Walker, was prepared to accompany the exhibition.

The photo exhibition continued until February 14, when there was a day-long programme of talks about the Armenians: "The Armenian and the Celtic stone crosses," was discussed by Rowena Lovernance, of the British Museum; "Facts, Figures. . . Forgiveness?" was discussed by Dr Harry Hagopian; and "Armenia Today," was discussed by David Miller, the first resident ambassador of this country to Armenia.

Almost overshadowing the talks, however, was the presence of the two Turkish "journalists," one of whom came to harass the speakers until he was well and properly put in his place (until he slinked out) by Miller. Though earlier having been "warned" by Miller not to be disruptive, he interrupted Hagopian's talk by shouting "if there was a Genocide, why doesn't the British government recognise it as such?" Miller told him that the British government concedes the substance of the events of 1915, but doesn't use the "genocide" word simply for political reasons.

### SYNAGOGUE

One of the most significant programs was presented at the South London Liberal Synagogue, in the Borough of Lambeth. Organized by its Rabbi, James R. Baaden, it drew more than 200 people from both the Armenian and Jewish communities as well as local religious leaders including from the nearby German church, and local politicians. Honouring both the Armenian and Jewish victims of genocide, the program included a prayer by Rev Shnork Bagdassarian and a hymn from the Badarak by Deacon Ararat Terterian. In his sermon, Rabbi Baaden highlighted the "richness which refugees--often fleeing from genocide--bring to the countries which allow them in. Refugees," he said, "need to be seen not as a problem but as a source of new life."

As gratitude for including the Armenian Genocide in his Holocaust Remembrance Day program, Rev Shnork presented the Rabbi with two books on the Genocide. Among those present was Arsinee Khanjian, the actress-wife of Atom Egoyan.

### HOUNSLOW AND EALING

The Armenians were prominent at official Holocaust Day programs in the boroughs of Hounslow and Ealing, both with the active participation of Misak Ohanian, general secretary of the Centre for Armenian Information and Advice.

Several hundred people attended the Hounslow program, including the local Members of Parliament, Alan Keen and Anne Keen, and local dignitaries. The program included songs by school children. Photos of the Armenian Genocide were exhibited, and several hundred leaflets about the Genocide were distributed.

Later in the day, a similar multi-faith service took place in Ealing Town Hall, at which Ohanian was one of the keynote speakers. In speaking of the Armenian Genocide, he drew parallels and similarities with the Jewish Holocaust. He stressed the need for remembrance days, pointing out that because the Armenian Genocide was "forgotten," it was easy for Hitler to plan and execute the Jewish genocide. Again, there were Armenian Genocide photos in the accompanying exhibition.

### CAMDEN

The last event in the six-day "blitz" was the program at the Camden Town Hall, prepared by the Borough's "Equalities Unit." Under the general head, "Aspects of Genocide," the Armenian was included with those of Cambodia, Rwanda, the Holocaust, and, interestingly, that of disabled people during World War II by the Nazis. Each speaker was allotted 15 minutes, with questions from the audience.

Khachig Pilikian presented a fascinating talk, both scholarly and historically, and crowding in facts and quotes from the distant and recent past. Any talk that can be relevant yet include such people as Mark Twain, Nazim Hikmet, Rafael Lemkin, and Kemal Pasha and, wonders of wonders, draw praise from Turks in the audience has to be worthy.

Among the most telling of Pilikian's facts was the 1879 speech by Kemal Pasha in which he called for the "elimination of the Armenian nation. Leave no trace, Wage war against this nation without an army." Kemal lived to see his words become action in 1895 to 1896 as well as in 1909. Had he lived through to 1918, he would have been overjoyed. It should be noted that Kemal's words preceded the rise of the Armenian political parties.

On the other hand, poet Hikmet was a friend of the Armenians, and spent one-third of his life in jail because his fellow Turks didn't like what he said and wrote. Born in Salonika, like the other Kemal, he survived both him and prison to write a moving poem "about his Armenian friend Souren" who, he said, "doesn't forgive the killings as neither can I."

Pilikian used the reference to Lemkin, who coined the word "genocide," to repeat his "definition" as "What the Turks did to the Armenians and the Nazis did to the Jews."

A photo exhibition accompanied the programme, the Armenian portion of which was highlighted by a collage of maps showing Armenia from 1000BC (Ararat, Aragadz, and Erebuni are shown) to the present, with stops at 517BC, 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC, 150AD, 10th century, 1331, 1541, 1701, 1920, 1921. The interesting aspect is that none of these are "Armenian" maps, with names like Hecateus, Ptolomy, Mercator,

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Peter I of Russia, among the creators or sponsors. The central feature was the blood-spotted map of Anatolia showing the centres from which the Armenians were taken to be killed.

### **AURON**

At each of the events, Yuri Auron's message was virtually the same--the Armenian Genocide seen from the perspective of "a human being, a Jew, and an Israeli." The last "identity" was important because Auron was highly critical of the denial of the Armenian Genocide by the State of Israel, and did not mince his words when he said, at the House of Commons talk, "The Armenian Genocide is one of the most horrible deeds in human history." He noted that in Israel, Holocaust Day is in early May and he expressed the hope that his country would mark both countries' tragic history on the same day.

In commenting on the denial by some countries and some people, he said, "When we refuse to take sides, we are taking the side of the criminal."

At the LSE, Auron titled his talk, "Armenian Memory; Jewish Memory," and constantly compared the two and stated that both should be considered together "and should be on every agenda [of Genocide remembrance]." He noted that it was a Jew, Franz Werfel whose "Forty Days of Musa Dagh," was a runaway best-seller and made a "great impression on European Jews. By May 1934, it was all the rage in France." Then, he commented sadly, "The new generation has no awareness of Musa Dagh."

He again criticised Israel for denying the Armenian Genocide and noted that all with all denials, "the Armenians are being victimised twice." However, he was proud of the fact that at a Genocide Conference, other Jewish scholars readily acknowledge the Armenian Genocide and had put their names on a petition calling on the world to recognise the Armenian Genocide.

At the Genocide Conference, Auron's topic was "Attitudes of the Jewish 'Yishuv,' the Zionist Movement, and the State of Israel toward the Armenian Genocide," in which he expanded his views in a more academic manner, suitable for his audience.

### **DADRIAN**

"What happened [in the execution of the Armenian Genocide] is something that is unprecedented in the annals of human history," Prof Dadrian told one of his three audiences.

In his three talks, Dadrian presented different aspects of the Armenian Genocide, tailored to his audience. And, he spoke without notes at all three, calling from his memory the relevant information.

Although Dadrian talks were different, what was the same, however, was the feeble Turkish attempts at rebuttal. What must have been most disconcerting for the Turks was that at each of his talks, Dadrian made a point of emphasising that his facts, his information, his quotes were taken from Turkish sources as well as from Turkey's World War I allies Austro-Hungary and Germany, so as to avoid charges of bias.

At the House of Commons hearing, Dadrian's twin themes were the significance and the consequences of the Armenian Genocide. Under the subject of the significance, Dadrian discussed three subjects--the perpetration, the prosecution, and the denial "of the crime."

After his 35-minute testimony, Dadrian was praised by the chairman, Lord Avebury, who held up a copy of Dadrian's book, and, after supportive comments from an MP and a Peer, the first to speak from the floor was Gündüz Aktan, a former

Turkish Ambassador to Britain and a member of the now-defunct Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission (TARC) who has made it his role in life to deny most vehemently any reference to the Armenian Genocide.

Aktan admitted that a "tragedy happened" but said that "there is a difference between a tragedy and a genocide." (Shades of the comment made by Shimon Peres, Israel's Foreign Minister, last year!) "What is lacking," he went on, "is a decision of an international tribunal, because crime is a legal matter." Being Turkish, he neglected to mention that it was Turkey that intervened to prevent the International Centre for Transitional Justice to decide, as was agreed at the last TARC meeting, in November. And then he questioned whether the 1948 United Nations Convention could be interpreted retroactively.

Dadrian responded by saying that Turkey's 85 years of denial not only makes it difficult for Turkey to admit the truth but also makes it difficult for any Turk to state otherwise, citing the existence of the Turkish Historical Society that is virtually an arm of government. Any books on the subject of Genocide must be approved by the Society which means that to be published the books "are not the product of unfettered academic freedom but are the fruits of near-total control."

At the London School of Economics, that evening, the audience was comprised mostly of Turkish students, and all but two of the questions came from them.

Under the auspices of the Department of Government, Dadrian's lecture was devoted almost entirely to the matter of denial after he again explained his methodology.

Taking the lead from the morning's hearing, Dadrian quickly demolished the "Civil War" argument and the "Armenians killed the Turks" argument, then explained the significance of Turkey's own documents and "concluded" from them that the Genocide was State-planned and State-executed.

By their warped questions, the Turkish students showed that they have been indoctrinated and not educated. They were deftly handled by Dadrian.

At that two-day conference, "Generations of Genocide," Dadrian was a keynote speaker on the second day, before an audience of some 300 academics and scholars--and a score or so Turks including some from the Embassy, as well as students and apologists such as Gündüz Aktan who never gives up.

Speaking on "The Documentation of the Armenian Genocide in the Light of Persistent Turkish Denials," Dadrian covered his Methodology, and discussed the Reconstruction of the Genocide and reached Some Conclusions.

In discussing the Turkish denials, he centred on two--the "numbers game" and the "civil war." In the former, the Turks try to equate their wartime losses with the "alleged" Armenian dead, conveniently forgetting to tell "the uninitiated, the novices, and simply the uninformed" that Turkey was fighting a four-year war on three fronts and also lost many as a result of disease and starvation.

### **AND, FINALLY**

The final word on this year's Observance comes from Alex Mosson, the Lord Provost (Chief Justice) of Glasgow who summed up Scotland's Holocaust Memorial Day program--where the Armenians were not represented--by including Armenia in the list of 20th-century genocides. This is most interesting because Glasgow will be the centre of this country's official 2003 Holocaust Day program.

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