

## **Armenian Terrorism: A Reappraisal**

by  
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### **ABSTRACT**

*This article reappraises the strategic impact of Armenian terrorism in the twentieth century. From 1973 to 1985, Armenian terrorists earned a deadly and infamous international reputation by murdering Turkish diplomats or members of their families, along with many other non-involved third parties killed in the crossfire, during 188 terrorist operations worldwide. By the mid-1980s, however, Armenian terrorists had fallen into mindless but deadly internal fighting that resulted in the deaths of several of their leading members. Yet even with the benefit of 20 years of hindsight, it remains difficult to assess definitively the strategic influence exerted by Armenian terrorism. It was an excellent example of how one person's terrorist can be viewed by some as another's freedom fighter. In seeking revenge for past perceived wrongs and in pursuit of the goal of an independent state, Armenian terrorism also shared common characteristics with such other ethnic-based terrorist movements as the Irish and Palestinians. Although by practically all conventional standards of measurement its ultimate strategic impact was virtually nil, some might still argue that Armenian terrorism did help preserve the memory of what many call the twentieth-century's first or forgotten genocide.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tacitly supported by many Armenians and others throughout the world as legitimate revenge for what most observers viewed as genocide<sup>1</sup> in the First World War, Armenian terrorism in the twentieth century was an excellent example of how one person's terrorist can be viewed by some as another's freedom fighter. In seeking revenge for past perceived wrongs and in pursuit of the goal of an independent state, Armenian terrorism also shared common characteristics with such other ethnic-based terrorist movements as the Irish and Palestinians. In another sense, however, Armenian terrorism, as well as its support in the larger Armenian community, was unique in its visceral hatred of its enemy, in this case the Turks. Also unique was how Armenian terrorism manifested two separate

periods of activity separated by almost half a century: first, the period immediately after the First World War when a secretive Armenian organization called Operation Nemesis assassinated several former Ottoman officials; and second, the period from approximately 1973 to 1985 when the Marxist Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) and its more right-wing nationalist rival, the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide (JCAG; after July 1983, the Armenian Revolutionary Army [ARA]), assassinated numerous Turkish diplomats as well as a number of third parties.<sup>2</sup>

This article will reappraise the strategic impact of Armenian terrorism in the twentieth century. What forces drove this particular terrorism, and what led to its demise? What was its strategic impact, if any? With the perspective of time, what role did Armenian terrorism play in the twentieth century's over-all explosion of terrorism as a means by which the weak could achieve strategic goals they could not reach in more conventional ways? Alternatively, was Armenian terrorism more *sui generis*, a unique phenomenon which had no lasting achievement?

## Causes

Terrorism is a phenomenon that usually emanates from the failure of its perpetrators to develop sufficient political or military strength to present their case in a more conventional manner. The inability of the victims to stem it, on the other hand, often flows from the cliché that "one person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter." For example, during the 1984 trial in Paris of the four ASALA operatives who seized the Turkish consulate and killed its Turkish guard in 1981, the president of the French court ruled that referring to the defendants as "terrorists" would not be allowed, since anyone participating in a struggle can be called a terrorist by someone who opposes that struggle.<sup>3</sup> Clearly, one of the background causes of Armenian terrorism during the 1970s and 1980s was that too many states and individuals were too lenient on the matter, condemning it in one breath but apologizing for it in the next by saying "but we have to understand the motives."

Although Operation Nemesis, the Armenian terrorist organization that assassinated Ottoman officials immediately after the First World War, disappeared in the early 1920s, "there have existed for many decades those organizations internationally . . . that are pursuing quite seriously the Armenian struggle for liberation in every peaceful method available."<sup>4</sup> Eventually some Armenians became frustrated with what they saw as the unsuccessful peaceful approach and turned to violence.

The deletion of paragraph 30 from a report of the United Nations in 1973-74 is one example of the failure of the peaceful method. This paragraph specifically mentioned the Armenian massacres in 1915 "as the first case of genocide

in the 20th century,” and was included in a progress report to a study entitled, “Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.” When Turkey objected during the UN Commission on Human Rights, however, paragraph 30 was deleted, and the Armenians frustrated.<sup>5</sup> Gerard J. Libaridian, a prominent Armenian scholar, concluded that “the unwillingness of the Turkish state and major world powers to recognize Armenian aspirations after 60 years of peaceful efforts has resulted in a decade of terrorism.”<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the leader of the ASALA group explained the wave of Armenian terrorism that occurred in the 1970s, in part, as the result of “the general discovery as to the failure of the policy of the traditional Armenian parties.”<sup>7</sup>

In 1965, anti-Turkish demonstrations were organized in Beirut, Lebanon, by Lebanese Armenians to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the 1915 Armenian deportations and massacres by the Ottoman Empire. At this time, the Lebanese Armenians proclaimed 24 April as “Commemoration Day.”<sup>8</sup> On the same day in 1965, thousands of Armenians illegally demonstrated in Yerevan, the capital of what was then Soviet Armenia. The protest became disorderly when rocks were thrown, and calm was finally restored only with difficulty. Since that date, Armenians around the world have commemorated 24 April as Genocide Day.<sup>9</sup>

Another event seminal to the genesis of organized Armenian terrorism occurred on 27 January 1973. In an individual act of revenge, a 78-year-old Californian of Armenian descent, Gourgen Yanikian, lured Mehmet Baydar and Behadir Demir, respectively the Turkish consul general and vice consul in Los Angeles, to a hotel room on the pretext of presenting them with two rare paintings. When the two Turkish diplomats arrived, Yanikian, who had lost members of his family in Turkey during the First World War, launched into a tirade and then shot both Turks to death. Many feel that this double murder served as a catalyst for the ensuing decade of Armenian terrorism by ASALA and JCAG. Indeed, after Yanikian died in 1984, a respected Armenian newspaper in the United States declared that he had “opened [a] new era of political struggle” and “changed the course of Armenian history.”<sup>10</sup>

Armenian terrorists themselves declared that their campaign began in 1975. In an interview with the Arab-language periodical *Al-Majallah* in August 1982, an ASALA representative stated that his organization’s first operation had been in 1975 against an office in Beirut “run by the World Council of Churches, for promoting the emigration of Armenians to the United States.”<sup>11</sup> A miniscule breakaway ASALA group headed by American-born Monte Melkonian agreed that “the January 20, 1975 bombing of the Beirut office of the World Council of Churches . . . became known as the act which defined the birth of ASALA.”<sup>12</sup> After one of its agents murdered Kemal Arikan, the new Turkish consul general in Los Angeles on 28 January 1982, the other Armenian terrorist organization, JCAG, claimed the deed in a recorded message over the telephone to the Washington Bureau of the *Associated Press*, adding that “our revolutionary

struggle began in 1975,"<sup>13</sup> apparently referring to its assassination of Danis Tunaligil, the Turkish ambassador in Vienna, Austria, on 22 October 1975.

### **Lebanese-Palestinian Catalyst**

The Lebanese civil war of the mid-1970s acted as another catalyst for organized Armenian terrorism. As a result of the upheavals of the First World War, Lebanon had come to serve as the host for the largest group of displaced Armenians in the Middle East. In time, they numbered some 200,000 or approximately 6 percent of that country's population.<sup>14</sup> Many lived in Bourj Hammoud, the teeming Armenian quarter of east Beirut, while the Cilician See of the Armenian apostolic church was headquartered nearby in Antelias. During the 1970s, some Lebanese-Armenians gradually fell into the internecine power struggles that were to turn Lebanon into a byword for violence. The nationalist Dashnaks formed close alliances with the right-wing Christian Phalangists of Pierre Gemayel and the National Liberals of Camille Chamoun. Leftist Armenians drew close to Kemal Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist (Druze) Party and various factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which had become a state within a state in Lebanon by the early 1970s.

Given the support of their Palestinian allies, radical Armenian leftists had created ASALA by 1975. In reaction to these developments, the right-wing Dashnaks set up their own terrorist organization, JCAG, to keep their young party members from abandoning the rank and file to join ASALA.<sup>15</sup> The dissident ASALA group headed by Monte Melkonian agreed that "the most important and active center of such political experimentation during this period [1965-75] was Lebanon,"<sup>16</sup> and the editor's preface to Melkonian's posthumously published writings concurred that "during this time several Palestinian resistance organizations provided their Armenian comrade with extensive military training."<sup>17</sup>

Jose Antonio Gurriaran, a Spanish journalist who had come to know the Armenian terrorists after being maimed by one of their bombs, wrote that the "Black September chief Abu Iyad"<sup>18</sup> had helped ASALA leader Hagop Hagopian form ASALA in 1975. A dissident ASALA source stated that soon after joining the Palestinians, Hagopian "found himself within the ranks of Wadi Haddad's splinter PFLP [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine],"<sup>19</sup> which was George Habbash's faction in the PLO. "It was during his activity with Wadi Haddad that he [Hagopian] gained most of his experience, developed many personal friendships with Palestinian leaders, and began to mimic the organizational and military tactics of Wadi Haddad," which, according to the same dissident ASALA source cited above, "intentionally caused innocent victims harm, and thus served to discredit the Palestinian Resistance in general as 'terrorist.'"

The Lebanese catalyst for Armenian terrorism was further illustrated by the fact that so many of the known terrorists hailed from that country. As Hrand

Simonian, a leader of the Armenian community in Los Angeles, explained, “Many of the terrorists are newcomers from Lebanon who learned how to do violent things” in the many years of civil violence there.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, Martin Halabian, the director of information of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts, stated: “Armenians recently arrived from Lebanon and other Mideast countries . . . are more used to militancy as a way of life.”<sup>21</sup>

## **The Dashnaks**

### *Background*

The *Hai Heghapokhakan Dashnaksuthium* or the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), commonly referred to as the Dashnaks, was founded in Tiflis, Russia, in 1890.<sup>22</sup> Until Armenia declared its independence from the Soviet Union in 1990, the Dashnaks were arguably the preeminent Armenian political organization. The ARF’s Manifesto issued in 1891 “sounded like a declaration of war against the Turkish authorities,” declared a modern Dashnak writer.<sup>23</sup> “To attain its aims by means of revolution, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation shall organize revolutionary bands which shall wage an incessant fight against the [Ottoman] Government,”<sup>24</sup> wrote Simon Vratzian, the Dashnak leader who briefly became the premier of the independent Republic of Armenia created after the First World War, but was incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1921. The resulting *fedayeen* movement, claimed another Armenian writer, “was a forerunner of the freedom fighters from Iran to Algeria in the 20th century Muslim world.”<sup>25</sup>

From its inception in 1890, the ARF resorted to terrorism because of what it perceived as the necessity for self-defense in the absence of any legal means of protection. According to Mikayel Varandian, an early party historian, “Perhaps there has never been a revolutionary party — not even the Russian *Narodovoletz*, or the Italian *Carbonaris* — with such rich experiences in the road of terrorist acts, as the AR Federation, which in its difficult environment, has developed the most frenzied types of terrorists, and given hundreds of masters of the pistol, the bomb and the dagger, for acts of revenge.”<sup>26</sup> According to yet another Armenian source, “terrorism became an act of courage to clandestine organizations — populists or Dashnaks — a primary response in self-defense, comparable to war for a Westerner.”<sup>27</sup>

Other scholars, while not condoning the massacres that did occur, point out that, since they were the weaker party, the Dashnaks and other Armenian groups began deliberately to use terror against the Turks to incite reprisals and massacres, which would then encourage broad Armenian support for revolution and, finally, great power intervention. According to historian William Langer, “Europeans in Turkey were agreed that the immediate aim of the [Armenian] agi-

tators was to incite disorders, bring about inhuman reprisals, and so provoke the intervention of the powers.”<sup>28</sup> Walter Laqueur, a noted authority on terrorism, has concurred: “Since they [the Armenian terrorists] could not possibly hope to overthrow the government, their strategy had to be based on provocation. They assumed, in all probability, that their attacks on the Turks would provoke savage retaliation, and that as a result the Armenian population would be radicalized; more decisive yet, the Western powers, appalled by the massacres, would intervene on their behalf as they did for the Bulgarians two decades earlier.”<sup>29</sup> This terrorism, which was well developed by the beginning of the twentieth century, was used not only against Ottoman officials but also other Armenians who had run afoul of the Dashnaks’ interests. This pattern continued during the wave of Armenian terrorism that began in the 1970s, as will be illustrated below.

### *Operation Nemesis*

For a few years in the early 1920s, a secret Dashnak network known as Operation Nemesis (named for the Greek goddess of retributive justice) relentlessly pursued and murdered several former Ottoman officials living in exile in Western Europe. Armen Garo — a former member of the Ottoman parliament who had deserted to the Russians at the start of the First World War to join the Armenian volunteers fighting against the Ottoman Empire and whose real name was Garegin Pasdermadjian — was “the overall boss of Operation Nemesis.”<sup>30</sup> Shahan Natali (an Armenian-American from Turkey whose real name was Hagop Der Hagopian) was the operational coordinator, and Aaron Sachaklian was responsible for finances, logistics, and training.<sup>31</sup>

Talaat Pasha, probably the most important Ottoman leader in the First World War, was gunned down in Berlin on 15 March 1921 by Soghomon Tehlirian. The assassin had lost most of his family in Turkey during the war. The German court found Tehlirian innocent, a precedent frequently cited by Armenian activists as a moral justification for murdering Turkish diplomats during the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>32</sup> A Dashnak newspaper, for example, proclaimed that the trial of two Armenian terrorists who had killed Galip Balkar, the Turkish ambassador to Yugoslavia on 9 March 1983, was “becoming like the Tehlirian trial” in the sense that the accused terrorists could and were justifying their actions in terms of their political demands against Turkey.<sup>33</sup> Arshavir Shirakian, another Nemesis operative, assassinated Said Halim, the former Ottoman foreign minister, in Rome on 6 December 1921 as well as two other leading Ottoman officials — Bahaeddin Shakir and Djemal Azmi — in Berlin on 17 April 1922. Shirakian then managed to escape to the United States, where he finally died in 1973.<sup>34</sup>

By the summer of 1922, however, the independent Republic of Armenia had fallen to the Soviet Union. The Dashnaks decided that Operation Nemesis had served its purpose. Shahan Natali was criticized for the exorbitant expenses

that had been incurred and was eventually expelled from the party in 1929. The so-called 'Prometheus' plan now sought to use Kemalist Turkey against the Soviet Union, which had become the new main enemy.

### *New Terrorism*

As noted above, the Dashnaks apparently decided to create a new terrorist arm, the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide (JCAG), because they were losing their young, activist members to what was perceived as the new, more dynamic ASALA terrorist organization. On 22 October 1975, JCAG carried out its first operation when it assassinated the Turkish ambassador to Austria. Up to 1984, when the diplomatic assassinations stopped, JCAG-ARA had killed 20 Turkish diplomats or members of their immediate families, while ASALA, in spite of its much greater claims, was responsible for only eight diplomatic murders.<sup>35</sup> In March 1985, ARA made one last attack when it killed a Canadian security guard during an attack on the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa.

Unlike ASALA, the Dashnak terrorist groups shunned other international terrorist connections and struck only at Turkish targets. After it murdered the Turkish consul general in Los Angeles in 1982, for example, JCAG announced: "Our sole targets are Turkish diplomats and Turkish institutions."<sup>36</sup> In pointed contrast to ASALA, ARA also made clear its intention to campaign against only the Turkish enemy, while leaving others alone: "Our target is the Turkish reactionary government through all its official representatives."<sup>37</sup> In another "communiqué," ARA noted that its activities "will conclude when, taking note of the legality of the Armenian Cause, the Turkish government begins negotiations with the representatives of the Armenian people."<sup>38</sup>

The "Political Platform" ratified by the 23rd World Congress of the ARF in 1985, made the ultimate goal of the party explicit: "The principal political aim of the ARF remains the realization of a free, independent and integral Armenia encompassing the Wilsonian boundaries, Nakhichevan, Gharabagh [Karabagh], and Akhalkalak."<sup>39</sup> The platform also declared that "on the road to the resolution of the Armenian Cause, our enemy is Turkey." Placing perhaps impossible barriers before any possibility of accommodation, the Dashnaks proclaimed that "the continuing existence of the Turkish empire is fundamentally in opposition with the Armenian Cause," and concluded that "the Armenian people had no choice but to resort to self defense to insure their physical existence and right to self-determination." Indeed, 15 years after gaining its independence, Armenia still claims in its constitution parts of eastern Turkey while occupying Karabagh, which constitutes 20 percent of Azerbaijan. As a result, Turkey has decided not to maintain diplomatic relations with Armenia.

In a further theoretical justification of terrorism, the Dashnak press declared that "the acts of the Armenian Army and the Justice Commandos

against Turkish officials are supported by a mass of the Armenian people since the Oppressor [Turkey] is being defied.”<sup>40</sup> Armenians “could only be excited by these acts of violence, as ‘acts of creation’ since the destruction of any representative of the Oppressor, Turkey, means the assertion of Armenian dignity.” Claiming a unique right to engage in such actions and denying that they constituted terrorism, the Dashnaks argued that “our Cause — no matter how militant at times — is not and never was part of ‘International Terrorism.’”<sup>41</sup>

Similarly, after the JCAG operative, Hampig Sassounian, was found guilty of assassinating Kemal Arikan, the Turkish consul general in Los Angeles on 28 January 1982, some Armenians in Boston announced: “What occurred throughout Hampig’s trial was a mockery of justice, an attempt to stop the Armenian people from actively pursuing their cause. . . . We are outraged by the . . . guilty verdict.”<sup>42</sup> In 2004, an active campaign within the Armenian community to gain Sassounian’s release on parole failed, partially on the grounds that he still refused to express any remorse for what he had done.

Despite this passionate defense of violence, Dashnak-sponsored terrorism against Turkey ceased after 1985. In part, this was probably because the ARF had calculated that such action had served its purpose of preventing ASALA from winning over the Armenian youth, had helped win the Armenian cause international attention, but was now creating negative publicity.<sup>43</sup> In addition, the Dashnak-sponsored terrorism probably stopped because the reputed leaders of the two Dashnak terrorist organizations had themselves been assassinated during vicious spasms of intra-Armenian bloodletting in Lebanon. In December 1982, for example, Apo Ashjian, the head of JCAG and a member of the ARF’s Central Committee in Lebanon, was apparently killed by his Dashnak associates because he advocated Dashnak cooperation with ASALA and sought to disregard a reputed deal with the CIA to cease activities in the United States. After Ashjian’s death, the Dashnaks created ARA, which was active until shortly before its head, Sarkis Aznavourian, also a member of the ARF Central Committee in Lebanon, was gunned down in Beirut, apparently by ASALA.<sup>44</sup>

## ASALA

The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) was born in January 1975 as a distinct alternative to the traditional Armenian political parties, especially the Dashnaks. As ASALA later explained in its journal *Armenia*, “International imperialism had almost completely spread its dominance on our people in the Diaspora through the rightist Dashnag Party which is a tool in the hands of imperialism and Zionism.”<sup>45</sup> Thus, although “the main target of the New National Liberation Struggle launched in 1975 by ASALA is the liberation of the Turkish-occupied Armenian lands . . . another main aim of the . . . Struggle is the political and national awakening of the Armenian people which was led to a dangerous ‘deep sleep’ by the treacherous policy of the



Dashnag Party.”<sup>46</sup> Sarcastically, ASALA declared that “even the name given to their armed group ‘Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide’ reveals the deliberate indifference of the Dashnag leadership vis-à-vis the Armenian Territorial Question.”<sup>47</sup>

Thus, although the world ironically saw ASALA as a Marxist, anti-Western terrorist organization seeking to join eastern Turkey to Soviet Armenia (goals and characteristics which indeed were true), ASALA first and foremost was created, in its own words, to “become today the representing power of the Armenian people.”<sup>48</sup> Again, the organization proclaimed: “We came from different Armenian currents and circles, and united in ASALA, putting aside all inter-communal conflicts to serve the principal aim . . . to liberate Western Armenia [Turkey] and join it to today’s liberated Soviet Armenia, forming an integral, revolutionary Armenia.”<sup>49</sup>

In its attempt to appropriate the leadership of the Armenian diaspora, ASALA tried to co-opt historical Armenian heroes and deeds. Gourgen Yanikian, whose murder of two Turkish consuls in California in 1973 anticipated the terrorism that began in 1975, was adopted as “the spiritual leader” of the organization and operations were named for him and other historical Armenian heroes and places, such as Andranik (Ozanian) — an Armenian military hero in the early twentieth century — Shahan Natali, Erzurum, and Van, among others. Andranik’s portrait sometimes appeared with a fictional one representing ASALA’s founder and leader, Hagop Hagopian, alongside the masthead of *Armenia*. Even Vatche Daghlian, the leader of the Dashnak’s “Lisbon Five,” was usurped by ASALA to be portrayed as *their* “martyr” who had been killed “during a mission in Lisbon, following a Dashnag-international conspiracy.”<sup>50</sup> Further tapping Armenian historic roots, “the words of our great [Soviet Armenian] poet Yeghishe Tcharentz ‘O Armenian people/Your sole salvation is/in your collective force’”<sup>51</sup> were cited as a call for unity under ASALA.

It is noteworthy that ASALA’s birth, as mentioned above, was announced by a bombing attack against the Beirut office of the World Council of Churches on 20 January 1975. Hagop Hagopian later wrote that “I chose it because the above mentioned organization was conspiring with the United States, with the Tashnag’s co-operation, to send the Armenian youth away from the Middle East and socialist countries.”<sup>52</sup> ASALA was going to challenge the existing Dashnak-led Armenian elites who were allowing the emigration and thus assimilation to occur.

By 1980, Hagopian boasted: “In five years we managed to win for ourselves the support of the Armenian masses and the democratic and revolutionary forces throughout the world.”<sup>53</sup> He even claimed that “some of the leaders of Tashnag and Henshang [another Armenian party] have secretly joined ELA [ASALA].”

On 24 September 1981, four ASALA agents seized the Turkish consulate in Paris. They killed its Turkish guard, wounded the consul, and held 56 people hostage for 16 hours. According to Monte Melkonian, at that time a member of ASALA, this so-called “Van Operation” by the “Yeghia Keshishian Suicidal Commando” marked “ASALA’s historic peak. It became the greatest single military/propaganda success ever achieved in the history of the diaspora. . . . Summed up, this was a tremendous achievement which created a previously unequalled atmosphere of patriotic enthusiasm and which made ASALA the hope in the eyes of a vast number of Armenians for the realization of our national aspirations.”<sup>54</sup>

After his release from a French prison in the summer of 1986, Kevork Guzelian, one of the four participants in the Van Operation, discussed it at length.<sup>55</sup> “The essential aim . . . was to gain on political ground and to turn the attention of international public opinion on Turkey.” In addition, ASALA wanted to “shake the Armenian community in France, which until 1981 was in a slumber.” Indeed, while they were occupying the consulate, said Guzelian, “we immediately made an appeal to the Armenians through a phone call . . . to organize a demonstration around the Consulate and back us up.” Since “about 3,000 Turks had surrounded the Consulate in a demonstration . . . clashes took place between the Turks and the Armenians in the streets.”

Guzelian claimed that “after our operation we noticed an awakening of national awareness in the Armenians in France.” French Armenians who did not speak Armenian started to learn the language. Before 1981, the 24 April Genocide Day demonstrations in France had brought out no more than 150, but after the Van Operation the figure rose to 10,000. “This was not due to the activities of the other [Armenian] organizations . . . found in France but came as a result of ASALA’s national and revolutionary sacrifices.”

At the end of 1981, ASALA published an eight-point political program that was described as “the political line that the Popular Movement of ASALA will support.”<sup>56</sup> The program was apparently the result of long discussions with the leaders of various “popular movements” with a view to eventually forming a united organization covering a broad spectrum from left to right.

In the program, ASALA identified its enemies as “Turkish imperialism” supported by “local reaction” and “international imperialism.” “Revolutionary violence” was said to be “the principal means” to achieve the liberation of Armenian territories. ASALA would support those who “reject the authority of the oppressing classes” and would endeavor to “strengthen and expand” coalitions within the “international revolutionary movement.” The final goal was a united Armenia with a “democratic, socialistic and revolutionary government.” The Soviet Union and other socialist governments were to be called upon for help and Soviet Armenia itself turned into a base for “the long people’s war.”

ASALA's hope of becoming the leader of a broad, united front of all Armenian groups, however, foundered in general upon the increasingly obvious failure of terrorism to unite the Armenian community but more immediately upon the frequent Armenian tendency toward divisive factionalism. The latter problem involved Hagopian's willingness, even apparent eagerness, to employ indiscriminate terrorism against non-involved third-party civilians and non-Turkish targets. "In the name of the Armenian revolution," declared Monte Melkonian, "inhuman operations (i.e. atrocities) were being committed due to which dozens of innocent people were dying and hundreds of others had been wounded."<sup>57</sup>

The deadly attacks on the Ankara and Paris Orly airports in 1982 and 1983, respectively, and the Istanbul Covered Bazaar in 1983 were three egregious examples. As Melkonian explained in an interview: "Orly claimed innocent lives. It debases our struggle."<sup>58</sup> The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, and the resulting expulsion of ASALA from its base in west Beirut to the relative isolation of the Bekaa Valley, where the organization fell under increasing Syrian control, also helped lead to the subsequent splintering of ASALA.

ASALA violently split into two factions following the assassination of Khachig Havarian and Vicken Ayvazian, two of Hagopian's closest allies, on 15-16 July 1983. Hagopian blamed Melkonian for the deed, which Melkonian denied, and reciprocated by killing two of Melkonian's closest friends, Garlen Ananian and Aram Vartanian. Amid bitter mutual recriminations, which are too byzantine to go into here, as well as deadly infighting against the Dashnaks analyzed above, ASALA quickly shrank into insignificance. Hagopian's ASALA lost its allies and contacts outside Lebanon and, as mentioned above, fell increasingly under Syrian control.

Melkonian's hopes for a more humane ASALA under his leadership in the West were dashed by his sudden arrest and imprisonment for three years in France in November 1985. A series of deadly bombings in Paris in September 1986 were at first blamed by many on ASALA as an attempt to win the release of Varoujan Garabedian, the perpetrator of the deadly Orly bombing in 1983. However, the eventual arrest of the actual perpetrators in March 1987 proved this to be untrue. ASALA had been reduced merely to issuing proclamations and threats.

Then, on 28 April 1988, Hagop Hagopian himself was assassinated in Athens, Greece.<sup>59</sup> It was said that he ironically had been expelled from the now Syrian-controlled ASALA at the end of 1987.<sup>60</sup> A subsequent report claimed that the Syrians had been behind these events because Hagopian had refused to follow their orders, which, among other things, involved driving booby-trapped trucks into Christian east Beirut for later explosion.<sup>61</sup> The Syrians were also displeased with Hagopian's close relations with such Palestinians as Abu Cherif, Abu Iyad, and Fouad Bitar, who operated independently of Syrian influence. A

partial rapprochement between Syria and Turkey at that time also played a role in Syria's actions.

Monte Melkonian was released from the French prison early in 1989 and eventually found his way to the newly independent Armenia. There he became a noted military leader in the war against Azerbaijan over Karabagh, which he saw "as crucial for the long-term security of the entire Armenian nation."<sup>62</sup> He was killed in a minor skirmish on 12 July 1993, and given a funeral with full military honors in Yerevan.

### **Financial Matters**

Financial matters, of course, constitute an important issue in studying terrorist organizations. On this point, Hagopian declared: "Our strength is the Armenian people; that is where we get our support from. And from robberies."<sup>63</sup> Melkonian concurred when he wrote that after the Van Operation on 24 September 1981, Hagopian "went to France to collect money. . . . Due to the atmosphere, collecting money was not difficult and considerable sums were acquired."<sup>64</sup> After Hagopian moved to Damascus to escape the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 1982, Melkonian added that "the collection of money . . . [there] within the Armenian community" also occurred.

The amply publicized fact that the Dashnaks in the United States were able to raise over \$250,000 in small donations for Sassounian's legal defense,<sup>65</sup> as well as some \$160,000 in Canada for the defense of the so-called 'LA-5,'<sup>66</sup> indicates that these claims of broad-based Armenian financial support are not empty. For the legal defense of the accused murderers of the Turkish ambassador to Yugoslavia, "fundraising committees have visited Armenian homes" in Europe and "everyone has been very generous with their donations"<sup>67</sup> claimed another Dashnak report.

Other reports, however, indicate that the terrorists also extorted funds from nonviolent, fellow Armenians.<sup>68</sup> Further such evidence regarding ASALA emerged during the trial of three young ASALA members, charged with conspiring to bomb the freight terminal of Air Canada in Los Angeles in May 1982 to gain freedom for four Armenians held in Canada and with conspiracy to extort money from wealthy Canadian-Armenians in Toronto.<sup>69</sup> Vicken Tcharkhutian — who was apparently involved with the three Armenians on trial but who managed to escape to France where the government refused to extradite him back to the United States — was also charged on a separate count of attempting to extort \$150,000 from the Haserjian brothers, the owners of a chain of carpet stores throughout the Los Angeles area.

In addition, according to Monte Melkonian, ASALA was apparently able to acquire money from "Abu Nidal and certain governments" by performing "operations as gestures of revolutionary solidarity."<sup>70</sup> This explains the bizarre

ASALA attempt to bomb the Kuwait Airlines office in Athens from a motorcycle on 8 December 1982. The plot failed, causing the death of one ASALA agent, Karnik Vahradian, and the imprisonment of the other, Vahe Khutaverdian. Nevertheless, Hagopian “used Karnik’s death to extract even more financial aid and other ‘favors’ out of Abu Nidal and/or some governments.” The Athens operation was “portrayed . . . as proof of the willingness of Armenian revolutionaries to struggle to the death in cooperation with Arab revolutionaries against imperialism.” ASALA, concluded Melkonian, “had become a mercenary for [other] governments and organizations.” Further reports indicate that ASALA was probably also running a “drug ring”<sup>71</sup> and that “the huge revenue generated from this trafficking was being directed for use by the underground radical group.” Three Armenians were convicted for this operation in Sweden and incarcerated.

Testifying before the US Senate’s Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Nathan M. Adams, a senior editor of *Reader’s Digest*, who stated he had been investigating “the connection between drug trafficking and international terrorism . . . over the past several years,” declared: “Armenian terrorist groups of both the left and the right were estimated a year ago to be 90 percent financed through the sale or barter of narcotics.”<sup>72</sup> Adams then elaborated on “the case of Noubar Soufoyon, a notorious Armenian drug trafficker now believed sheltering in Lebanon.”

In June 1981, Soufoyon “was indicted in New York for importing heroin” and Interpol was alerted. The Greek authorities who arrested him, however, rejected a US application for extradition and chose instead to send him to Lebanon, where he was promptly released. Soufoyon, testified Adams, was “capable of dealing as much as 100 kilos of heroin at a single time [and] . . . has helped finance both Armenian terrorist factions with the profits from drug sales.” Adams added that Soufoyon “was convicted in Switzerland of the financing of a series of bomb attacks against Turkish financial and cultural establishments in Zurich the year before.” The Swiss authorities, however, merely banned him from their country for five years.

Similarly, Francis M. Mullen, Jr., the administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration of the US Department of Justice, added: “Documented heroin and hashish trafficker Noubar Soufoyon was connected with the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide. . . . He remains a fugitive from U.S. justice and his current whereabouts are unknown.”<sup>73</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

This article has shown that Armenian terrorism was one of the classic examples of how one person’s terrorist could be viewed by some as another’s freedom fighter. From 1973 to 1985, Armenian terrorists earned a deadly and infamous international reputation by murdering 30 Turkish diplomats or mem-

bers of their immediate families. In addition, many other non-involved third parties were killed in the crossfire. Some 188 terrorist operations occurred on four different continents, including Western Europe, southwest Asia, North America, and even Australia. Nevertheless, some among the Armenian public tacitly sympathized with the terrorists because of what they saw as past wrongs committed by Turkey. As Michael J. Arlen, Jr., a measured Armenian critic of the terrorism, explained: "It was as if a particular poison had entered the Armenian system several generations back, and had remained within it: a poison that one might up to a point live with but that caused the limbs suddenly to twitch, or the mouth — perhaps in mid-sentence — to grimace grotesquely."<sup>74</sup>

By the mid-1980s, however, Armenian terrorists had fallen into mindless but deadly internal fighting that resulted in the deaths of several of their leading members. Tacit Armenian public support for the terrorism dried up, while shortly afterwards Armenia's independence from the Soviet Union gave a new generation of Armenian militants a more reputable cause to support. Indeed, Monte Melkonian, a former ASALA leader, became a noted fighter in the Armenian war for Karabagh and was killed in battle fighting for his cause.

Even with the benefit of 20 years of hindsight, it remains difficult to assess definitively the strategic influence exerted by Armenian terrorism. There were a number of factors that helped to determine its success or failure. Since Armenians tend to be a closely knit group, who in their own language distinguish themselves from the *odar* or non-Armenian, the Armenian diaspora around the world provided a unique, transnational system of contacts and support. Given the fact that Armenians tend to be more successful in the professions than many others, they often possess a political clout that exceeds their relatively small numbers. In addition, during the Cold War, the fact that the two largest concentrations of Armenians in the world lived in the Soviet Union and the United States probably gave them more input into the policies of the two superpowers than one would otherwise have suspected.

On the other hand, of course, the Turkic population in the Soviet Union was much larger than the Armenian. It was unlikely, therefore, that the Soviet Union would have wanted its Turkic populations to identify it as being too pro-Armenian. The hesitancy in acceding to the Armenian demands on Karabagh was a case in point. On the other hand, although the Armenian population in the United States was much larger than the Turkish, the strategic importance of Turkey to the NATO alliance prevented the United States from taking as strong a stand on behalf of the Armenians as they would have desired. The failure of the Armenian activists in the United States to pass a "Genocide Resolution" in the US Congress over the years illustrated this point. Indeed, as recently as April 2005, US President George W. Bush angered many Armenian-Americans by declining to use the word "genocide" in commemorating the ninetieth anniversary of the tragedy that occurred in 1915.

Returning again to inherent Armenian strengths, it also should be noted that Armenian terrorism against Turkey tended to elicit a certain amount of implicit sympathy and even tacit support both from Armenians and non-Armenians because of the widespread belief, referred to above, that the Ottoman Turks ruthlessly massacred tens of thousands of Armenians in the latter part of the nineteenth century and then committed genocide against them during the First World War. Add to these damning accusations the view that the Islamic Ottoman Empire was one of the leading historical enemies of Christian Europe, while the Christian Armenians were usually viewed much more sympathetically — as well as the fact that the Armenians were more fluent in languages than the Turks and thus able to get their view across to the rest of the world better — and one can readily appreciate another implicit advantage possessed by the terrorists. Indeed, 20 years after Armenian terrorism stopped, this author often finds sheer disbelief on the part of the general non-Armenian public that the phenomenon ever existed, that somehow any mention of it is simply part of the continuing Turkish attempt to blacken the Armenian reputation and deny the genocide.

The tacit sympathy some Greeks showed for Armenian terrorism stemmed from the traditional Hellenic hatred of the Turks. The special requiem service held in Athens in December 1986 for Karnik Vahradian — the ASALA agent who was accidentally killed during an attempt to bomb the Kuwait Airlines office in Athens in 1982 — further illustrated the situation. At the requiem, Reverend Spiros Tsakalos of the Greek Orthodox Church delivered a eulogy in which he declared: “The Turkish fascist regime understands only the language of armed struggle carried out by the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia.”<sup>75</sup>

The situation regarding France was similar, although not as intense, since the Turks had not conquered and ruled that country for 400 years as they had Greece. A number of French politicians supported Armenian activists because of their electoral power in certain areas where they were concentrated. On 24 April 1982, for example, Gaston Defferre, the minister of interior and the mayor of Marseille — which had a relatively large Armenian population — told them: “France will assist you to triumph in the pursuit of your just cause.”<sup>76</sup> Even more tacitly condoning the terrorism that was occurring at that time, Charles Hernu, the minister of defense, told a large Armenian rally in his home city of Villeurbanne on 10 October 1982: “Whenever there are aggressions, we must raise the question as to who the real aggressor is. Are the aggressors people that survived a genocide committed by the Turks or the Turks themselves?”

Syrian support for the Armenian terrorists also stemmed from traditional animosities and especially contemporary political ambitions. The Turkish annexation of Hatay (Alexandretta) province in 1939, current problems dealing with the waters of the Euphrates River, and the long-term ambitions of the late President Hafez Assad all motivated the Syrians to support the terrorists surreptitiously.

In the end, however, the Armenian terrorists also suffered from many problems as detailed above. In addition, the entire Armenian population in the world numbered no more than six million, while the Turks counted more than fifty million. During the period of the terrorism, the Armenians also lacked the institutional framework of a state, while Turkey was a geostrategically important NATO ally of the United States. Although by practically all conventional standards its ultimate strategic impact was virtually nil, some might still argue that Armenian terrorism did help preserve the memory of what many call the twentieth century's first or forgotten genocide.

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### Endnotes

1. There is an enormous body of literature on what most observers call the Armenian Genocide but which Turkey still argues is a term that is too one-sided to characterize fairly what actually occurred. For the most part this continuing debate is beyond the scope of this article. For a recent analysis of what many call the Armenian Genocide, see Rouben Paul Adalian, "The Armenian Genocide," in Samuel Totten, William S. Parsons, and Israel W. Charny, eds., *Century of Genocide*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 53-90. For a solid analysis of the conflicting claims that questions whether what occurred can accurately be called a planned genocide, see Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2007). See also Michael M. Gunter, "The Historical Origins of the Armenian-Turkish Enmity," *Journal of Armenian Studies* (special issue entitled "Genocide & Human Rights") 4, nos. 1 and 2 (1992), pp. 257-88, which concludes that while "there is no doubt the Armenians suffered a great wrong," (p. 276) "the Armenian claim that they were victims of a premeditated and unprovoked genocide does not ring entirely true." (p. 277).
2. For previous studies of Armenian terrorism, see Michael M. Gunter, "*Pursuing the Just Cause of Their People*": *A Study of Contemporary Armenian Terrorism* (New York: Greenwood, 1986); "Transnational Armenian Activism," *Conflict Studies* 229 (London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, 1990); "Contemporary Armenian Terrorism," *Terrorism: An International Journal* 8, no. 3 (1986), pp. 213-52; and "The Armenian Terrorist Campaign Against Turkey," *Orbis* 27 (Summer 1983), pp. 447-77. In addition, see Anat Kurz and Ariel Merari, *ASALA: Irrational Terror or Political Tool* (Jerusalem, Israel: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies and Boulder, CO: Westview, 1985); and Francis P. Hyland, *Armenian Terrorism: The Past, The Present, The Prospects* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1991).
3. *Armenian Reporter* (New York), 9 February 1984, p. 2.
4. Armenian National Committee, Los Angeles, letter to the editor published in *Christian Science Monitor*, 3 April 1981, p. 22.
5. Paragraph 30 appeared in a report of the Special Rapporteur to the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of the Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, UN Doc. E/CN. 4/Sub. 2/L. 583, 25 June 1973. For a scholarly analysis, see Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 219-20.
6. Cited in *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 October 1983, p. 21.



7. Cited in "Armenian Terrorist Leader Hagopian Interviewed: Milan Panorama in Italian, 1 September 80, pp. 62-65," in *Joint Publications Research Service: Western Europe*, no. 1628, 24 September 1980, pp. 1-6, hereafter *Panorama Interview*.
8. See Pierre Terzian, "La question armenienne aujourd'hui," in the special issue of *Critique Socialiste* 55, no. 4 (1982) entitled "Armenie du genocide a l'explosion," p. 51. Armenians mark 24 April 1915 as symbolic of the beginning of the deportations and massacres. On that date, several hundred Armenian civic, political, and intellectual leaders in Constantinople were arrested, deported, and eventually executed.
9. For further details, see Ronald Grigor Suny, *Armenia in the Twentieth Century* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), p. 78.
10. See *Armenian Reporter*, 8 March 1984, p. 1. Yanikian was convicted on two counts of murder and sentenced to a life term in prison. He was released from prison and died less than a month later on 26 February, at the age of 88.
11. "Nadim Nasir Report: Al-Majallah Visits an Armenian Secret Army Base in Lebanon" in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)*, Daily Report (Middle East and Africa), 1 September 1982, p. G8.
12. "Booklet Giving History of ASALA's Existence Gives New Insight into the Revolutionary Movement," *Armenian Reporter*, 10 January 1985, pp. 3 and 10 and the eight subsequent issues. Monte Melkonian — an Armenian-American born in California on 25 November 1957 — became an important member of ASALA before breaking away from the group in an attempt to form a more effective organization. He was probably the author of this most revealing document that was originally published in France, under the title "The Reality," in response to allegations made against it by Hagopian's ASALA group. Melkonian spoke several different languages fluently and was eventually killed while leading Armenian troops against Azeris in Karabagh on 12 July 1993.
13. *New York Times*, 29 January 1982, p. A1.
14. See Christopher Walker, *Armenia: The Survival of a Nation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), pp. 363-67. The following analysis is based on this source and Andrew Corsun, "Armenian Terrorism: A Profile," *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* (August 1982), pp. 32 ff.; Sato Papazian, "Sept annee de lutte armee," *Hay Baykar* (published in Paris, France by the *Mouvement National Armenien Pour L'ASALA*, 22 December 1982), pp. 8-9; Terzian, "La question armenienne aujourd'hui," pp. 51-58; and "Booklet Giving History of ASALA's Existence."
15. On this point, see *Armenian Reporter*, 5 January 1984, p. 1, and its subsequent issue of 2 February 1984, p. 2.
16. "Booklet Giving History of ASALA's Existence."
17. Markar Melkonian, ed., *The Right to Survive: Selected Writings of Monte Melkonian on the Armenian National Question*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco, CA: Sardarabad Collective, 1993), p. xiii.
18. Robert I. Friedman, "Spanish Journalist, Victim of ASALA Bombing, Becomes Expert on Armenian Cause," *Armenian Reporter*, 15 November 1984, p. 2.
19. "Booklet Giving History of ASALA's Existence."
20. Cited in *[Armenian] California Courier*, 28 July 1983, p. 7.
21. Cited in *Christian Science Monitor*, 6 May 1982, p. 5.
22. For a thorough analysis, see Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1963).
23. Manuel S. Hassassian, *ARF as a Revolutionary Party, 1890-1921* (Jerusalem: Hai Tad Publications, 1983), p. 4.

24. Simon Vratzian, "The Armenian Revolution and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation," *The Armenian Review* 3 (Autumn 1950), p. 19.
25. Anaide Ter Minassian, *Nationalism and Socialism in the Armenian Revolutionary Movement (1887-1912)* (Cambridge, MA: Zoryan Institute, 1984), p. 19. In addition, see James G. Mandalian, *Armenian Freedom Fighters: The Memoirs of Rouben Der Minasian* (Boston, MA: Hairenik Association, 1963). The term *fedayeen* refers to freedom fighters in the Middle East organized as irregulars or guerrillas and comes from an Arab word meaning "those who sacrifice themselves." Thus, the term has an almost mystical ring to it redolent of the word martyr.
26. Mikayel Varandian, as cited in K.S. Papazian, *Patriotism Perverted* (Boston, MA: Baikar Press, 1934), p. 18.
27. Sarkis Atamian, *The Armenian Community* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955), p. 277.
28. William Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902*, 2nd ed. (Boston, MA: Knopf, 1951), p. 157.
29. Walter Laqueur, *Terrorism* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1977), p. 44.
30. Jacques Derogy, *Resistance & Revenge: The Armenian Assassination of the Turkish Leaders Responsible for the 1915 Massacres and Deportations* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1990), p. xxvii. Derogy's book was originally published in French as *Operation Nemesis* in 1986 by Librairie Artheme Fayard.
31. *Ibid.*, p. xiv. For further details, see Yves Ternon, *The Armenian Cause* (Delmar, NY: Carvan Books, 1985), pp. 98-101.
32. For what purports to be Tehlirian's own story, see Lindy V. Avakian, *The Cross and the Crescent* (Los Angeles, CA: De Vorss & Co., 1965); also, Oliver Baldwin, *The Questing Beast* (London: Grayson and Grayson, 1932), pp. 201-04; and Sarkis Atamian, "Portrait of Immortality, Part II: 'The Hunt,'" *Armenian Review* 13 (February 1961), pp. 11-21. Tehlirian finally died in the United States in 1960.
33. "The Belgrade 2 Trial: Becoming Like Tehlirian Trial," *Armenian Weekly*, 24 December 1983, p. 1.
34. Arshavir Shiragian, *The Legacy: Memoirs of an Armenian Patriot* (Boston, MA: Hairenik Press, 1976).
35. For a list of the assassinations and who was responsible, see Gunter, "Pursuing the Just Cause," pp. 68-69. ASALA, however, was responsible for a number of civilian, third-party deaths, particularly during bloody airport attacks in Ankara in 1982 and Paris in 1983.
36. Cited in Robert Lindsey, "Turkish Diplomat is Slain on Coast: Armenian Terror Group Takes Responsibility in Shooting," *New York Times*, 29 January 1982, p. A12.
37. "Communique," dated 12 October 1984, and published in the Dashnak newspaper *Armenian Weekly*, 3 November 1984, p. 2.
38. "Communique," dated 19 November 1984, and published in *Armenian Weekly*, 29 December 1984, p. 2.
39. This and the following citations were taken from "Political Platform of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Ratified by the 23rd World Congress," *Armenian Weekly*, 16 August 1986, pp. 1 and 7; and 30 August 1986, p. 1. Nakhichevan and Gharabagh (Karabagh) were then part of Soviet Azerbaijan, while Akhalkalak was part of Soviet Georgia. Soon after gaining its independence from the Soviet Union in 1990, Armenia conquered Karabagh.
40. This and the following citation were taken from Aram Khaligian, "The Necessities of Violence and National Culture in the Liberation Struggle," *Armenian Weekly*, 31 December 1986, p. 15.
41. This and the following citation were taken from Tatul Sonentz-Papazian, "The ARF Legacy — Are We Ready?" *Armenian Weekly*, 31 December 1986, p. 3.
42. Cited in *Armenian Weekly*, 14 January 1984, pp. 6 and 7.

43. For a fuller analysis of these causes, see Khachig Tololyan, "Conflict and Decline in Armenian Terrorism," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, 29 August 1986.
44. For an analysis of this Dashnak-ASALA fratricide in Lebanon during the early and especially the mid-1980s, see Michael M. Gunter, "The Armenian Dashnak Party in Crisis," *Crossroads* no. 26 (1987), pp. 75-88.
45. *Armenia*, no. 131/13, 1986, p. 10.
46. *Moush*, no. 13 (Autumn 1987), p. 3. *Moush* is the organ of the Armenian Popular Movement or political arm of ASALA in Greece.
47. *Armenia*, no. 127-128/11-12, 1986, p. 18.
48. *Armenia*, no. 105-106/7-8, 1985, p. 29.
49. *Armenia*, no. 131/13, 1986, p. 7.
50. *Armenia*, no. 127-128/11-12, 1986, p. 7.
51. *Armenia*, no. 131/13, 1986, p. 7. For further analysis of such symbolism, see Khachig Tololyan, "Martyrdom as Legitimacy: Terrorism, Religion and Symbolic Appropriation in the Armenian Diaspora" in Paul Wilkinson and Alasdair M. Stewart, eds., *Contemporary Research on Terrorism* (Great Britain: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), pp. 96 ff.
52. *Armenia*, no. 89-90/5-6, 1984, p. 5. I have taken the liberty of correcting typographical errors in this citation from ASALA's journal without in any way changing the meaning of the text. ASALA's journal in Armenian at first also suffered from grammatical errors, but eventually the late Simon Simonian, an authority on classical Armenian who wrote the language perfectly, began to edit it. The result was that the quality of the written Armenian radically improved. I am indebted to Professor Khachig Tololyan for this information. A picture of Simonian and a trim, youthful-looking Hagop Hagopian appears in the *Armenian Observer*, 31 August 1988, p. 12.
53. *Panorama Interview*. See note 7 for the full citation to this source.
54. "Booklet Giving History of ASALA's Existence."
55. This and the following citations were taken from *Armenia*, no. 131/13, 1986, pp. 18-19.
56. This and the following citations were translated from "ASALA'nim Siyasal Programi," [ASALA's Political Program] *Hay Baykar* (Paris) no. 1 (1982). *Hay Baykar* [Armenian Struggle] was the organ of the Armenian Popular Movement of ASALA in France.
57. "Booklet Giving History of ASALA's Existence."
58. "Monte Melkonian Explains His Break with ASALA: Interview," *Armenian Reporter*, 12 January 1984, p. 4.
59. "Hagop Hagopian, Legendary Leader of ASALA, Gunned Down in Athens, Greece," *Armenian Reporter*, 28 April 1988, p. 1.
60. "Assassination of ASALA Leader Is Queried by Greek Authorities," *Armenian Reporter*, 5 May 1988, p. 1.
61. This and the following data were taken from "Syria Said to Have Caused New Split within ASALA," *Armenian Reporter*, 4 August 1988, pp. 1 and 2.
62. Melkonian, ed. *Selective Writings of Monte Melkonian*, p. xiv.
63. *Panorama Interview*.
64. This and the following citation were taken from "Booklet Giving History of ASALA's Existence."
65. See the reports in the [Armenian] *California Courier*, 22 September 1983, p. 2, and 8 December 1983, p. 9.
66. *Armenian Weekly*, 19 November 1983, p. 1, and 10 December 1983, p. 5.

67. *Armenian Weekly*, 1 October 1983, p. 1.
68. See "UnArmenian Activities," *Economist*, 6 February 1980, p. 20; *New York Times*, 17 April 1983, Sec. 1, p. 20; *New York Times*, 31 July 1983, p. E2; *New York Times*, 1 August 1983, p. A6; and *Los Angeles Times*, 12 November 1982, part 1-B, p. 9.
69. See the report on this case in the *Armenian Reporter*, 18 August 1983, p. 1. The three tried in Los Angeles were convicted.
70. This and the following citations were taken from "Booklet Giving the History of ASALA's Existence."
71. For details, see the account in *Armenian Reporter*, 25 August 1983, p. 1. For further general background, see Tarik Somer, "Armenian Terrorism and the Narcotic Traffic," in *International Terrorism and the Drug Connection* (Ankara: Ankara University Press, 1984), pp. 19-27.
72. This and the following citations were taken from the "Statement of Nathan M. Adams Senior Editor of Reader's Digest August 2, 1984; Room 428 Dirksen Senate Office Building Before the Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse" (mimeographed), pp. 3-5.
73. "Statement of Francis M. Mullen, Jr., Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration U.S. Department of Justice on Drug-Related Terrorism Before the United States Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Paula Hawkins, Chairman, August 2, 1984" (mimeographed), p. 6.
74. Michael J. Arlen, Jr., *Passage to Ararat* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1975), p. 186.
75. "Requiem Service in Athens, Greece Remembers Youth Said To Have Been Killed by Turkish Agents, 2 December 1982," *Armenian Reporter*, 8 January 1987, p. 15. ASALA falsely claimed that Vahradian was a victim of the MIT, the Turkish intelligence agency, when in reality he was simply killed in a bungled attempt to bomb the Kuwait Airlines office.
76. This and the following citation were taken from "Four French Ministers Friendly to Armenian Cause Severely Criticized," *Armenian Reporter*, 23 July 1983, p. 7.