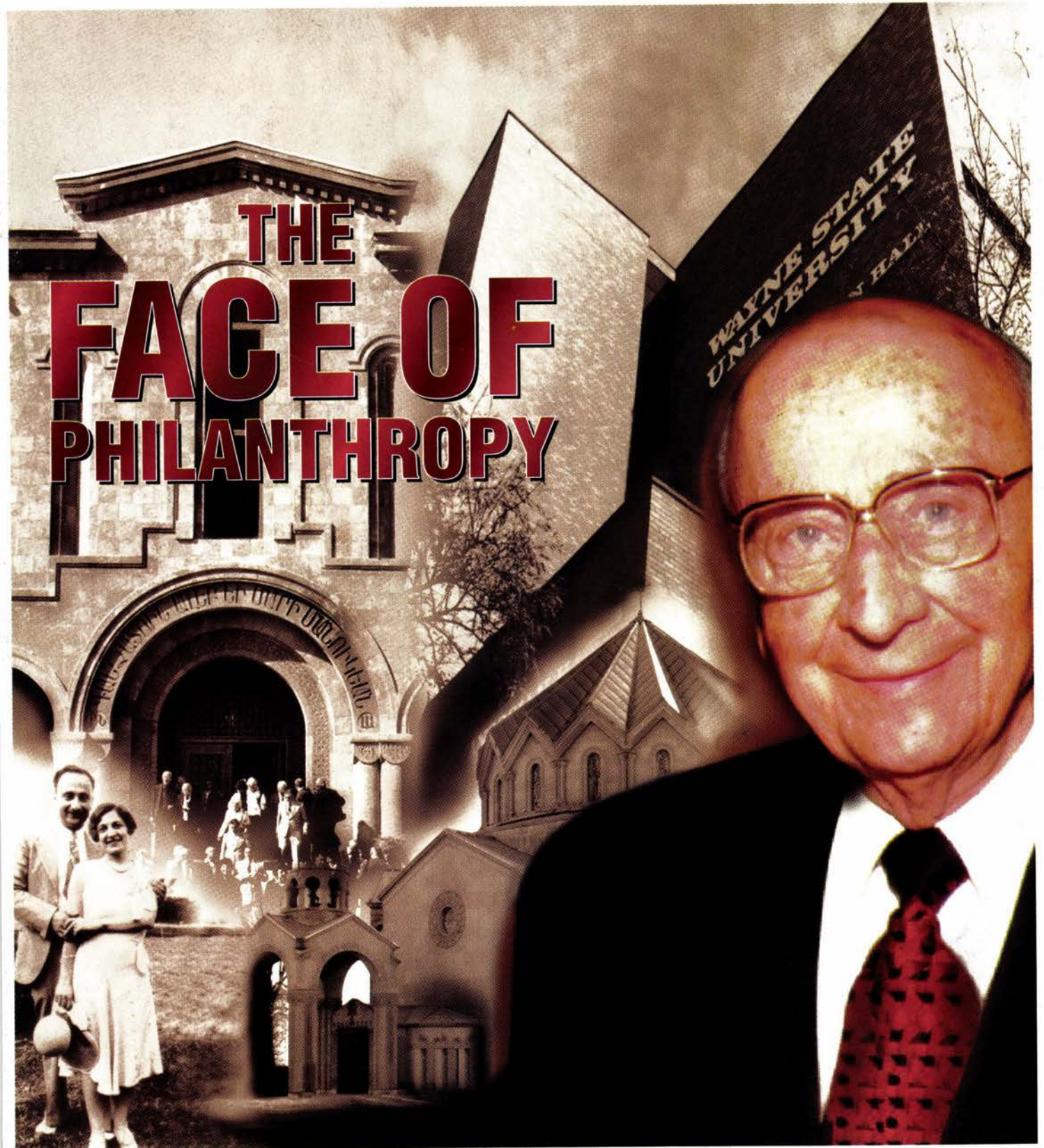


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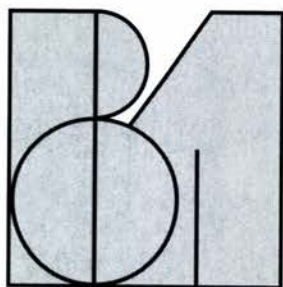
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**COVER STORY**  
**THE FACE OF PHILANTHROPY 16**

It began with a \$100 check during the Depression and has reached a record \$80 million. Mark Arax profiles Alex Manoogian and the impact of his philanthropy on the face of the Armenian community.

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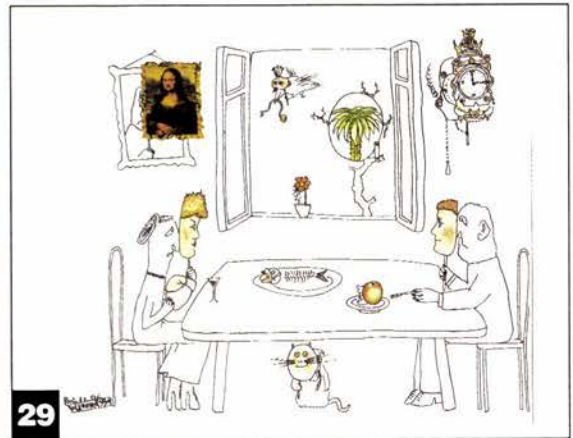
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COVER DESIGN BY RAFFI TARPINIAN



PRESENTS

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# UNCONVENTIONAL AND UNORTHODOX

We have chosen the opportunity of a cover story that, on the face of it, looks like a dozen others, to talk about what makes AIM unconventional. That may seem somewhat unorthodox, but then, so is AIM.

In recognition of his unique role as benefactor, Manoogian has become the first Diasporan to receive the Hero of the Armenian Nation title from the President of Armenia. After all, ask any Armenian to name the two or three individuals who have been most consistently generous with Armenian institutions and inarguably, Alex Manoogian will be the one most frequently mentioned. There may not be agreement on the other two, but there is no question about number one.

When AIM's founders solicited financial backing from some 90 individuals for what appeared to be a risky, costly—and crazy—venture, six years ago, Alex Manoogian was one of a handful who responded positively. "An Armenian International what?" the others said. "It'll never work." Manoogian sent in his check. His contribution matched exactly that of each of the eight founders and the six others (including Louise Manoogian Simone) who together provided the \$200,000 start-up capital.

As necessary as each dollar was, those which came with strings attached were not accepted. Manoogian's came with no strings.

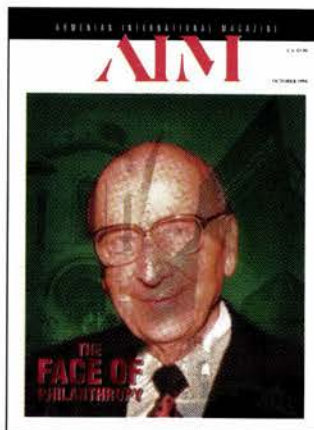
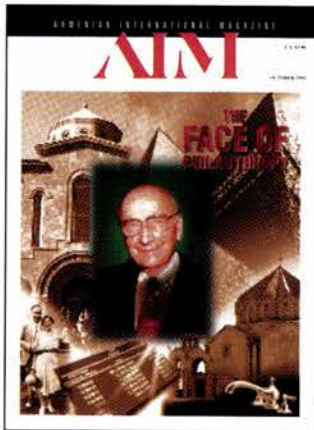
Is it necessary to go on at such length about one particular cover story, you might wonder. We wondered ourselves, yet the questions frequently posed to us in various forms, by readers and non-readers, tell us that the standards of journalism are suddenly forgotten in our Armenian world.

Not just forgotten—unknown.

"You mean the last guy you had on the cover didn't give AIM any money? You really do have writers write all those stories for you specifically? It really takes two to twenty days to work on a story to get it just right?"

These are some of your questions. Now, the answers.

No, no one has given us any money in



Two working versions of this issue's cover

exchange for any story. Yes, every article that has appeared in AIM has been written expressly for AIM. From Los Angeles Times reporter Mark Arax's profiles of Kirk Kerkorian and Alex Manoogian, to stories about gangs, the nuclear power in Armenia, the Armenian KGB and Charles Aznavour, these are stories unique to AIM.

AIM does not print press releases. Most of AIM's articles are written on assignment. Even then, however, very few go in exactly as submitted. Most require major rewrites and editing in order to make sense to an international audience which shares national interests without necessarily sharing a national experience.

Designing a cover takes as much time as writing an article. Art Director Dicran Kassouy (and Vahe Fattal before him) and designers produce several versions over several days. These are then discussed, debated and modified. The final choice is made based on clarity of message and aesthetics—the cover that says it all, without one of us having to come along to explain it, is the one which is chosen.

So, as you read this "Manoogian" issue (which includes not just a profile of Alex Manoogian, but also an interview with Vazgen Manukian—no relation) remember, our difference is not just in our color pages.



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## CORRECTIONS

*In M. Keheyian's "What Are Presidents For," (Letters, August-September, p. 10) the word **paramount** in the fourth paragraph should have read **parliament**.*

*A photograph of former ADLA member Vigen Khachatrian was incorrectly identified as Davit Vartanian in "Celebrating the First Third," (Cover Story, August-September, p. 20.)*

*Photographer Sonia Katchian's name was misspelled under the photo of Vazgen I (Institutions, August-September, p. 33.)*

*In Lola Koundakjian's "Playing Catch-Up," (Technology, August-September, p. 78) the correct e-mail address for subscribing to Hayastan should have been **Hayastan-request@usc.edu**. Also, AGBU-AIS is no longer available on Groong. It is available on-line by subscription only.*

*AIM regrets the errors.*

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EDITOR Vartan Oskanian

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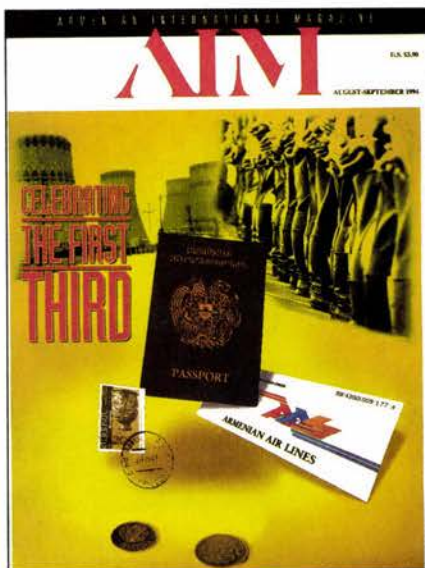
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# AIM



## LETTERS



### LET'S GO ARMENIA

Taline Satamian's "Yerevan City Walk" (Landmarks, August-September) was truly enlightening. I have seen no other writing that explores the city of Yerevan with such an upbeat and refreshing approach. In addition, the accompanying map and photos were fantastic.

Now that you have created the desire to visit the city, we need more details. It is too bad that there is no *Let's Go Armenia* or similar travel guide on Armenia. The creation of such a book would be a great boost to Armenian tourism and provide much needed capital to the new republic.

*Aram Barsoumian, Esq.  
Burbank, California*

### THOSE MISSING VALUES

"Who Speaks Their Language?" (Cover Story, June-July) discussed many important problems in the Armenian community here in Los Angeles. Surprisingly, it mentioned values (or the lack of) very briefly. I am referring to biblical values. Our kids, apparently without their parents' awareness, are quickly adopting secular standards which are the norm in American mainstream society.

Our kids should be exemplary Christians as well as successful Armenian-American citizens. Unfortunately, our churches seldom cater to the young, and organizations like the Armenian Youth Federation and Homenetmen are nationalistic, not religion-oriented.

How ironic that the same people who boast of Armenia's status as the first Christian nation fail to notice the decadence proliferating within our youth.

*George Gabrelian  
Granada Hills, California*

Congratulations on your well-written and informative article, "Who Speaks Their Language." William Malkasian's

comments particularly touched my heart.  
*Diane Verdolotti  
West Warwick, Rhode Island*

### WHO WANTS UNITY?

I am fed up with people who continually advocate unity among the Armenian churches and do nothing to help bring this about (Cover Story, March). They complain, pound their fists and muster all their emotions to tell the world that the Diocese is better than the Prelacy or the Prelacy is better than the Diocese. I urge all Armenians to wake up. The time has never been better to unite our churches. The heads of both churches have signed a statement advocating unity.

Help organize local committees, tell the heads of our church what you feel. We are witnessing history in the making, and we are an integral part of the process.

*Karney Ovian  
Henderson, Nevada*

I would have subscribed for three years. However, I feel that a forum for opposing opinions is very limited in AIM. I hope that this will change in the future because, after all, a democracy allows even the opposition to be heard and read.

*Lorig H. Nercessian  
Syosset, New York*

### INTERESTING VS. USEFUL

Enclosed is a picture taken in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1937, showing mechanic George Ishkhanian and Charles Lindbergh. This is to show you that if there

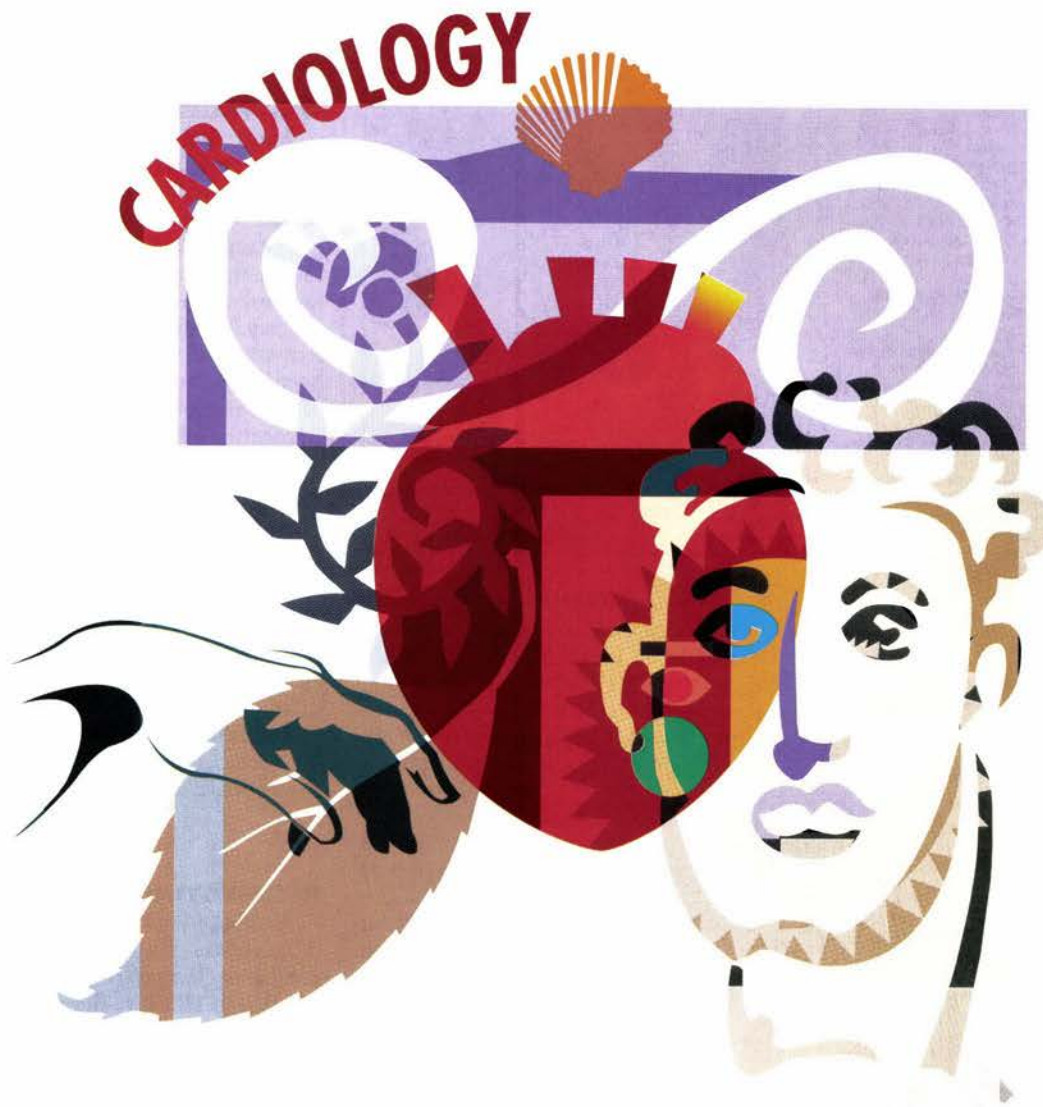


are interesting women like Lucy Artin (Profile, December 1993) there are also useful men like George Ishkhanian in the Armenian community of Egypt.

*Sarkis Papazian  
Cairo, Egypt*

Letters to the editors should be brief and include verifiable name, signature, address and daytime phone number. Mail letters to

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# BYTES *ON* FILE

Number of major disasters to affect Sweden in this century, other than the recent capsizing of the ship  
*Estonia* : 0

Number of victims: 500

Number of major catastrophes to affect Armenians in this century: 4+

Number of victims: 2,000,000+

Number of 1994 graduates from the Shushi Music School in Karabakh: 2 (one clarinetist and one *dudukist*)

Number of times Omar Sharif has portrayed an Armenian character on film: 2

Amount of geranium produced by Armenia's farmers in 1991: 8.5 tons

Amount of tobacco: 2.2 tons

Number of deaths in which US Dr. Jack Kevorkian has assisted: 20

Age of Paris's St. John the Baptist Armenian Cathedral: 90 years

Diamonds and metals as a percentage of Armenia's gross exports: 30.5

Shoes: 8.5

Average life expectancy in Armenia in 1993: 69

In Canada: 77; in China: 70

Number of books published in Armenia from 1990-1993 by government supported publishing houses:  
over 1100

Percentage decrease over 1987, the best publishing year for Armenia: 35

Area of Armenia's forests: 331,000 hectares

Number of jeeps owned by Armenia's Forestry Division: 6

Number of women dying from pregnancy-related causes per 100,000 live births in Armenia, in 1988: 35

Number in Austria: 11; Number in Russia: 49

Number of state museums, galleries and exhibition halls in Armenia: 70

Total number of pieces owned: 1.8 million

Age of Mt. Ararat's taller peak: 3.5 million years

Age of smaller peak: 200,000 years

According to Anania Shirakatsi, seventh century mathematician, average weight of the fish caught in  
the Arax River: 80 kg. or 175 lbs.

# FOREGR

Compiled by **GARINE ZEITLIAN**



**Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton**

On September 27-28, Russian President Boris Yeltsin and US President Bill Clinton discussed ways to halt Russia's \$1 billion annual arms sales to Iran. Sales of submarines, combat planes and missile technology, as well as some nuclear technology, provide income to the cash-strapped former Soviet giant. The Russian defense industry, having lost the Russian government as its main customer, has been looking elsewhere for large orders, since it lacks the funds to convert to peacetime production and cannot afford to lay off the populations of entire towns.

**The Committee on Legal Issues of the Black Sea Cooperation Council met in Yerevan** on October 12, in an attempt to regulate commuter transit between member states. Ibrahim Artvinli, head of the Turkish delegation, said that "Turkey and Armenia must first establish diplomatic relations and then develop economic cooperation. Turkey is ready to take the first step, but we are waiting for the Karabakh problem to be solved." Earlier, the Council had resolved the share distribution of a regional bank to be financed by the member states. Turkey and Russia will each have 16.5 percent, Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine 13.5 percent, while Georgia,

Moldova, Armenia, Albania and Azerbaijan each will supply two percent of the bank's shares.

**Ukraine reached a preliminary accord in September with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to launch market reforms.** This economic reform, in return for financial assistance from the West, was the agenda of newly-elected President Leonid Kuchma. The government is now expected to tighten its fiscal policies, balance the budget, liberalize prices and exchange rates and ease trade



**President Leonid Kuchma**

restrictions. Lawmakers who have enjoyed easy access to government credit to boost their own private enterprises are expected to oppose the measure.

Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitali Masol pledged that **Ukraine will be paying its debt to Armenia "gradually, in dram or by barter."** Masol signed a number of trade agreements with a visiting Armenian delegation headed by his Armenian counterpart Hrand Bagratian, including one on customs cooperation.

**Armenian President Levon Ter Petrossian paid an official visit to Romania** on September 19. He met with Romanian President Ian Eliescu and discussed the promotion of

bilateral relations and economic cooperation

Armenia's first women's party, the **Conservative Democratic Party of Women of Armenia**, registered with the government. Chairperson Armenuhi Ghazarian announced that her party was the first such organization in Armenian history. It proposes to enact legislation for the protection of the family and for women's "health, honor and dignity." The party has adopted a socialist platform and a pro-Russian political orientation.

Sergey Badalian, first secretary of the newly-elected **Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party**, stated that his party was eager to participate in Armenian politics within the framework of the constitution. He also said that the Armenian CP did not find market economy to be at odds with the party's proclaimed Marxist platform. Badalian announced that his organization had met with the Azerbaijani CP about the Karabakh issue and was also willing to work with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) if the latter abandoned its anti-Communist stance.

**Jirair Libaridian resigned from his position as Armenia's deputy foreign minister** on September 16, for reasons which remain unclear. He will retain his title as presidential advisor.

**Andrei Uranov was appointed Russia's new ambassador to Armenia.** A native of Moscow, Uranov holds advanced degrees in history and international relations. His diplomatic career includes 30 years of service in the international department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet

# OUND

Union. Since 1990, Uranov has been Russia's ambassador to Namibia. Uranov replaces Vladimir Stupishin whose term has expired.

**Armenia joined the Partnership for Peace of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on October 5.** Armenian



Papazian with NATO Dep. Sec. Gen. Sergio Balanzino Sec.

Foreign Minister Vahan Papazian signed the documents at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. Armenia was the last Transcaucasian state to join the partnership which extends defense training benefits to its members, without formal membership in NATO.



**The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has granted Armenia \$3.5 million** for curricular and health assistance to 64 boarding schools and kindergartens. The agency recently contributed 52 tons of medicine to children's hospitals, in addition to funding a vaccination program throughout the country.

**Azerbaijan's President Gaidar Aliev declared a 60-day state of emergency** on October 3, following an attempted coup led by Prime Minister Surat Husseinov. In a

televised address, Aliev said that 'dark forces' backed by pro-Husseinov troops had seized the airport, cut off all telephone lines with the outside world and besieged strategic buildings in Ganja and Baku. Husseinov denied all allegations of responsibility for the coup attempt and said that he still backed Aliev. The coup came less than two weeks after Azerbaijan's embattled parliament signed a \$7 billion contract with US and other Western oil companies to develop oil fields in the Caucasus (see Economy.)

**Azerbaijan has asked Saudi Arabia for \$15 billion in investments** to reinvigorate its waning economy. According to the Saudi newspaper *al-Riyadh*, the Saudi Development Fund and the Islamic Assistance Fund have completed a fact-finding mission to Azerbaijan and have expressed their readiness to respond to Azerbaijan's request for emergency refugee aid and housing construction.

**Azerbaijan's President Gaidar Aliev was accused of having sanctioned a plot to assassinate Abulfaz Elchibey**, the former president of the country's parliament and the leader of the opposition Azeri Popular Front (APF). The deputy chairman of the APF, Asim Mollazade, said that the plot had been "coordinated by the interior ministry in Nakhichevan [where Elchibey resides] but Aliev knows everything about this."

**The Javakhk Popular Movement has rejected Georgian President Edvard Shevardnadze's decree** which places areas of southwestern Georgia under a special administrative order headed by a federally appointed official. Javakhk includes the Armenian-populated areas of Akhalkalak,

Akhaltskha, Adigen, Aspindza, Bogdanovka and Borzhom.

**Turkey has refused the 10 percent of its \$363 million in aid from the United States** which the US government had withheld pending the improvement of that country's human rights record. Prime Minister Tansu Çiller also raised the possibility of "halting Western military protection for the Kurds" in northern Iraq. The crisis had begun with an Amnesty International claim that the Turkish military used US-supplied weapons in its campaign against Kurds in both southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq.

**Turkish forces continued their military campaign against Kurds**, in southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq, unabated. The foreign ministers of Iran, Turkey and Syria, in a recent meeting held in Damascus, renewed their pledge to the territorial integrity of Iraq, at a time when clashes between the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan flared up in the UN safety zone set up after the Gulf War.

**Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati visited Baku** in August. The Iranian official reiterated his country's readiness to mediate the Karabakh conflict. He also pledged Iran's support in developing bilateral relations. Thus far, Iranian assistance to Azerbaijan has been limited to humanitarian aid to war refugees. In addition, Iran's foreign policy has been characterized by caution due to Iran's own Azeri population, which is three times larger than that of Azerbaijan proper.



Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati

# DOSSIER

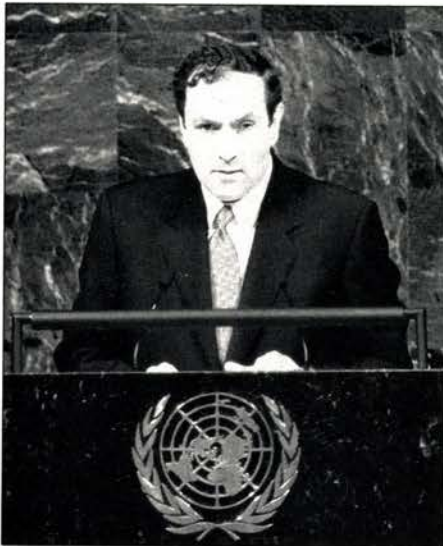
By GARINE ZEITLIAN

## TER PETROSSIAN BRINGS KARABAKH TO THE UN

The presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan came to the opening of the UN's 49th General Assembly in New York—each with his own agenda.

In his September 28 speech to the assembly of world leaders, conveniently coinciding with the

Menem and Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati. He also held discussions with UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Ian Eliasson, Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Group and US Ambassador to the UN, Madeleine Albright. Ter Petrossian also addressed members of the Armenian community, which had gathered at St. Vartan's Cathedral in Manhattan, to celebrate the Republic's third anniversary.



The Armenian delegation (above) listening to Ter Petrossian (left) speak at the UN

week-long celebrations of Armenian independence in Armenia and the Diaspora, Armenia's President Levon Ter Petrossian reaffirmed his government's position: a peaceful resolution to the Karabakh conflict

would end the blockade of Armenia which, in turn, would facilitate economic and political reforms.

The Armenian president repeated that the road to lasting peace in Karabakh lay in the deployment of multinational troops until such time as a negotiated solution to the problem can be reached "with the full participation of the Karabakh delegation at the CSCE Minsk Conference."

When Azerbaijan's President Gaidar Aliiev took to the podium one day later, he unleashed accusations against Armenia for entertaining territorial ambitions in Azerbaijan. "All of this is cloaked by an arbitrary interpretation of the right of people for self-determination as the right of any ethnic group to self-proclaim its independence and join another state," decried Aliiev.

He blamed Armenia for the military build-up in Karabakh, the annexation of Azerbaijani territory and the hundreds of thousands of Azeri war victims and refugees.

Before leaving New York, Ter Petrossian met with Aliiev (see below), Argentine President Carlos

## WARMER PROSPECTS FOR WINTER

As the winter sets in, the oil rush is on in Armenia.

In an interview with *Platt's Oilgram News*, Steve Tashjian, Armenia's State Minister for Energy and Fuel announced that Turkmenistan had resumed its delivery of gas to Armenia. Tashjian said that Armenia was receiving an average of three million cubic meters per day—less than the five million agreed upon, but double the 1.5 million cubic meters per day Armenia received in the past. Due to this additional delivery, power supply to the commercial, industrial and residential sectors of the country has increased from two to six hours per day. Part of the imported gas is also stored in underground reservoirs for the winter. The government is also stockpiling fuel oil imported from Russia, in preparation for the fourth winter under economic blockade. Fuel oil shipment from the European Union will also be stored for winter emergencies.

In addition to relying on imports, the Armenian government is also completing the conversion of a petrochemicals plant near Yerevan to a refinery that would produce one million tons (20,000 barrels per day) of refined oil per year. The project would allow Armenia to import crude directly from Russia. The Russian crude pipeline that supplied Armenia during the Soviet period has been shut off since the beginning of the civil conflict in Georgia in 1991. Currently, Tashjian explained, Armenia's 800,000 tons per year of crude imports from Russia are processed in Georgian refineries before being transported to Armenia by rail.

## IS THIS GRIDLOCK?

The Karabakh peace process continued with a Moscow meeting on September 9 between Armenian President Levon Ter Petrossian, Azerbaijani President Gaidar Aliiev and Karabakh State Defense Committee Chairman Robert Kocharian. The meeting did not

result in signed protocols or even progress. As Azeri Foreign Minister Hasan Hasanov put it, the two sides "introduced their positions clearly and distinctly."

According to Manvel Sargisian, Karabakh's representative in Armenia, the Azeri side intentionally stalled negotiations by requiring that a delegation representing the Azeri population of Karabakh partake in the talks. Unverified reports state that the Karabakh delegation was willing to negotiate

Matters came to a head at the UN in New York. Aliev met with Clinton on September 26. Clinton met with Russian President Boris Yeltsin on September 27. Ter Petrossian met with Aliev on September 28. Ian Eliasson, the Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Group met with both Aliev and Ter Petrossian individually. The discussions focused on ways of integrating the CSCE and Russian plans. The deployment and composition of peace-keeping forces, the withdrawal of belligerent troops, the lifting of the blockade and the exchange of prisoners were at the core of the talks.

This materialized several weeks later through the mediation of CSCE Minsk Group Deputy Chairman Per Anderman. Two Azeri prisoners from Karabakh were brought to Yerevan, under guard, turned over to Anderman who flew them to Baku and exchanged them for two Armenian prisoners of war. One of them POWs, 55-year-old Sahak Tamrazian from Hatrut, had spent 13 months in a camp 35 miles from Baku.



AIM / ANKHTAR NIKHCHATIRIAN

Vartan Oskanian of the Armenian Foreign Ministry (left) with Anderman (second from right) and returned Armenian prisoners

the withdrawal of its troops from currently occupied areas of Azerbaijan in exchange for safety guarantees for the Armenians of Karabakh.

Azerbaijan is also keen on placing the return of the cities of Shushi and Lachin on the negotiating table—issues the Karabakh delegation has thus far refused to address, unless a comprehensive political agreement on the status of Karabakh is in place.

According to the secretary of the Armenian Parliament's Permanent Committee on Karabakh, Suren Zolian, the Moscow negotiations were merely a preparatory step for the UN speeches of the presidents of both Armenia and Azerbaijan and for the meeting between Aliev and US President Bill Clinton. Zolian warned that Aliev is using his image as the only head of state in the Caucasus to challenge Russia in order to ingratiate himself with the Americans.

In the meantime, Turkey has reiterated its unwavering support for Azerbaijan and its pledge to blockade Armenia. At the same time, the Azerbaijani opposition continues to maintain that the decision on the status of Karabakh is an internal issue to be settled by the Azerbaijani legislature alone.

## US PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON OPPOSES HUMANITARIAN BILL

In a letter to Representative Richard Lehman (D-CA), US President Bill Clinton voiced his opposition to the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act which the Congressman had introduced in March. The bill calls for a ban on American assistance to governments which prohibit passage of US humanitarian aid to a third country. Clinton said he "deplores the closure of Turkey's border to aid shipments to Armenia" but that the Act "might only serve to exacerbate the situation and delay the reopening of the Turkish-Armenian border."

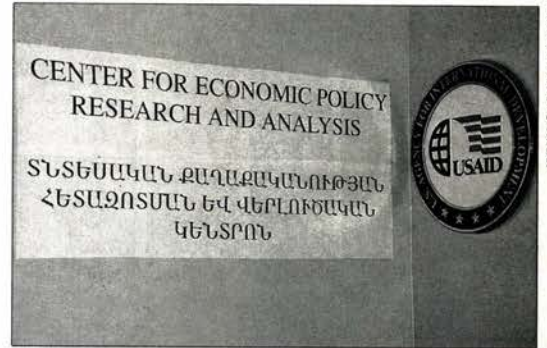
Lehman had argued, "It makes no sense for our government to provide assistance to countries that impede the transport or delivery of US humanitarian aid to other countries. Such restrictions add to our financial burden and, more importantly, preclude congressionally approved food and medicine from getting to needy people as soon as possible."

For most of the spring and the summer, the Armenian-American community lobbied for the passage of the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act introduced by senators Bob Dole (R-KS) and Paul Simon (D-IL). However, as the 103rd Congress adjourned in early October, any action on the Act was postponed to January when Congress reconvenes.

Supporters of the bill include Greek-Americans,

organizations concerned about political interventions in humanitarian endeavors. Opponents argue that the bill targets the one country reportedly blocking US aid—Turkey. They explain that Turkey's embargo on the transit of US humanitarian aid to Armenia is based on strategic considerations. Unlike Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act which specifically identifies Azerbaijan as the target of American sanctions for its blockade of Armenia and Karabakh, the Corridor Act would apply globally.

Ross Vartian, Executive Director of the Washington, DC-based Armenian Assembly, explained that congressmen and the President do not like "blanket restrictions" on foreign policy. "All tough pieces of legislation take more than one session [of Congress]. We will be pushing harder in the next session and go to full hearings, if necessary. We will continue until either the problem is resolved or policy is imposed," he said.



## RESEARCH CENTERS SPRING UP

Research and documentation centers spring up in Armenia as policy-making becomes daily business for the three-year-old government.

The Center for Economic Policy and Analysis of the American University of Armenia (AUA) is funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The Center's goals include compilation and data analysis toward the improvement of Armenia's

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economic and social situation. At the opening ceremonies, Thomas Dine, Assistant USAID Administrator for Europe and the Newly Independent States, said that the US wanted to work in "close partnership" with Armenia and the AUA. "The opening of this Center is a new page in the development of relations between Armenia and the United States," said Armenian Minister of Economy Armen Eghiazarian.

The recipient of a large fund from the Lincy Foundation in Nevada as well as private donations, the Armenian Center for National and International Studies (ACNIS) was established by former Foreign Minister Raffi K. Hovannisian and began operations in September. The main objective of ACNIS is "to serve as a link between innovative scholarship and the current and emerging public policy issues facing Armenia and the Armenian people in the post-Soviet world." ACNIS projects to disseminate "balanced and unbiased information" and to assist in the process of building "reasoned consensus."

## SURVIVING TOGETHER

The Autumn 1994 issue of *Surviving Together: A Quarterly on Grassroots Cooperation in Eurasia*, published by the Institute for Soviet-American Relations (ISAR) featured articles on the Caucasus.

In his article on Georgia, Stephen Jones (see AIM, October, 1993) explains that Georgia's geostrategic position, regionalist tendencies and multiethnic complexity have complicated the difficulties connected with the collapse of imperial power and the tasks of state-building in an impoverished country struggling to overcome an authoritarian legacy.

The second piece, a photo essay by members of the Women's Commission for Refugees and Children of the Washington-based International Rescue Committee, details the conditions of Azeri refugee settlements.



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# THE FACE OF P

By MARK ARAX

**L**ong before his company landed on the Fortune 500, long before he became the godfather of the Armenian Diaspora, Alex Manoogian handed over his first gift to charity, a \$100 check to Saint John's Armenian Church in Detroit during the early days of the Depression. Some \$80 million, an amount that staggers the imagination, has followed.

The very face of Armenian institutional life has been carved out by his largesse. Many of the organizations the Detroit industrialist decided to fund are still with us—some prosperous, others hanging on. Many of the organizations he could not underwrite or chose not to underwrite vanished long ago. Quite simply, a check from Manoogian has meant the difference between make or break.

What is remarkable about this giving (beyond its sheer amount) is that it has come not in anticipation of death, nor as a postscript to death. Manoogian has been parceling out his patronage, a million dollars here and a million dollars there, for more than half a century. This year alone, at the age of 93, he has given \$3 million to Armenian and non-Armenian causes.

So large and so sustained is his philanthropy that the man himself has been cloaked, sanctified by his charity. And the Armenian community, his chief beneficiaries, have been muted of any criticism, lest they be accused of looking gift

horses in the mouth.

Only now, in his twilight years, have Manoogian and those closest to him allowed a peel inside his life.

Only now, in Armenia's dark hours, has the Armenian-American community dared to question the wisdom of some of his gifts.

How, it is asked, can Manoogian pledge \$5 or \$10 million to build a new cathedral in Ejmiatsin while the country itself suffers so? And yet those asking the question do not wish to be quoted by name. Manoogian, they say, is the closest thing we have to a living saint.

"You have to understand," said Mitch Kehetian, editor of the *Macomb Daily* outside Detroit, "this man has been giving his life to the Armenian church and community. Maybe he could have given his money to more effective institutions. Maybe he could have helped build an industrial base in Armenia. But it isn't my money. People might take exception here and there, but in the overall picture he has managed to do many remarkable things."

Edmond Azadian, Manoogian's longtime assistant, says critics see only the churches and schools bearing the Manoogian name. People do not realize that there are countless other charitable causes—the earthquake fund, the heating oil fund, food and clothing drives—that Manoogian has supported generously without a string attached.

"No matter how you slice it, someone is going to be unhappy," Azadian said.



Alex Manoogian and the faucet which launched Masco (right); Manoogian with wife, Marie, 1931 (top); at the wheel of a Ford in 1920 (middle); with his children, 1930 s (bottom).



# PHILANTHROPY



"The writer asks why do you need a building. The clergy asks why do you need a book. Do I agree 100 percent with the way Mr. Manoogian contributes? No, not always. He is very soft on clergy, and some clergy, frankly, are undeserving. But people should criticize all those Armenians who have money and don't give a dime."

You might expect Manoogian himself to respond less than kindly to such questions, to dismiss any critic as an ingrate. Yet he concedes that maybe he has leaned too much in his lifetime toward the building of edifices. He is now reevaluating his pledge to the church, he says. A new mother church will be built but he has decided to delay groundbreaking until a new Catholicos is seated and some of Armenia's more pressing problems are resolved.

"We're not going to start building the church tomorrow," he said in a recent interview with AIM from his corporate offices in Taylor, Michigan. "It is better to postpone the building and help the country get out of its troubles. We should wait."

Very little has been written about Manoogian beyond the legendary rise of his company, Masco. While the company has made Wall Street history ("It is probably the greatest stock in the history of capitalism," wrote the former head of the Magellan Fund), Manoogian has preferred the shadows for himself.

The portrait that emerges in a series of interviews is of a driven man who pinched pennies to give away millions, who rode himself and his employees hard, who rejected nearly all the trappings of wealth and still questions to this day the need for a first-class airplane ticket, who misses deeply his wife, Marie, and a small circle of bridge-playing friends he has outlived, whose one indulgence in life remains his flower garden.

"It is the story of the altar boy in Smyrna who went on to make millions and millions but always wanted to be a priest," Kehetian said. "Therein lies the reason he ticks the way he ticks."

The role of godfather was not so much assumed as it was bestowed upon a young Manoogian by his father, Takvor, a wealthy grain and raisin trader who was the unofficial mayor of their town, Kasaba. Even as late as 1918, the father had considerable sway with the Turkish provincial powers. As an elder of the community and church, Takvor was overwhelmed with requests to serve as godfather to the parish children—so many

requests that he had to pass on the duty to his oldest son.

"From an early age, I felt a responsibility to my community," Manoogian explained. "My mother and father were charitable people. I remember as a boy carrying all the clothing and foodstuffs to the poor people."

Kasaba was close enough to the international ports that the Turks did not dare visit their atrocities. Manoogian graduated from high school and at 17 set up a trading company with money borrowed from his father. As World War I ended and the province was ceded to the Greeks, he began to feel uncertain about the future.

He did not jump at the idea of America. Like every fateful decision that would come in his life, he studied the proposition first. Two cousins had lived briefly in the United States and he sought their advice. America is fool's gold, the first one told him. "You've got a good business, your family is here. Stay put," he advised. The second cousin waxed on and on about an America of endless beauty and opportunity.

Manoogian was puzzled. Then he discovered that the first cousin had worked in a factory his entire stay in America and lived in a flophouse. Cousin No. 2 sold Singer sewing machines door-to-door and traveled the land. Manoogian took the advice of the second cousin. He bought the boat ticket to America.

He walked through the turnstile at Ellis

Island on May 10, 1920, \$50 in his pocket and seasick. He could speak five languages, and English was not one of them. He had the address of a friend in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where he went to work polishing spoons in a silver shop. He bounced from job to job, Armenian boss to Armenian boss. In Providence, Rhode Island, he befriended a factory worker named Harry Ajamian who would alter the course of his life.

Ajamian taught Manoogian the rudiments of tooling screws and bolts, a skill Manoogian took with him to Detroit where such jobs were plentiful. Five years later, on the eve of the stock market crash, he sent for Ajamian and another friend named Sahakian and they began Masco (Manoogian, Ajamian, Sahakian CO), with less than \$5,000 capital. They produced their first screws on antiquated machinery that Manoogian found at a junk sale. He spent weeks restoring the equipment, dismantling each part, cleaning, oiling, and then reassembling. His partners marveled at his patience, his 15-hour work days and the ability to fix almost every part himself.

The company not only survived the Depression but slowly prospered. Still, it

wasn't enough for Manoogian, who wanted to put all profits back into the company. Ajamian, who had married Manoogian's sister in Greece, respected his brother-in-law but did not have the patience for his farseeing plans that sounded, at times, like pie-in-the-sky. Ajamian and Sahakian left Masco, believing the company would never be big enough to sustain three families.

"The secret of his success is that he is a very persistent man," Azadian said. "If he decides something, come hell or high water he's going to do it. And he does it himself. He doesn't trust too many people. So he taught himself how to handle the engineering, the accounting, the marketing. He knew and still knows every phase of the business, top to bottom. No one can fool him."

Manoogian likes to say that luck was on his side but quite often he made his own luck.

The Ford Motor Co. needed a part in 24 hours to launch a new model and none of the machine shops in Detroit would take the job on such short notice. The man who showed up at Masco's front door that day was more than a little panicked.

"Mr. Ford needs this part by 8 a.m. tomorrow!"

Manoogian studied it. "Well, let me see what I can do."

He worked all day and through the night and completed the job with one hour to spare. He drove to the Ford Motor division that was assembling the new model and waited to hear if the part fit. Out came the sour Henry

Ford and one of his assistants. "Mr. Ford, this is the man who saved the day," the assistant motioned. Ford walked up to Manoogian and rested a hand on his shoulder. "Young man," he smiled, "you're going places."

Masco produced custom parts for Ford, Chrysler and Hudson Motor Company; Manoogian didn't like being wholly dependent on the car buying whims of Americans. To branch out, he needed new equipment but that would cost far more than the \$20,000 he had in the bank. In 1936, he got the idea of taking his company public and he spent weeks cajoling brokers until he found one willing to issue the stock. Masco became the first Armenian-owned industrial enterprise whose shares were traded on the stock exchange. Overnight, Manoogian had \$200,000 to play with.

It all went up in smoke on a cold December night a year later. Manoogian was playing

**The Manoogian School in Argentina is one of dozens around the world which bear the Manoogian name.**

**"The secret of his success is that he is a very persistent man... If he decides something, come hell or high water he's going to do it."**



bridge with friends when a caller informed him of a fire at his new plant. Everything but the office was ravaged. That night, he broke down right there on the street. The next day, he sat down amid the frozen ashes and began fixing the equipment, even though the insurance company had assured him it would cover the full loss. In the end, he salvaged the old machines and used the insurance money to buy new ones.

In the meantime, he had married Marie Tatian, a musician and scarf painter in New York who came from a long line of musicians and artists, and succeeded in bringing over his parents and five siblings from Greece. He and Marie had two children: a daughter, Louise, and a son, Richard.

Masco boomed during the war years, production tied to the defense industry. Armenians wondered why Manoogian didn't loosen up, work fewer hours, indulge in the fineries of a man of wealth. He smoked an occasional cigar, bought a few expensive suits that he wore to death and joined a country club. But he didn't care much to associate with the rich. Most of his friends came right from St. John's Armenian church: shopkeepers and dry cleaners and tobacco wholesalers. They'd gather every Friday night for bridge—a game that Manoogian, a fine player, seemed to take as seriously as Masco's bottom line.

One night, at dinner, an Armenian restaurateur tried to interest Manoogian in a \$100 bottle of wine from Portugal. He was talking to the wrong man, not only because Manoogian rarely drank but because he never spent more than \$3 for a bottle of anything. "You spend the \$100," he gently chided his friend, "and I'll spend \$3 and give the \$97 to a person who needs it."

If not for Marie, friends say, Manoogian would have never been introduced to the theater or opera or literature. He was quite happy with his technical books. If there was a price to be paid for his devotion to work, it was almost certainly paid by Marie and the children, who saw very little of him for weeks at a time.

Film of those family years shows a loving but slightly distant father whose movie camera invariably shot as much footage of his flowers as his children. Theirs was a proper home, friends say. Manoogian usually came to the dinner table in suit and tie. Marie, one of the best Armenian cooks in Detroit, insisted on preparing the meals. She could never imagine a maid or butler in her kitchen.



Manoogian with son, Richard (top) and daughter, Louise (bottom).

By the mid 1950s, Masco was already a hit. What turned it into an industrial behemoth was an encounter with the son of a friend from California. The young man had come to Detroit to ask Manoogian to devise some parts for a single-handle faucet he was trying to develop. Manoogian made the parts and didn't hear from the young man for almost a year. When they met again, Manoogian was told that the faucet had failed.

"I said to him, 'Give it to me.' He said, 'You can have it.' So I took it and worked on it for a year. That faucet was the biggest thing in my business. I made more money on that faucet than I did on my life."

Sales of the single-handle Delta kitchen faucet exceeded \$1 million in 1958. That was the year young Richard graduated from Yale and joined the company full-time. "I told him to do whatever he could. Help around. I don't recall placing Richard in charge of the company. I just noticed that one day people stopped coming to me."

The more responsibility his son assumed, the more time Manoogian spent pursuing his philanthropic passions. He had joined the ranks of the Armenian General Benevolent Union in the 1930s and was named International President in 1953, a post he

occupied for 37 years. During his tenure, AGBU capital funds multiplied from \$8 million to \$130 million, much of the money raised or given by Manoogian himself.

Of the \$80 million he has contributed to charity, about \$50 million has been used to build AGBU schools in the United States, Iran, Lebanon, France and South America. Another \$15 million has gone toward the building of churches and monasteries throughout the world. Another \$10 million has built museums and benefited Armenian artists, poets, writers, scholars and musicians.

When the Armenian monastery in Venice lost \$50 million in a real estate swindle by the Italian Mafia, Manoogian stepped in and saved the rare artifacts and 18th century print shop. When the earthquake devastated Armenia, he wrote a check for \$2 million for a cold food storage facility. When the Matenadaran repository for 6th and 7th century manuscripts fell in disrepair, he gave \$650,000 for heat generators, computers, a minibus, cafeteria and salaries.

While his allegiances have been with the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party and the AGBU, he has also contributed to literary magazines and schools

affiliated with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. He is a benefactor of several Michigan hospitals along with the Gerald Ford Library and Museum in Ann Arbor and the Jimmy Carter Library in Atlanta. He even gave away his house—the Manoogian Mansion—to the city of Detroit for use as the mayoral residence.

And yet he is downright cheap with himself. "I remember the time the family was traveling to France and someone made the mistake of buying first-class tickets," Azadian said. "Mr. Manoogian was furious. He called up his travel agent and was able to save \$6,000. He gave me a check for the \$6,000. 'Here,' he said. 'Now send this money to the AGBU in New York.'"

"It's almost like he is a trustee of his money, that he feels it really belongs to the community instead. I can't explain. He is a very frugal man when it comes to himself. But when it comes to people in need, he is very generous."

Under his son's aggressive management style, Masco has grown into a \$7 billion a year multinational corporation. The Masco group boasts 350 manufacturing plants around the world. It is the world's largest producer of faucets and the nation's largest furniture manufacturer with such brands as Henredon

and Drexel Heritage. A \$10,000 investment in Masco in 1958 would be worth nearly \$30 million today.

Richard is known to have a different, less imperious manner than his father. When the senior Manoogian walks the halls of Masco, it is said, every man buttons his jacket and no one dares call him "Alex." When the 56-year-old son makes his way down the same halls, longtime employees call out "Richard."

They are different too in their philosophies about money. Richard gives to charity but he is not afraid to indulge. He has two summer cottages in Michigan and a place in New York. His 19th century American art collection, which includes the famous painting of George Washington crossing the Delaware, is valued at more than \$100 million. This collection, the younger Manoogian points out, is not hoarded, but on loan most of the time. Washington-on-the-Delaware is now hanging in the White House.

"My father brought us up to recognize that if you are fortunate to do well in this world then you have an obligation to share that good fortune with those who are less fortunate. I don't feel any pressure to outdo my father. And



The Masco group includes the world's largest producer of faucets and the nation's largest producer of furniture.



I don't feel that his philanthropy has somehow taken the onus off of me. Giving is part of our family tradition."

The father does not begrudge the son's indulgences. Indeed, over the years, he has taken great pride in his accomplishments. Publicly, Manoogian has been somewhat less effusive about his daughter, Louise Simone, who succeeded her father as head of the AGBU. Simone has changed the direction of the organization he carved out, focusing less on edifices and more on projects that respond to Armenia's everyday needs.

"Louise is doing great work," he said with

obvious pride. "When she was younger, I never expected that she would be so enthusiastic about Armenia. It tickles me. I like it very much. I love her for that."

If Manoogian has one regret, it is that he failed to heal the longtime rift that split the Armenian church and community in two. Three times over the decades he tried to bring the two willing Catholicos together for substantive talks. Three times politics got in the way.

At 93, his health is frail but mind as sharp as ever. He still goes to work three days a week though he moans about the cost of a driver. He is lonely without his wife, Marie,

who died last summer, and without his bridge and golf playing companions. And it saddens him to have lived long enough to witness Armenia in great despair again. Still, his eyes twinkle with hope.

"That Armenia has survived all these years is a miracle. That's why I love our nation and we do all we can to perpetuate it. If you ask me if I was born again what nationality I would choose, I would like to be born Armenian again."

Mark Arax is a reporter for The Los Angeles Times. Photos courtesy of Edmond Azadian.

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# ADDING UP FOR THE LONG RUN

The name that is synonymous with the political opposition in Armenia today is Vazgen Manukian. Former mathematician, former Prime Minister, former Defense Minister, and currently the head of the National Democratic Union (NDU) and probable presidential candidate, Manukian takes a long view on the past and the future in Armenian politics.

By **SALPI HAROUTINIAN GHAZARIAN**

PHOTOS BY MKHITAR KHACHATRIAN

**AIM: You were considered the ideologue of the democratic movement. Now you're seen as the ideologue of the opposition. Do you agree?**

**Manukian:** In part. I don't believe the democratic movement has been correctly understood yet. There was a very important and positive aspect to that movement: its pragmatism. When Armenians and other oppressed peoples rise to the struggle, they lean towards the romantic. As the political activists who carry the burden of that romantic struggle come face to face with difficulties, contradictions and complexities, they are often left with only frustration and cynicism, regarding those who do not defend the rights of small nations.

From the outside, the movement appeared very emotional and inflamed, and perhaps not many knew that everything proceeded by mathematical calculation. The infusion of pragmatism in politics was ascribed to me. I had arrived at that pragmatism by studying our history of the last 100 years and learning from the political lessons our leaders had culled, rather late, unfortunately. I tried to include those lessons in the movement early on.

That is why I tried to gather within the Karabakh Committee those people who thought pragmatically. However, that was sometimes damaging. When a man has dreams for the nation, as I did, sometimes it is hard to be pragmatic. After all, I am the child of immigrant parents. My grandparents were from the village of Moks, on the southern shores of Lake Van.

On the other hand, the pragmatic person often lacks dreams and passion, and upon assuming office, his pragmatism quickly

converts to cynicism regarding both the job and the public.

I believe that the political activist must carry that national dream in his heart, but in his job, must be pragmatic. I would not say that those ideas, which I composed and which were later edited by the Committee and became the principles of the Armenian National Movement, were ideology. They were very simple, pragmatic principles on which to carry out our political activity.

**What you put forward then was not ideology but political program.**

As an individual, I wished to develop an ideological circle around which all political elements could gather—a general national platform which could be accepted by all. And that platform is this: I don't believe we need to accommodate ourselves to thinking we are a small country in this region, that we must get by without dealing with the larger, complex issues. I don't believe we are going to become a Switzerland. Nor do I think our strength should lie in trying to conquer the maximum amount of territory. That's not strength. I would want, as a nation, to put forth as our goal that we walk in step with the world. All of world history is a competition between states and nations. I don't agree with people who say, we are small and weak, and in competition with the rest, we want to come out 100th in rank. I want to think about first place. About placing in the first third. This may sound like a fairy tale that does not match my pragmatism, but I believe that by addressing complex issues, we can solve them.

Throughout the whole movement, we were very careful that there should not be war with Azerbaijan because of Karabakh.



That war was forced upon us and you see, we won. We resolved a very complicated problem. I am convinced that similar complex problems in other areas can also be resolved.

I don't know if this can be considered ideology. But I want to live in a state where I am proud to be Armenian; where I can live freely—proud of my freedom; where I have the knowledge that through my work I am serving not only my family, but also some general national interests. I would say Armenians share that consciousness. If we could only set before us national issues and resolve them, I would call that a national ideology.

**In order to do that, what is necessary?**

First, we must bring this country to a state of normalcy where people are not hungry, where they're not sitting in the dark, and where the war can be concluded in a just way. This will not come about by dreaming. Detailed work is necessary to get to that point. But on the way, the people's faith and hope must not be destroyed. Today, that hope and faith are gone. Not because there is no electricity, or because they are hungry, but because people see the injustices that are committed in the country. Leaders who place issues and goals before their people, must also serve as examples. Speaking now as the opposition, I don't see that our leaders are serving as an example.

**Is that a general evaluation, or are there specific examples?**

This is general. The individuals of course have their positive and negative sides. But generally, as a government, they do not enjoy the people's confidence as the

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protectors of justice, and as the people's companions along this hard road. It's as if the leadership is isolated.

### **What should they be doing differently? What would you be doing?**

It's difficult to answer that. When I was minister of defense, it seems to me it was possible to create in our army the kind of atmosphere where people dealt with each other with confidence; they had confidence towards the army's leadership, saw clear objectives placed before them and enthusiastically attempted to reach those objectives. I'm not saying that everything about the army was ideal at that time. There was all sorts of lawlessness—even bribery. But that was not the norm. Everyone understood that there was enthusiasm and confidence at the top.

### **And that spirit of enthusiasm and confidence doesn't exist within the present government?**

Fundamentally, it doesn't. Generally, the atmosphere that has been created makes it difficult for the regular conduct of one's job. Everyone is concerned with himself. I don't want to use specific names, but there are people both from the Karabakh Committee and from the Armenian National Movement, who, and it hurts me to see this, are being corrupted.

### **Hakob Paronian had written somewhere that when a person takes office, either he changes, or people around him begin to perceive him differently. In this case, which is it?**

I'm not so convinced that people change upon assuming office. Of course, I'm not talking about a 20-25 year old, who perhaps can change. But if we're talking about 40 or 50 year olds, then their positive and negative attributes are simply put under a magnifying glass, but they don't change. Those among the more mature ones who became corrupted, probably always had it in them but had no opportunity. As to the younger ones who became corrupted by following the examples of the more senior



**When the law on the presidency was passed, when it became clear that Ter Petrossian's chances of becoming president were great, and that I would remain on the job, but on the side, I preferred to resign.**

members, for that, we are to blame. I say this with a great deal of pain. I think we were somewhat wrong in the way we dealt with the youth. Giving them very responsible positions also lends to corruption. We should have been more careful.

I've read somewhere that within any nation, only five percent of the total is the truly noble, honest segment, and another five percent is always evil and corrupt; the remaining 90 percent have both good and bad traits, and depending on the conditions, can go either way. So, it is very important that a people's leadership come from that first five percent, and then, the people begin to copy them.

In our case, unfortunately, our leaders are not of that five percent. And this is not because of inexperience. It has become intentional policy to corrupt people so that they can become yours, so that you can retain power at all cost. I don't understand that.

When I speak with those in power, that conviction among [President] Levon Ter Petrossian and his friends, runs very deep. That conviction becomes the moral basis to do everything to stay in power, because thinking about staying in power becomes synonymous with thinking about Armenia.

### **Your position in all this is a riddle. Your comments about the state, and the evolution of the state are generally positive. You don't participate in the verbal street duels, you hesitate to use names. Yet you were yourself part of the power base for quite a long time. What is it that you resigned from, and what is it that you aspire to?**

I resigned from the position of prime minister when it had become clear that there was tough maneuvering going on to establish a power base, to take charge of the machinery. I thought that in the ruling team, especially in regards to the economy and the process of nation and state building, I was leading the process, based on my knowledge and preparation. I wanted us all to go down that road together. I could not stay and become just one link in the chain. When the

law on the presidency was passed, when it became clear that Ter Petrossian's chances of becoming president were great, and that I would remain on the job, but on the side, I preferred to resign. Seeing what Ter Petrossian's team would attempt to do, I could not stay and be a part of it. I preferred to step aside and let the people see for themselves.

**In such cases where there are two strong leaders, different working relationships are possible. Either one leads and the other follows, or the two work in tandem. How did you and Ter Petrossian work?**

In both ways. For example, removing me from the position of defense minister I could only explain this way. I took the position when we were losing the war. Then, when we began winning, the people ascribed those victories to me to some extent. That was considered dangerous by the president, because I could have been perceived as the top person. That fear on his part makes it difficult for us to work together.

**What happened to the National Alliance? And is there a parallel with today's opposition?**

The Alliance was formed by opposition political parties at a time when we wanted to force on the government certain changes in matters of national defense. At that time, Ter Petrossian suggested that I become defense minister. I said I would if the Alliance found that appropriate. The Alliance drafted a proposal whereby a defense council was to be created, to include the president, certain ministers and also the representatives of certain opposition parties. They together would be responsible for defense—the defense of Armenia and Karabakh. I didn't think such a structure was right. I didn't find it workable that the president of the republic, who is by law accountable for defense, would find imposed upon him certain decisions with which he disagreed. I found it natural that any president would not agree to such a proposal. Of course, Ter Petrossian didn't. I agreed to serve as defense minister if none of the parties objected. They didn't. The whole time that I served, I felt that I had the support of not only the entire apparatus of government which I knew well, but also of all the opposition parties. The Alliance, having served its purpose, dissolved.

As for the rallies that are taking place today, they serve various purposes. Because the interior minister, and those in power generally, have been treating people any way they wish, people had begun to feel that there is some evil force in Armenia against which nothing is possible; that there are no options available in dealing with those in power. The first objective was to give people the feeling that they can do

something regarding government and to actually bring about some changes. And we succeeded, for example, by forcing the interior ministry to abandon its use of financial pressure against businessmen, which had been resulting in entrepreneurs leaving Armenia.

The third objective was to ensure democratic elections in Armenia. I don't think we've guaranteed that yet. The elections will still be quite complicated and the local administrations and those in power will probably use pressure and fraud to bring in their people.

The final objective, the matter of early elections, has already lost its validity, because there are just a few months left until parliamentary elections, anyway.

**Are there elements among the opposition parties who fear your popularity?**

Speaking of parties is difficult in Armenia. There are individuals in Armenia who refer to me in much the same way they refer to Levon Ter Petrossian and the others. That is, since I have been in positions of power, they hold me responsible.

**Do you consider that there are viable candidates for president, other than yourself?**

There is no question that the incumbent here, as in any country, enjoys an advantage. But there are many who enjoy a great deal of name recognition among the people. Besides myself, Paruir Hairikian enjoys popularity, as does Raffi Hovannisian. People remember Karen Demirjian and the old days of bread and butter and caviar, with nostalgia. Arshak Zadoyan's name and Davit Vartanian's name are well known.

It must be said that in that sense, we are in far better shape than Georgia, or even Russia. To find five or six recognizable faces in such a small country, is positive and a resource for Armenia.

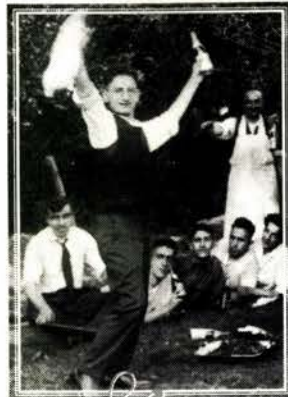
**If Levon Ter Petrossian's Armenian National Movement has at most 60 of the current parliament's 240 members, what does that say about the opposition's inability to push through its own agenda?**

Remember that this parliament was elected in the last days of the Soviet Union, when people were not elected according to a party platform. Simply put, a mound of individuals were elected. Of the 240 members, a maximum of 100-140 show up to the sessions. The remainder can be considered a swamp that can be moved, or pushed or bought. Until this parliament is revamped, and the size is reduced and until the parliamentarians become professionals with no other commitments, this situation will be difficult to improve. ■

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# OIL MAY DEAL KARABAKH A BAD HAND

By **GARINE ZEITLIAN**

**A**fter three years of negotiations with three different Azerbaijani administrations, the four billion dollar production sharing contract between Azerbaijan's state oil company SOCAR and a Western consortium was signed in Baku on September 20. The identity of the key guests at the signing ceremony in Gulistan Palace and the timing of the October 4 attempted coup led by Azerbaijan's Prime Minister Surat Husseinov betray the underlying political turmoil shrouding "the oil deal of the century." Present were a representative

of the Russian Ministry of Energy and Fuels, US Deputy Energy Secretary Bill White, Ilham Aliev, the son of the Azeri president, who is SOCAR's vice-president for foreign relations and the head of the Azeri negotiating team, and President Gaidar Aliev himself.


A day before the ceremony, in a statement to the US Central Intelligence Agency's foreign press monitoring service (FBIS), Fikret Jafarov, chief of resource planning and utilization at Azerbaijan's State Committee on Ecology (who later joined the opposition in the October 4 coup attempt), said that legislation pending in Parliament would give SOCAR sole ownership of all petroleum resources in the country. Observers believe that Jafarov had indirectly referred to the increasing fear in

Azerbaijan that SOCAR's eventual privatization and its partnership with a Western consortium may jeopardize the state's jurisdiction over its own resources.

The deal covers the development of three Caspian Sea oil and natural gas fields by oil companies who will share production costs: SOCAR (20 percent), Russia's state-owned LUKoil (10 percent), British Petroleum (BP) (17.127 percent), Norway's Statoil (8.563 percent), Turkey's state-owned TPAO (1.75 percent), the private Saudi companies Delta and Nimir (1.68 percent) and five American companies—Amoco (17.01 percent), Pennzoil (9.82 percent), Ramco Energy (2.08 percent), UNOCAL (9.52 percent) and McDermott (2.45 percent). Production is expected in 1997, pending the construction of export pipelines—an issue which raises geostrategic considerations involving Iran, Turkey and Russia.

Over the past few months, the American members of the consortium spent millions lobbying for US assistance to Azerbaijan while polishing Azerbaijan's image in the media to influence the legislative process in Washington. One sign of their effectiveness is the postponement of the vote on the Humanitarian Corridor Act in Congress which would have prohibited the provision of US aid to any country impeding the

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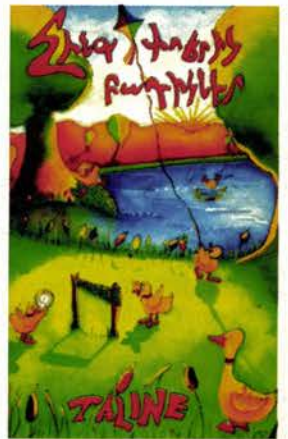
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New York—not to put up “jurisdictional and transit roadblocks” against the implementation of the deal.

Nevertheless, throughout September, the Russian Foreign Ministry questioned the legitimacy of the Caspian deal and even criticized LUKoil and Russia’s own Energy and Fuels Ministry for their support of the agreement. Foreign Ministry officials argued that the Caspian Sea, a landlocked body of water, is not governed by international maritime protocols. They quoted Soviet-era treaties—signed with Iran in 1921 and 1940—that stipulate that all countries along the Caspian should share its resources. On October 9, in a position paper circulated at the UN, Russia stated that it does not recognize Azerbaijan’s unilateral actions.

Intelligence sources state that, in order to soften Russia’s stance on the oil deal, the West might take a new approach on the Karabakh conflict. So far, the CSCE Minsk Group and Russia have been competing for primacy in the design of the Karabakh peace plan where the ‘winner’ would be assured influence in the area. Russia insists on the deployment of Russian or CIS troops in the war zone, while the CSCE prefers its own multinational forces.

In view of Russia’s posturing on the Azeri oil deal, the West might now be

prepared to accept significant Russian or CIS troop presence in CSCE multinational forces, if Russia, in exchange, would allow the oil deal to go through.

Russia probably won’t—not yet, anyway. It may even help derail the Karabakh peace process in order to ‘demonstrate’ its resolve on the Caspian deal. After all, although “the oil deal of the century” is now only an unpalatable piece of paper, it may, given peace in Karabakh, turn into an undesirable economic and political scenario. While Russian Foreign Ministry officials criticize Azerbaijan’s unilateral negotiation with the West and express their dissatisfaction with the mere 10 percent that LUKoil will receive in this deal, the real issue remains Russian fears of losing to western influence in the region.

Then, there is the issue of routing the pipelines which will create another set of problems involving the same players. Again, this is a double-edged sword for Armenia. There is the chance, that given peace, an oil pipeline will be built through Armenia. But then, the peace process can be delayed for all of the reasons stated here.

As the Russian-American struggle for influence in the Caucasus becomes more acute, Azerbaijan may lose its dreams of oil, Armenia its dreams of peace, and they may all come tumbling down on Karabakh. ■

delivery of American humanitarian aid to another country. The other sign is the recent efforts in Congress to repeal Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act which names Azerbaijan as the target of US sanctions for its blockade against Armenia and Karabakh.

But matters go deeper than this. The administration of US President Bill Clinton, in view of BP and LUKoil benefits from the oil deal, has begun to warm up to Azerbaijan. US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott appears to be the key player in the rapprochement with Aliev.

In early September, Ilham Aliev met with the National Security Council staff. Soon after, US Vice-President Al Gore met with President Aliev during the UN population conference in Cairo. Gore stated that the US saw a connection between American geostrategic interests in the Caucasus and Western Asia and the project to develop and transport Azeri oil. They discussed the American role in the development and exploitation of Caspian oil and US economic assistance to Azerbaijan.

The US has several aims: the marginalization of LUKoil’s role in the venture—a role which Aliev himself created upon coming to power as Russia’s man on the spot—which involves one third of SOCAR’s original 30 percent share; the strengthening of the American companies’ standing to prevent BP’s exclusive development or drilling of a particular field; and a lead role in the supervision of operations and routing of pipelines.

In turn, Aliev is using his boosted image in the West and the completion of this income-generating deal to assuage his arch rivals at home and to revive the country’s blemished economy. While in New York in September to deliver a speech at the UN 49th General Assembly, Aliev met with Clinton. Diplomatic sources close to Aliev claimed that Clinton asked Yeltsin—also in

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# ALMOST DEJA-VU

## What the Ingush Didn't Learn from Karabakh

Text and Photos

By **FELIX CORLEY**

**T**here was something all too familiar: women, their faces haunted by a look of hidden agony, tell of how their menfolk had been taken from them, killed, beaten, taken hostage; how there has been no news of them for months or years. They show photographs of their menfolk, wearing their best clothes or their uniforms, in the classic poses beloved by Soviet photographers. The women bring a cup of tea, some biscuits and fruit, although I know they have little on which to survive.

This is not Karabakh, but it could have

been. This is Russia's troubled southern border along the northern Caucasus. The women are Ingush, driven from their homes

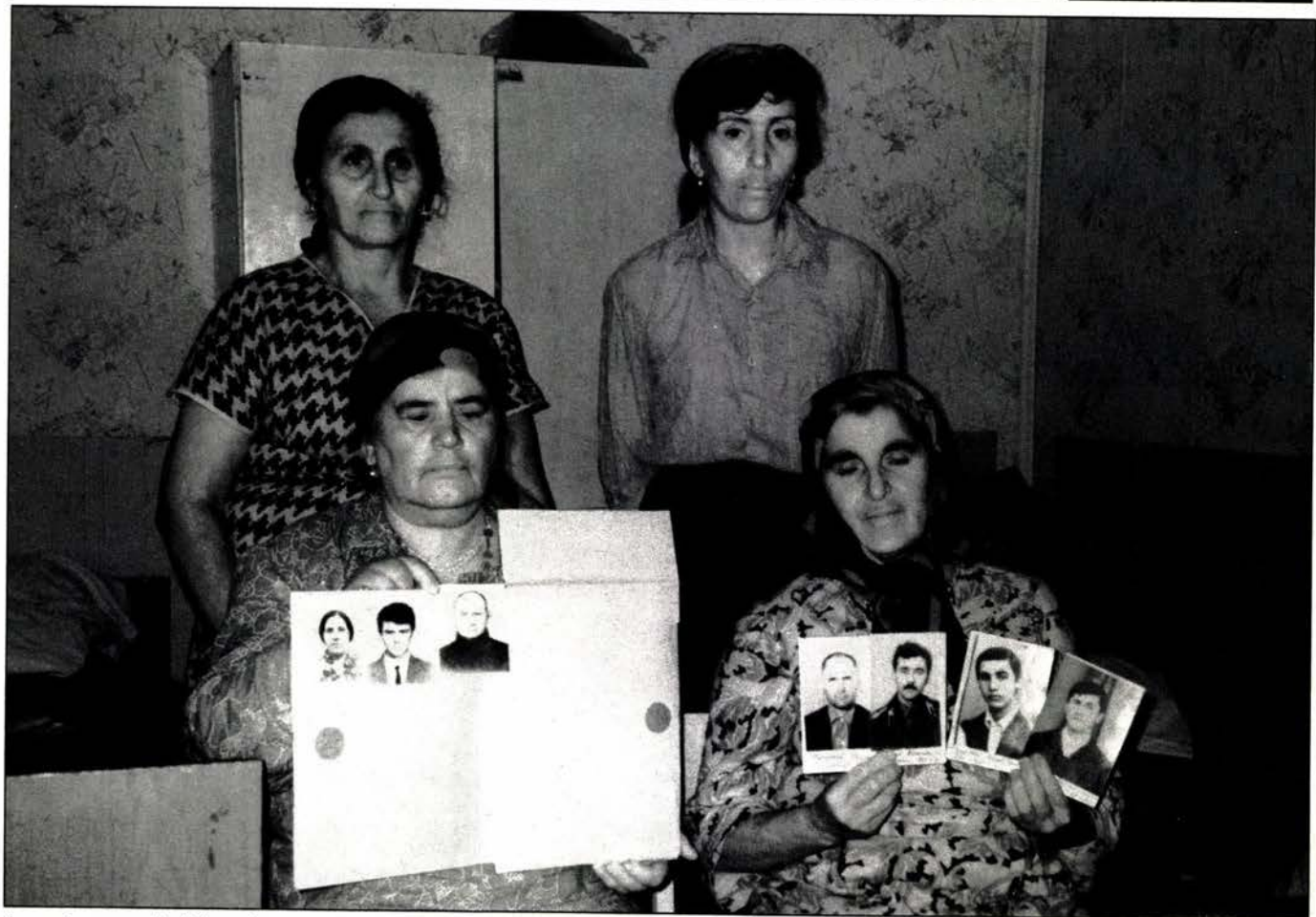
in the Prigorodny district by the North Ossetian forces with the active support of Russian troops. For years, the Ingush—a majority in that district—had suffered harassment and discrimination at the hands of the North Ossetians. Since late 1992, the Ingush had peacefully campaigned for the district to be taken away from North Ossetian jurisdiction and handed back to the Ingush.

If this sounds familiar, it is. The parallels between the Ingush of Prigorodny district and the Armenians of Karabakh are striking—to everyone except the Ingush. Both suffered at the hands of their local



**Ingush populated regions.**

*Deported Ingush from the Prigorodny District of North Ossetia have been forced into Ingush-Chechnia where they have declared an independent Ingushetia. North Ossetia and Ingush-Chechnia are both autonomous republics within the Russian Federation.*



Ingush women holding photographs of their missing husbands and sons.



**Ingush deportee children in a refugee camp.**

rulers during the Soviet era. Both saw concerted attempts, with the tacit support of the Kremlin, to drive them from their homes as the Soviet Union collapsed—but with one crucial difference—the Armenians fought back; the Ingush didn't—the Prigorodny district is a remarkable lesson in what might have happened to the people of Karabakh.

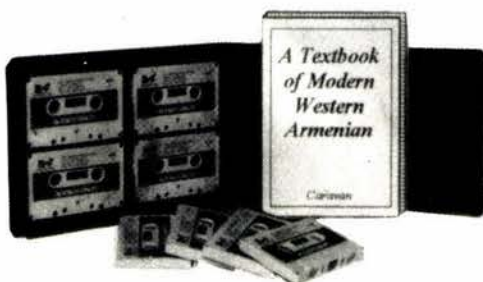
The Prigorodny district—home to some 75,000 people, mostly Ingush—descended rapidly into war in late 1992. The North Ossetian authorities claimed the Ingush were preparing raids against them with the help of their ethnic brothers, the Chechens. Irregular bands of North Ossetian thugs, backed by Russian troops, moved in. Hundreds, most of them Ingush, died in bitter clashes. Within days, 60,000 Ingush were driven across the border into Ingushetia with little more than their clothes. Ingush homes were looted and burned. Their charred remains litter the district today. During and after the fighting, North Ossetian forces seized hundreds of Ingush. Many still remain unaccounted for.

Two years on and many of the Ingush refugees—or deportees, as they insist they should be called—have moved in with relatives in Ingushetia. Those who have no family have been crammed into wooden huts in makeshift camps on the edge of Nazran, the capital of Ingushetia. In summer, frequent rains turn the settlements into seas of mud. In winter, the huts are freezing. Water is fetched from a standpipe at the edge of the camp. Life is miserable, with little in the way of state handouts and only limited help from foreign charities. But the deportees ask for nothing—except the right to return to their homes.

Tension continues to rise in Ingushetia at Russia's failure to secure the deportees' return. Agreements between the Russian federal government and the local governments in North Ossetia and Ingushetia about returning the deportees to their homes have consistently and successfully been blocked by North Ossetia.

Ask the Ingush and they will tell you their nation will not put up with another

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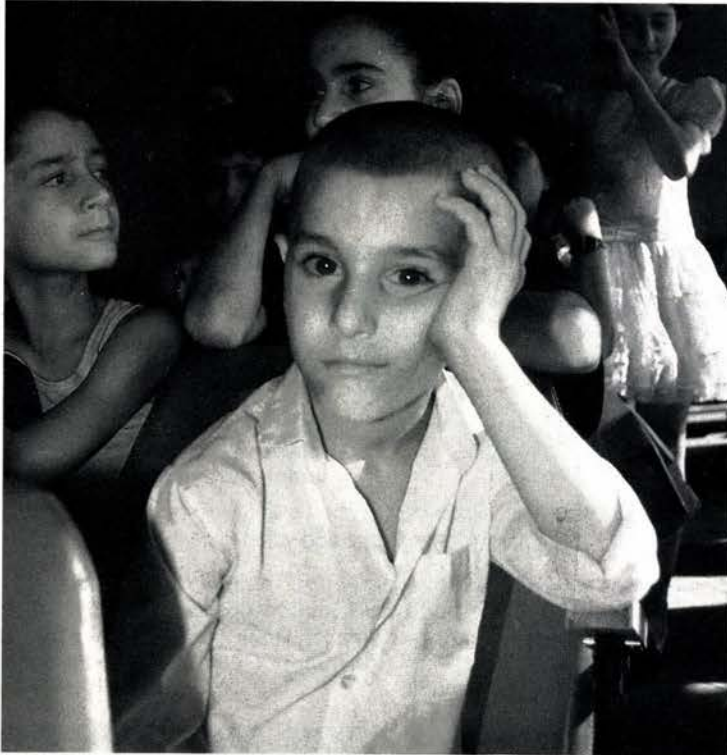
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Ingush graveyard on the edge of Nazran.

winter passing without the injustice done by the North Ossetians being righted. They mutter darkly about weapons being collected. But, for all their bravado and reputation for military prowess, I could find no evidence that any Ingush had seriously considered fighting. They don't appear to have the discipline, the weapons nor the strategy. The fearsome reputation that the Ingush and, especially, their brother Chechens have throughout the region was found wanting in their hour of need.

Why didn't the Ingush fight back in 1992? "We did, but the North Ossetians had so much more weaponry. We are just a small nation. There are lots more of them." Both points are valid, but what about the parallels with Karabakh? After all, the Armenians were outnumbered and outgunned, yet they fought off the Azeris.

The answer is strange. "We don't like Armenians. Armenians always live in the best places. Where there's money to be made, you can be sure to find Armenians."

Unlike the Armenians in Karabakh who have been disciplined, serious and have had clear goals, it appears the Ingush will remain forever barred from the Prigorodny district they once called home. The women will wait in vain for news of husbands and sons disappeared without trace. Those who died in the 1992 clashes and whose bodies lie in the rain-sodden graveyard at the edge of Nazran will have died in a lost cause.

"I believe that now there will be more effective measures to ensure the refugees' return," Ingush vice-president Boris Agapov tells me bravely, but naively. Without pressure from Moscow, the North Ossetians will never agree to allow the refugees back. They know that if they can keep the Ingush out, they will be able to claim total ownership over the area they have controlled only since the 1940's—ethnic cleansing brought to a successful conclusion.

*Felix Corley writes about minorities and religion in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. He is based in London.*

# BEAMING AUTHORS FOR DOUBLEDAY

## Shapian Innovates The World of Public Relations

By PAT MCDONNELL TWAIR

**A**mong fellow public relations specialists, Betty Shapian is known as "Dean of West Coast Publicists." The title is a tribute to Shapian's more than 25 years as promoter of best-selling authors.

"Betty brings class to the Los Angeles publicity corps," stated veteran public relations specialist, Pat Flynn. "Everyone in the field respects her and most of us have learned from her."

Being on a first-name basis with legendary authors and arranging global interviews for them via a Culver City satellite studio is commonplace for Shapian, the youngest of four daughters born to Berj and Zvart Shapian.

Her parents were married in Diyarbekir, Turkey, in the midst of the Turkish massacres of 1914 and immediately fled to Alexandria, Egypt, where Berj found work as a diamond setter. Four of Berj's brothers, and Zvart's parents as well, were killed in the Genocide and Berj worked tirelessly to take his wife, her brother and infant daughter to the United States, and safety.

Eventually the Shapian family settled in Ridgefield, New Jersey. When asked if it was difficult to grow up in an immigrant family, Shapian replied, "You bet. How do you think I felt when my mother couldn't even read my report cards? My older sister always signed them."

As a child, Shapian escaped reality by reading books. "I knew that when I grew up, I wanted to be around books. Becoming a librarian came to mind, but once I was aware of the world of publishing, I set my goals on that," she said.

Shapian was introduced to Manhattan in her teens when she spent summer vacations working in her father's diamond-setting studio. As soon as she completed high school—equipped with secretarial skills—she commuted daily to Manhattan calling on publishing agencies for employment.

She landed her first job—as a Girl Friday—at Doubleday's foreign

department. At night, she studied English literature at Columbia University and later at New School.

Shapian's big break came when she was promoted to the publicity department where for the next eight years she was the right hand of Doubleday President Nelson Doubleday.

One of the highlights of this period was five months spent in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where former President Dwight D. Eisenhower was working on his memoirs.

"I remember Eisenhower as a very gentle man," she said.

The editor would go over the galleys of the autobiography with Eisenhower and whenever he asked him to elaborate on a point, Shapian took dictation.

"I can't tell you how exciting it was to be in the same room hearing him describe the events of D-Day or crises during the White House years," she continued.

It was about this time that Max Shulman, author of *Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys*, named the heroine of his book, *Anybody Gota Match?*, Polly Shapian, in honor of his favorite Doubleday publicist.

By 1967, publishers were experimenting with national tours for their authors. In the case of Doubleday, the publisher decided to open a West Coast office to accommodate its touring writers.

Shapian was chosen to head the project. She now admits that she was scared and a bit overwhelmed.

"I didn't know a single person in Los Angeles, and this was the first publicity office on the West Coast for any publishing house. It was up to me to set the perimeters of my work and decide how best to serve the authors," she recalled.

By then, television had invaded

American households and "publishers were becoming aware that instead of being threatened by TV, they could use it to publicize their books," Shapian explained.

Her first author on the West Coast was attorney Louis Nizer. "I met the world in a way I never would have otherwise," Shapian mused. "Every headline-maker in the world came through Los Angeles and I arranged their interviews and drove them in my car."

Just a few of these were Averell Harriman ("a courtly and deliciously genteel man"), Peter Ustinov, Pierre Salinger, Victor Borge, Garson Kanin, James Michener, Irving Stone, David Attenborough, Arthur Hailey and Erma Bombeck, who remains a personal friend.

"My only regret," she sighed, "is that I didn't keep a guest book in my car. Imagine all those comments and signatures in one book."

And she's still driving the same black convertible that delivered so many notables to interviews.

In 1986, Shapian introduced publishers to Satellite Media Tours, a new electronic

publicity tool. "Instead of driving authors to television studios, I would now have them sit in a studio equipped with a satellite uplink where we beam conversations with reporters to any city in the world," she explained.

Prior to 1986, satellites could not be used for commercial purposes; but with deregulation, all this changed. Her firm, Shapian and Associates, is an arm of On the Scene Productions which specializes in electronic press kits, video news releases (VNRs) and celebrity interviews.

Her latest project involved recruiting international broadcasters to use VNRs as news features for events such as Woodstock '94, the Three Tenors Concert in Los Angeles in conjunction with the World Cup Soccer matches.

One cannot help but wonder what those Diyarbekir refugees would have said if eight decades ago, if someone had predicted that some day their daughter would achieve success as an independent woman in a strange land named Hollywood.

*Twair is a free-lance writer living in Los Angeles.*



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## TECHNOLOGY

# GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE

## Jet Line's critical venture

By **ROGER KUPELIAN**

It's Thursday afternoon and there is an influx of plastic shopping bags into Norik Satamian's Air Cargo office in Glendale. Freshly ground coffee, chocolate candies, boxes of bubble gum, baby clothing, sneakers and feminine hygiene products quickly disappear into boxes which are sealed for a seven to ten-day journey to Armenia. Packages also collect in Air Cargo's Hollywood and North Hollywood offices, and along with the boxes accumulated in Glendale, they are transported to the warehouse of the Inglewood-based freight company, Jet Line. They are stored there until the next cargo flight out of Los Angeles International Airport.

back home. According to him, packages then weighed 300 pounds on average and included television sets, refrigerators and other household appliances, either to sell or to keep. Today, customers send smaller packages of basic products. However, the overall volume of shipment has grown. "Cargo is the most important thing right now for a landlocked country like Armenia," Hovsepian said, as he finished typing instructions into his computer.

Diaspora Armenians who maintain strong ties with relatives and friends in the homeland form today's customer base. Air Cargo, which was founded by Satamian six years ago in close cooperation with Hovsepian, acts as an agent for Jet Line. It accepts and prepares individual packages and delivers them in bulk to Hovsepian.

Larger Jet Line customers like the United Armenian Fund (UAF) have sent planeloads of aid packages such as medical equipment to Armenia. "UAF's shipment was so big, there had to be a joint sea and air transport made to Helsinki, and from there by airplane to Yerevan," Hovsepian said. Other clients have included the United States Agency for International Development and other US government offices which have sent relief supplies as well as equipment for the Metsamor nuclear power plant which is being renovated.

The absence of clear trade and business laws in Armenia has made it tough to work there. And the situation may not change in the near future. "The first business convention I attended had something on all businesses except cargo transport. But without it, how can any other businesses do anything?" Hovsepian observed.

"Before it used to be easier to get in. There was better government control. Now we have to do most of the work including customs clearance," Hovsepian said. As a response, Hovsepian co-founded Gut, an Armenia-based joint venture which handles all local matters including home delivery. In the days when Jet Line handled all phases of freight transport, recipients in Armenia picked up their packages at the airport.

Today, fuel shortages may cause delays of a day or two. Otherwise reliability is at an all-time high, especially since Jet Line stopped using Aeroflot planes and switched to a hub in Helsinki where it charters its own planes. ■



Koko Hovsepian of Jet Line

Things have not always been this way. Koko Hovsepian, whose company, Jet Line, has been shipping cargo to Armenia for 15 years, remembers that a decade ago, homeland Armenians who visited the United States forwarded big-ticket items

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# OF GREENHOUSES AND BIOPARKS

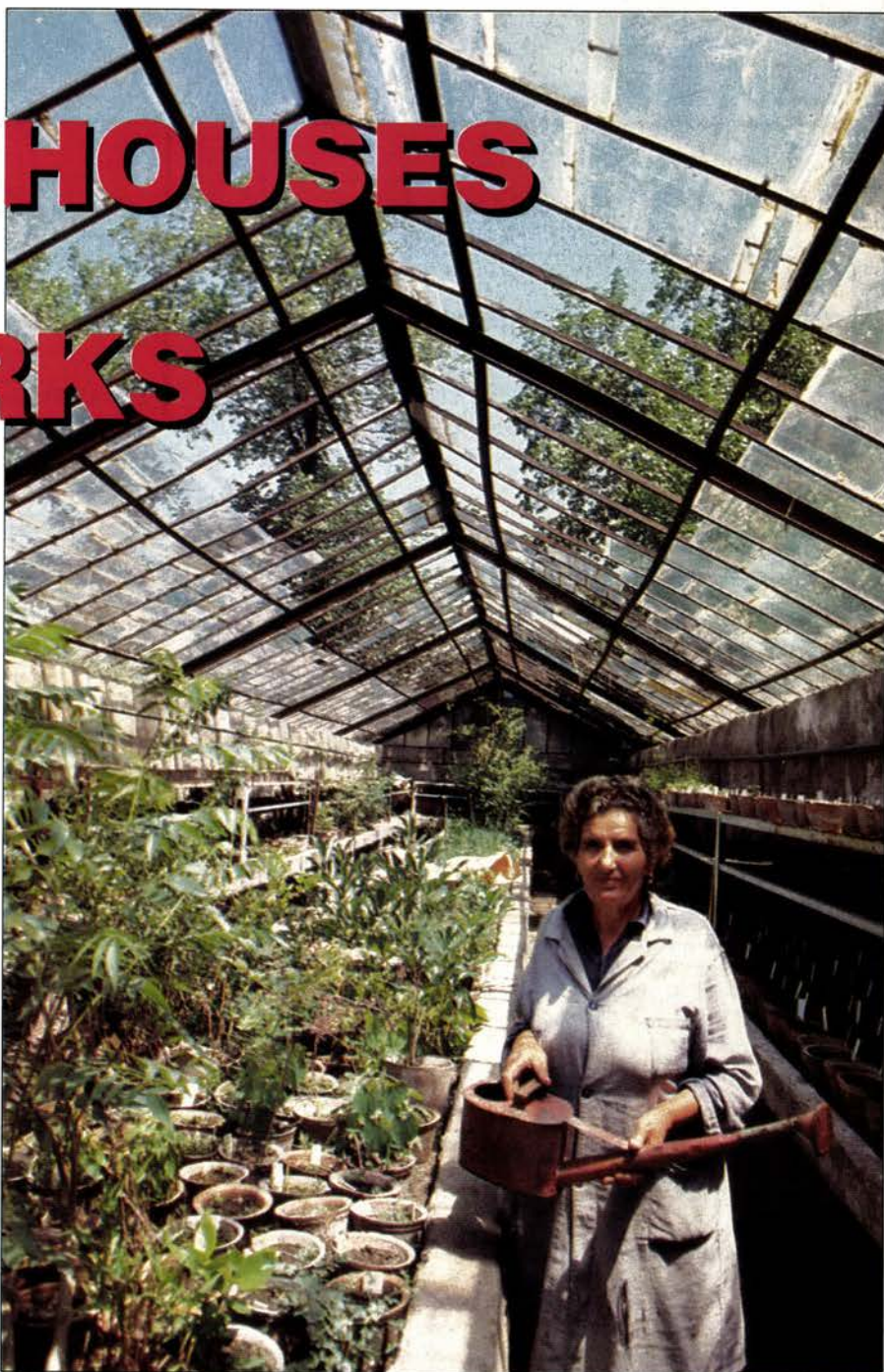
## A Walk Through Yerevan's Botanical Gardens

By **PETER KELEGIAN**

PHOTOS BY MKHITAR KHACHATRIAN

**J**ust down the road from the Yerevan Zoo lie the 100 beautifully landscaped hectares of the Yerevan Botanical Gardens. Containing 5,000 plant species from around the world, the gardens have been hit hard by Armenia's tough times. Lacking heat, 1,000 of the 1,200 tropical and subtropical species in its collection froze to death in the winter of 1992-93; the rest were not expected to last through the spring of 1994. Once dotted with trees, its attractive public relaxation area was reduced to a field of stumps in a single night's orgy of sawing and chopping by unscrupulous, firewood-hungry locals. A giant energy-guzzling greenhouse lies silent and empty, not far from the unfinished skeleton of the international research and conference center that was to be an important part of Director Ashot Charchohlian's biopark idea.

It is an idea that might seem ambitious. Yet, it's natural. The gardens are already home to the primary research



laboratories of the Armenian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Botany, including facilities for the study of plant geography, taxonomy and physiology, as well as for investigations into possible economic uses of Armenia's plant resources. But the funding has all but dried up and three of the gardens' leading botanists have left, temporarily they insist, to pursue research opportunities at the world renowned St. Petersburg Botanical Gardens. Once-extensive contacts with botanical gardens in the rest of the former Soviet Union and the West have withered as postal and telephone linkages have become too unreliable or expensive to maintain. Communication



with the outside rarely consists of more than an occasional letter or scientific article hitching a ride with an arriving or departing foreigner. One of the few exceptions is an ongoing cooperative effort between the botanical gardens and the Fund for Armenian Relief's environmental services group to develop a program for the protection and study of Armenia's rare and wild grains, some of which are thought to be of potential use in agriculture.



Washington palm, a struggling young Sequoia, and hundreds of very dead, young tropicals, Charchohlian pushes the conversation into the future. He speaks of plans to maintain important professional contacts with his colleagues in the Eurasia Association of Botanical Gardens (formerly the Council of Botanical Gardens of the USSR), to reestablish the international seed and herb exchange programs that gave the gardens a solid international reputation, to market his scientists' know-how and to make the gardens self-supporting. And he speaks about his biopark idea—a grand plan to painstakingly

**A** tour of the gardens reveals a still-magnificent physical space worthy of protection on its aesthetic merits alone. A wide boulevard flanked by stately junipers bisects the gardens. Smaller lanes and paths branch off to wind easily through the gardens' geographical zones—each with collections of plants from North America, East Asia, Europe, Crimea, Siberia, the Caucasus and Armenia. Never closed to the public and despite the recent

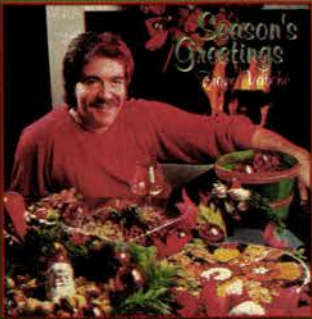
carnage, the gardens remain one of the most accessible and restful settings within Yerevan's often drab, highly urbanized environs.

**S**tanding at the entrance to a room where vigil is kept over the last of the gardens' surviving warm weather plants in a crumbling, 45-year-old greenhouse—next to the corpse of a huge


incorporate animals into their natural botanical settings. Part zoo, part botanical garden, part wildlife theme park, part research mecca, a biopark, Charchohlian speculates, could become a valuable component of Armenia's cultural, scientific and economic rebirth—when that rebirth finally comes.

*Peter Kelegian is a free-lance writer living in New York.*





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## By ARA PIRANIAN

Photos by EDMOND TERA KOPIAN

In its second game of the 1996 European Championship, Armenia tied Cyprus 0-0 at Yerevan, October 12, thus putting them on the boards with one point. The team has zero wins, one loss and one tie. If the team qualifies, which means it must place first or second in its group, it will participate in the final rounds of competition scheduled for June of 1996. The 1992 champion was Sweden.

Armenia will compete against Cyprus again on November 16. In 1995, the team will compete against Macedonia on March 25, Spain on April 26, Spain again on June 7, Denmark on August 16, Macedonia on September 6, Belgium on October 7 and Denmark on November 15. There are six groups with six teams each and two groups with five teams each. Armenia belongs to

group two among such contenders as Spain and Denmark with six and four points respectively. Belgium is presently in third place with three points, due mainly to its 2-0 victory over Armenia in September. But 5,000 Armenian spectators from France, England, Belgium—and New York—were at the game and their chants of "Armenia" and "Karabakh" drowned out the local Belgian fans.

The Belgian press referred to the Armenian team as the "Great Unknown" in the international soccer forum. Although a member of the International Federation of



During the Belgium-Armenia game, Armenian player avoiding slide tackle (top) and dribbling past Belgian defense (left).

Football Association, until the spring of 1994, it had only played in three international meets. The Armenian team brings together players from Banants, Ararat, Homenetmen, Shirak, Lokomotiv Moskva, Boruspol, Metallurg Zaporozhe, Zenith, St. Petersburg,

Kotaik and Aznavor, and is coached by Edvard Markarov, a former Soviet player with quite a reputation. ■

# LOOKING IN FROM THE INSIDE

Activist Levon Abrahamian on Anthropology, Folklore and Politics

By TALINE VOSKERITCHIAN

**O** conversation with anthropologist Levon Abrahamian opens a window onto a world of dissimilar elements—molecular biophysics and ethnography, humor and rigor, academic training and artistic expression, political activism and distanced observation, focused analysis and gentle spiritualism, detail and theme.

Abrahamian began as a molecular biophysicist at Yerevan State University. "From an early age, though, I had an interest in India and in religion," he says. After teaching physics at Yerevan State University for two years, he enrolled at the Institute of Ethnography in Moscow where he specialized in cultural anthropology. For the next 12 years, between 1978 and 1990, he taught anthropology in Armenia, conducted research in the culture of the Australian aborigines, and published in Armenian, Russian and Western journals. During this time, he was also affiliated with a number of cultural projects in Armenia, most notably the Parajanov Museum in Yerevan. A founding member of the museum, personal friend of the film maker, and specialist in the culture of the Caucasus, Abrahamian has authored a definitive study on Parajanov, "Myth and ritual in film structure: Notes on the poetics of Parajanov," which will be published this year in Armenia in an anthology of essays on the film maker. Abrahamian has also been associated with the Boston-based Armenian Cultural Project/Country Roads, Inc., which is planning a traveling exhibit of Armenian folk art and ancient treasures. He is the principal editor of a companion volume, Armenian Folk Art and Traditional Culture, to be published by Indiana University Press in 1997.

Abrahamian's broad knowledge of the culture of the Caucasus also extends to everyday life. "For many years," Abrahamian says, "my field was the streets and squares of Yerevan." When he talks about the streets of Yerevan, it is the Karabakh demonstrations of 1988 that he has in mind. "With a notebook and a pencil," he says, "I observed and documented—rumors, anecdotes, impromptu analyses, people's accounts of their dreams, hunger strikes, speeches." The result is a book-length study to be published soon, *People in the Square: National Movements in the USSR as Festival*. A second volume, written with Harutiun Marutian and Stephanie Platz, *History in Pictures: Posters and Banners As a Mirror of the Karabakh Movement*, is also close to completion.

But Abrahamian was also an activist. He was one of the key organizers of Galina Staravoitova's 1989 electoral campaign as People's Deputy from Armenia to the USSR Supreme Soviet; until recently Staravoitova was Russian President Boris Yeltsin's advisor on ethnic issues.

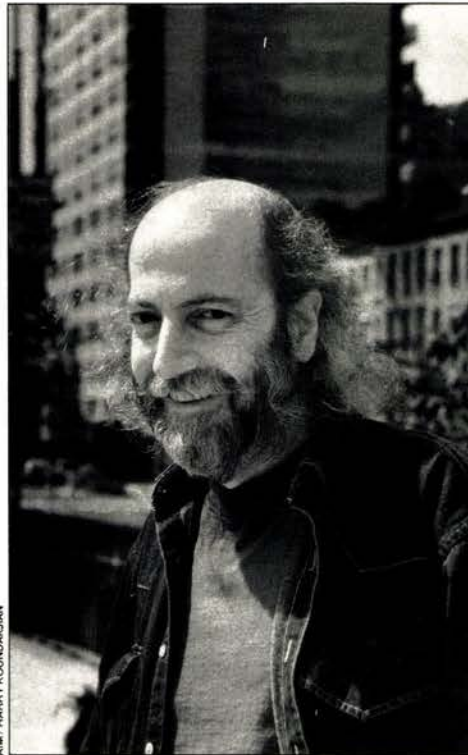
Abrahamian's life-work is as diverse as it is detailed, as layered as it is expansive. Its often contradictory elements, though, seem to

inhabit a shared space. I suspect it is this space Abrahamian has in mind when he talks of his work-in-progress, *Zruytsner Tsari Mod* (Conversations by the Tree). "It's a reflective work," he says, "meant to take the reader back in time when science, magic, religion and art were undifferentiated. It is organized in 366 paragraphs; I have written 150 paragraphs so far. Colleagues have described Zruytsner as 'poetic anthropology,'" says Abrahamian. The coupling which this description suggests is echoed in much of Abrahamian's thinking.

Perhaps the best example of this is Abrahamian's account of how the Karabakh Movement became a field of study for him. At a certain point, two worlds—the archaic and the contemporary, the Australian aboriginal and the Armenian—intertwined. A similar meeting—this time, of specializations—is evident when Abrahamian talks about the historical sources of the Karabakh movement from a combined perspective of geography, history and anthropology. "Armenians often look at things very closely," he says. "We need to cultivate the opposite of myopia."

There is also the object of investigation itself. "My task as an anthropologist," says Abrahamian, "is to show the peculiarities of the events unfolding in Armenia, specifically during the first nine months, between February and November 1988." In this task, argues Abrahamian, the anthropologist is similar to a seer. "Knowing history, knowing some cultural regularities, and seeing what is going on," he says, "the anthropologist is a unique personality who can go to the roots of his or her society."

After teaching anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh and conducting research at the Kennan Institute in Washington, D.C., Abrahamian has just returned home. Although home is Yerevan, Abrahamian is very much, to use his words, a person "on the border" where cultures, dialects and perspectives talk to each other across the blockaded and darkened land of Armenia.



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*On the anthropology of the Karabakh Movement...* Very soon after its beginning, the Karabakh Movement began to develop along two paths—one national, the other social. For me, this change came very suddenly, when at a specific moment, I realized that I was in the middle of the archaic festivals about which I had authored a book in Russian 10 years ago. The first demonstrations were in Armenia and the festival in Armenia lasted a long time—nine months.

Armenians are very proud of the idea that they are the first—the first Christians, the first to grow apricots, and so on. They have a lot of reasons to think so. To be the first, from an anthropological point of view, means to be unusual. You have a range of things, but the first is always extraordinary. And in this sense, the events in Karabakh and Armenia between February and November, 1988, were extraordinary. The strikes were different from traditional ones because people found new and sophisticated ways of being perpetually on strike.

These nine months were the most important phase of the movement, the learning period. During this time, leaders were created, issues debated. A colleague who was visiting from Moscow was astonished that Armenian teenagers in the Square were speaking about human rights, international law, points of the Soviet constitution while youngsters elsewhere, in other parts of the USSR, were committing acts of hooliganism.

During this period, which came to its logical conclusion when the Parliament met in November 1988 in Opera House on Theater Square, civil society was built. The session was the peak of a kind of democracy similar to the archaic democracy of ancient Athens, which came into being not in an organized, pre-planned way but as an emotional, collective explosion. After this kind of peak, you cannot have anything more; life must return to "normal."

But while it lasted, the festival was characterized by a high degree of solidarity. Many tensions in society were either neutralized or reversed. The tension between city and village, for instance, has been very acute in Armenia. But when villagers flocked to Yerevan in February 1988, they were welcomed and invited into strangers' homes. Likewise, the long-standing tension between Armenian and Russian was minimized; it was the first and

only time in Armenia that one could speak any language as long as one had something to say. The tension between the able-bodied and the disabled was also neutralized. One day, during the demonstrations, a man who had had both legs amputated wanted to give a speech; they handed him the microphone. Then, as the man began to speak, the entire square squatted so that they could be the same height as the speaker...

People in Armenia look at the difficult conditions now and they say that the Karabakh Committee exploited the Karabakh issue to attain power, that the administration of [President Levon] Ter Petrossian has "betrayed" the Karabakh Movement. This is a most traditional response.

When the festival was on, the rules were different, but when Committee members left the Square and entered Parliament, things changed. It is not that Ter Petrossian betrayed Karabakh, but he entered a new game with new rules—or the same game with different rules.

The theme of betrayal has a powerful presence in Armenian thinking. We often say that our history is a history of betrayal. Our collective obsession with this theme is

closely related to the special problems of our geography. Yet other people's histories too, have betrayals.

**People in Armenia look at the difficult conditions now and they say that the Karabakh Committee exploited the Karabakh issue to attain power**

*The two Karabakh Movements...* From the beginning of the movement, there were two distinctive waves. In Karabakh, the aim was to use glasnost and perestroika to achieve national objectives. Armenians in Armenia wanted to use national objectives to achieve openness and social change. To this day, the movement in Karabakh is national and can be compared, typologically, to national liberation

movements, which have appeared in this region since medieval times. Historically, the Karabakh feudal lords and their vassals fought with Turkic and other Central Asian nomadic invaders who professed other religions; they often asked the Russian czar to help them. Structurally, what happened in February 1988 was similar. The Karabakh Movement plays such a crucial role in Armenian consciousness because it is a variation of a recurring model in Armenian history.

The Karabakh Movement in Karabakh was initially propelled by the ruling Communist elite. In Armenia, though, the

leaders of the movement were intellectuals—school teachers, lecturers, anthropologists, mathematicians.

During the first nine months, the Karabakh Movement in Armenia was highly individualized, and varied. Vazgen Manukian presented the anti-Russian, anti-Soviet stream; his speeches were short and sharp. Ashot Manucharian played an instrumental role in steering the movement from the national to the social; his speeches always dealt with the idea of structural changes in society. Levon Ter Petrossian presented the constitutional mode of thinking; his speeches were detailed and analytical. When he rose to the podium to speak in Theater Square, I often heard people laugh and say, "Now he will analyze!"

**Diaspora political parties and Karabakh...** When the Karabakh Movement began, traditional political parties in the Diaspora did not support it. But when the paths of the two Karabakh movements diverged, these parties gave the Karabakh Movement in Karabakh their support because it was a model of irredentism which is very specific to the thinking of the Diaspora. The Armenian Diaspora is the result of lost historical territories. So, for the Diaspora, the war in Karabakh has immense symbolic meaning.

For the people of Karabakh, though, the war is a war for survival. In Armenia, there is not this irredentist idea. The Armenians of Armenia say, "If we lose Karabakh, then we lose Zangezur, and then Meghri, and then... Yerevan." One war can have many interpretations.

**To imagine revolutionary schemes...** The Karabakh movement in Karabakh was a typical national liberation movement and therefore did not need any theory. There was and is a tremendous amount of organization and strategic planning. In Armenia, theoretical questions were very important. Of particular importance was the role played by mathematicians, most notably Vazgen Manukian. We can make an analogy here with the role the Jews played in the first and second Russian revolutions. Because they could not own land, the Jews were socially more mobile, more free. In a sense, mathematicians have no roots on our earth; they are abstract thinkers and are free to imagine revolutionary schemes. The Karabakh Movement of Armenia was in a sense colored by this theoretical quality which pervaded all layers of society.

**At the border...** Throughout history, Armenians have found themselves at the point where different worlds separate; they have found themselves at the border, so to speak—between East and West in Cilicia and in Nor Jugha, or between nomadic and

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sedentary cultures in Karabakh. And when the borders have shifted, they have shifted too. And so Armenians ask themselves, "Who are we?" This has been a persistent question for us. Asian or European? A nation with a special mission, as Vazgen Manukian said during his presidential campaign, or a nation like any other nation, as Ter Petrossian said during his presidential campaign? People call the peculiarities of our geography and history "the luck of the Armenians" and lament over it. But it is crucial for us to accept this condition and use it to our advantage.

*To whom does the Genocide belong?...*

It is also important that we look at historical events in geographical and anthropological contexts. Armenians at the end of the nineteenth century used the same strategy of national liberation that was being used in the Balkan Peninsula: organizing revolts in the Ottoman Empire to attract the attention of a Europe which would save them. This

model succeeded for Bulgaria and Greece because they were on the periphery of the Ottoman Empire. The Armenians were in the heart of the empire; they reaped horrible results.

This idea of specificity is also very important in the way in which we interpret and present our history. Next year, on the 80th anniversary of the Genocide, Armenia begins work on the Genocide Museum.

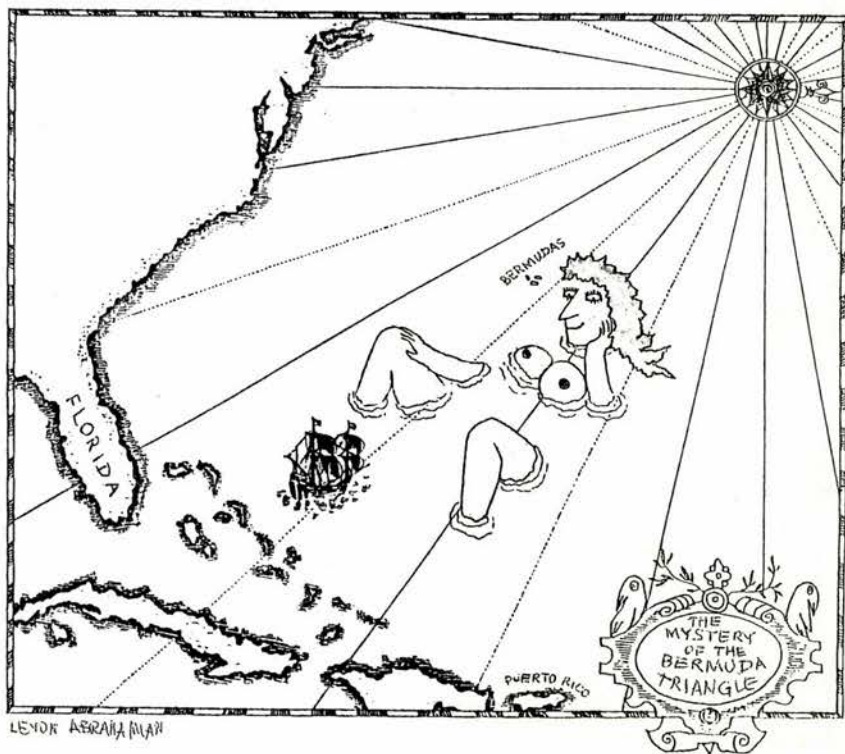
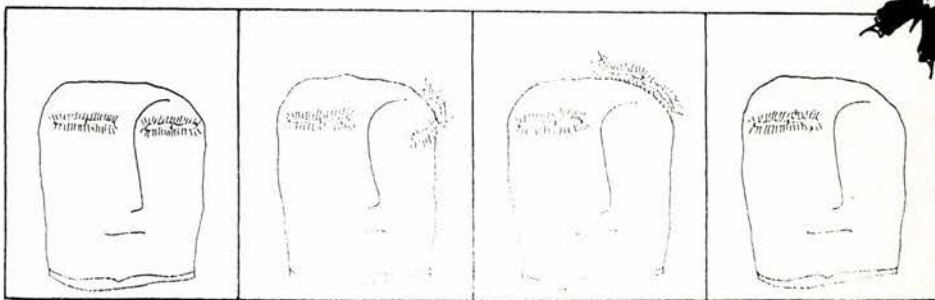
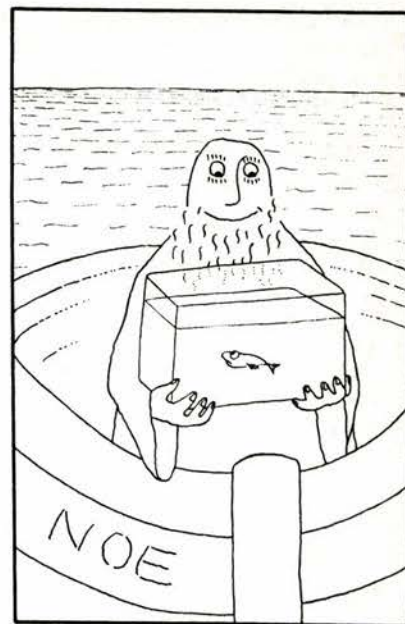
The question which must be addressed is: To whom does the tragedy of the nation belong? To us alone or to the world? It is important that when we organize this proposed museum, we present the

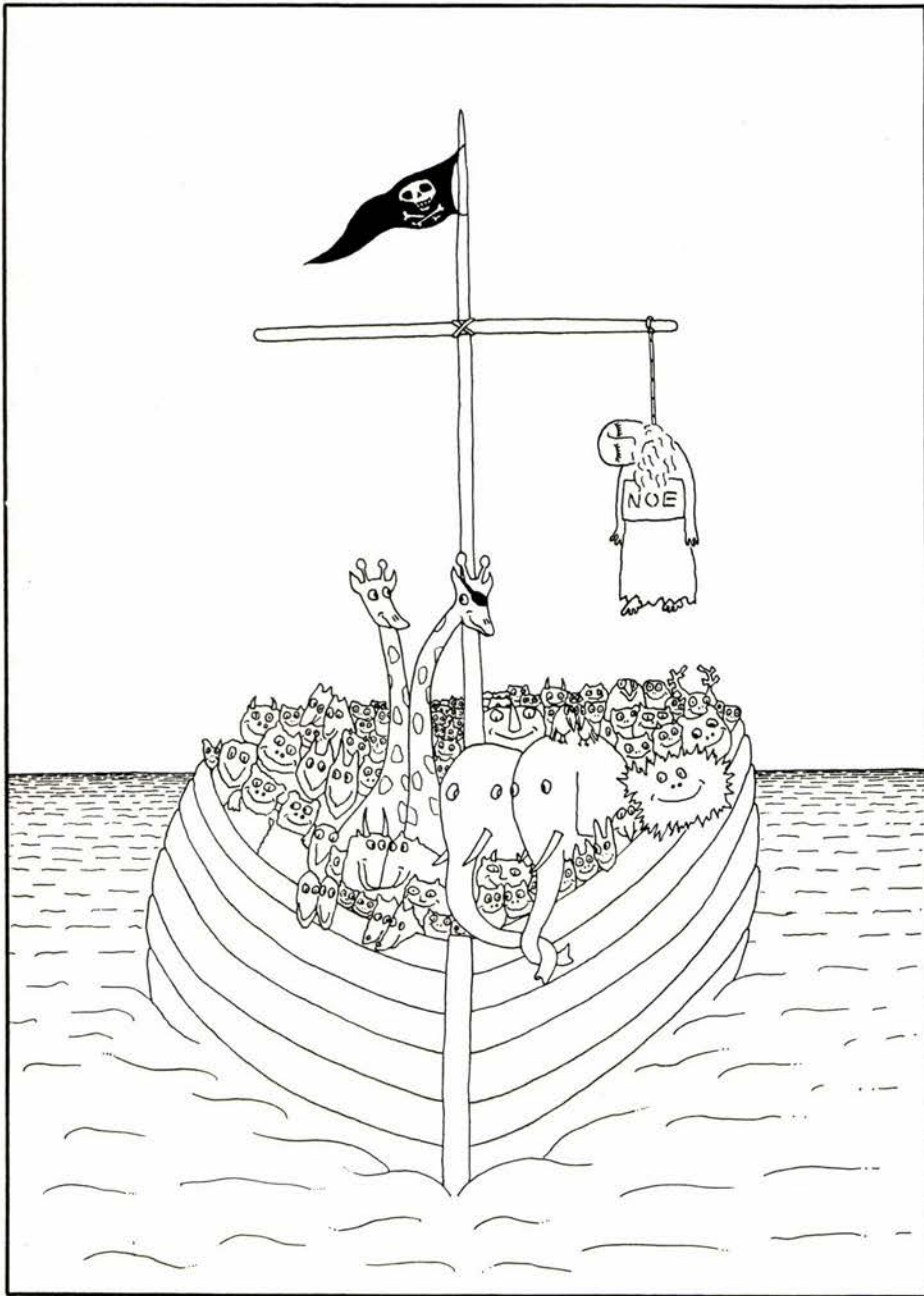
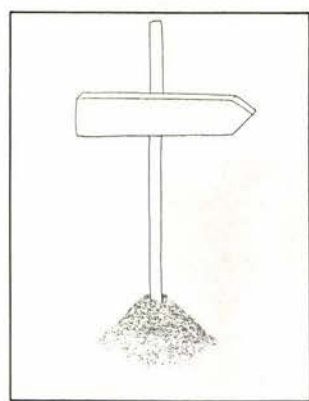
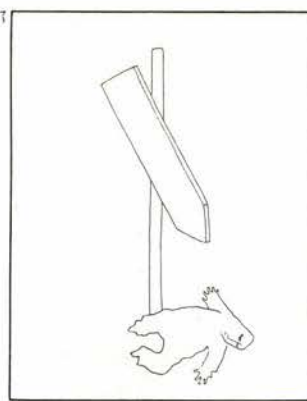
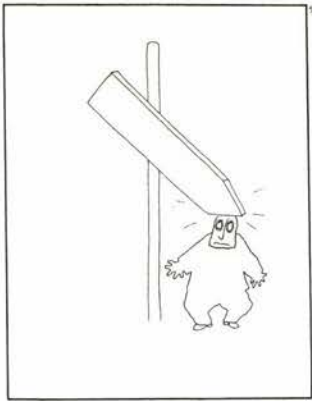
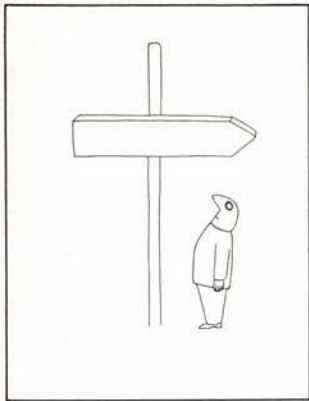
Genocide in its specificity but also in the context of human history.

There is another problem as well. The drafters of the preliminary proposals for the museum want everybody to know that ours was the first genocide of the century; they want to put everything in it—independence, the martyrs, Karabakh fedayees. You may put all these things in the museum, but you may end up losing the Genocide. ■

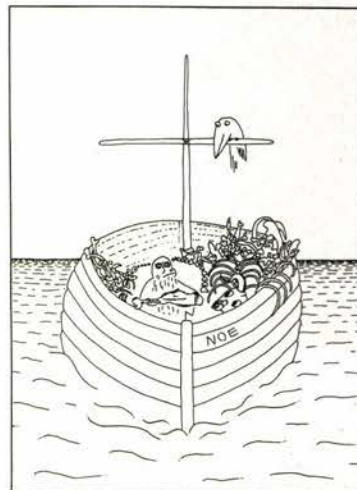
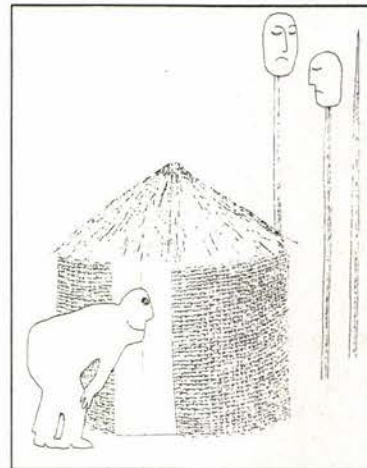
**In Karabakh, the aim was to use glasnost and perestroika to achieve national objectives. Armenians in Armenia wanted to use national objectives to achieve openness and social change.**

In addition to his academic, cultural and political work, Levon Abrahamian has responded to the unfolding of the Karabakh movement and democratization with a series of drawings. His wry, understated humor and detailed, clear line are evident in this selection.





LEON APHANIAN



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# STRUCTURES AND SCULPTURES

## The Changing Art of Rostom Voskianian

By ZAREH AREVSHATIAN

**F**illed with numerous paintings, photographs, Persian bronze statuettes, antique water faucets, 800-year-old spoons, newspaper clippings, paint brushes and canvases, Rostom Voskianian's apartment in Glendale, California, looks more like an artist's warehouse than a residence.

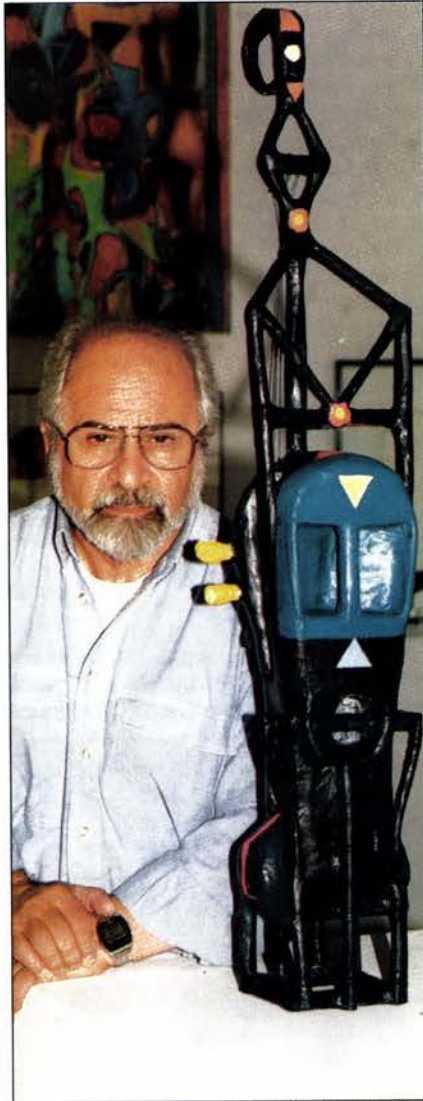
The son of a professional photographer, Voskianian was always fascinated by the intricacy of his father's work at the photography laboratory and often used his father's small sketchbook for inspiration. He also reworked creations by other artists by blending them with his individual vision.

Looking at his highly geometric paintings and sculpture, it is not hard to believe that Voskianian, born in Tabriz, Iran, spent most of his life working as an architect.

Voskianian was responsible for the design and the construction of the Armenian Club Hall in Tehran which received high praise from Charles Aznavour for its excellent acoustics. He also contributed to the 1975 renovation of Saint Thaddeus Armenian Church in northern Iran.

However, his biggest and most challenging project was the Ararat Athletic Stadium in Tehran, a 10,000-seat complex which was erected between 1970 and 1975. It includes soccer and track fields, indoor and outdoor basketball courts, swimming pools, a cafeteria, locker rooms, a reception hall and administrative offices. Political maneuvering became necessary in order to complete the project. "It was a very difficult project. If it were not for an Armenian parliamentarian who was a close friend of Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, it would have never happened," Voskianian remembers.

Even with such important connections it



PHOTOS BY KARINE ARMEN

### Rostom Voskianian

was not easy for the Armenian community of Iran to pull off this project. Because of the prime location of the land, "opportunistic government officials divided the land into many parcels before allocating it to the Armenian community. By the time the authorities agreed on its specifications, a great chunk of the southern part was missing," explains Voskianian.

The construction work was no easy task either. The land had to be leveled. "It took us eight months just to complete the grading," Voskianian said.

The second phase of the construction included a cultural center: a multi-purpose auditorium for 400 people, a 100-seat theater for experimental stage works, a reception and banquet hall, and administrative offices for every Armenian organization operating in the city.

A 1985 project to build a chapel behind the stadium faced more obstacles because of the government's reluctance to permit construction of new minority religious structures. "There was an old cemetery behind the stadium that had to be leveled to accommodate further expansion of the complex. Out of respect to those who had been buried in that area, I wanted to build an unusual memorial: the Holy Cross Chapel," Voskianian explained. In order to win government approval, the project was proposed as a memorial for Armenians who had died in the Iran-Iraq war.

From 1985-87, Voskianian devoted his time and energy to building the chapel which he considers his masterpiece. "Since Armenian religious architecture has played a very important role throughout our history, I wanted for the chapel to be both a tribute to the architectural tradition of the past and follow the post-modern school. It is all exposed concrete and judging by its design, one can tell how difficult the molding process could have been."

Symmetrical from all sides, the entire structure is 50 square meters (60 sq. yards) and can hold up to 40 people inside. The interior is illuminated by sunlight pouring in through 16 small windows, and a few light fixtures to provide indirect lighting of carvings on the walls. The chapel was officially anointed on September 25, 1987 by Archbishop Artak Manoukian. Today small weddings and christenings are held at this chapel.

During the same period of time, Voskianian also surveyed the St. Sargis Church in Iran's northern region of Azerbaijan. Based on the dates on gravestones in the neighboring cemetery, the construction date was estimated to be 1570 AD. For the

first time ever, Voskianian prepared detailed blueprints and sketches of this unknown structure. Upon completion of the project in



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1987, he left Tehran for Los Angeles.

"When I arrived in Los Angeles and settled down, I decided that it was time for me to relax. I was tired and felt that it was time to get away from big projects and to devote myself to my personal passion—painting," Voskian said.

While still in Iran, Voskian's participation in group exhibitions and competitions had led him to his first private painting exhibition in Tehran in 1975. This was to be followed by five group and three additional private exhibits in the United States and elsewhere.

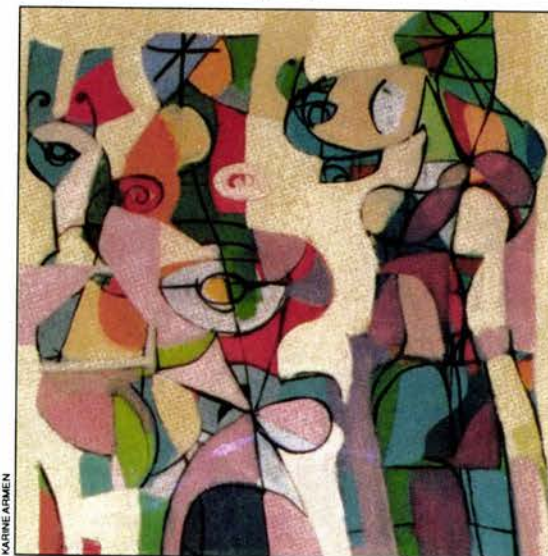
Reflecting on his early days as a painter, 62-year-old Voskian says, "I was introduced to the works of the impressionist artists at an early age. Soon after I was taken by the expressionists and then it became possible to combine the real and the unreal stylistically. Today, however, I feel like I am being drawn towards the abstract through which my ideas and inner feelings can be shaped and represented on the canvas."

To Voskian, as long as life continues, an artist's struggle continues as well. "I am always in conflict with myself," Voskian

play an important role for an artist. "It's a way of relieving tension from continuous work. For me, they also create an

opportunity to review myself and to think over what I have done." His latest exhibition, *Life, Memory, Reflections* consisted of works completed in the past four years. For the first time, this exhibit includes statuettes made from papier mache, which, Voskian hopes, will give way to bolder experiments in the future.

According to him, his style cannot be categorized yet. He is still searching for the right medium. "The papier mache statuettes gave me a chance to experiment with a different medium combination, newspaper and paint. This might give me some leads into the future for more experimentation."

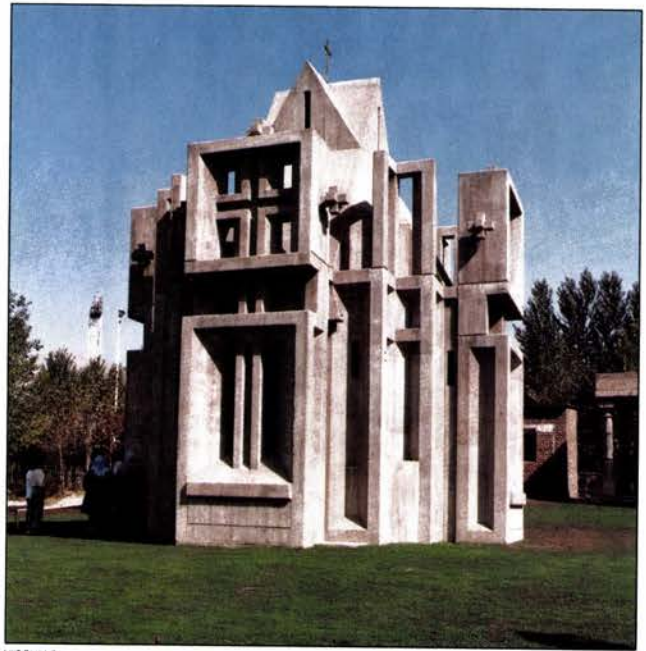


MARINE ARMEN

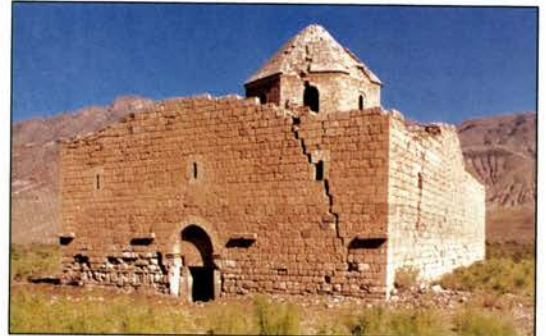
remarked. "That is the only way an artist can survive." This is an ongoing process and it never ends, according to him.

Voskian firmly believes that exhibits

*Zareh Arevshatian is the co-founder and president of The Armenian Film Society.*



VIGENV.G.



VIGENV.G.

# ANCIENT WARS, MODERN GAMES

TEXT AND PHOTO

By ROGER KUPELIAN

**F**ew know the vivid details of Armenia's military yesteryears, of the warriors in heavy metal thundering off to mortal combat on stoutly-bred mounts. Fewer still know of Essex, a British company, which is minting Armenian men of war miniatures as part of its Ancients collection. The colorful illustrations and detailed descriptions in Osprey's Man of War books — illustrations, of the original Caucasian cavalier—have gone equally unnoticed. Whether of the Sassanid or Crusader affiliation, the warriors of Armenia have been painstakingly researched by the authors and illustrators of these volumes.

The world of lead figures and the role playing games of which they are a part—Dungeons and Dragons being the most popular—is largely confined to the backrooms of hobby shops or a friend's living room on weekends. Although fantasy and myth are the mainstay, rules also allow for the inclusion of the history of war. Game books that have been written accordingly have explored the worlds and myths of the Vikings, the Romans, the Ancient Greeks, even Charlemagne. The warlord or king usually is able to build armies of the host culture or its allies. So far, Armenia has fallen into the 'ally' category mostly due to the lack of a substantial Armenian market. Still, any diorama of painted figures (which tower at heights of 15 or 25 millimeters) is a sight to see, a real treat if the hobbyist has taken the time to paint the colorful details. Warriors of the time were quite colorful—especially the Armenians, with their richer, lusher hues of red and violet.

A staple of any Armenian army, either of flesh or lead, was the cavalry. Good horsemen, both lancers and archers were an integral part of any war strategy — the former being the early version of a tank, the latter of artillery. The Osprey books, published by Reed International Books, Ltd. of Great Britain, bear this out in their brisk descriptions of Armenian war technology, uniform and weaponry. From Byzantine

treachery to Persian loyalty and honor, rich possibilities lie in wait for any potential player. Each game takes a bit of preparation—time and place must be agreed upon and a realistic scenario devised. The fantasy world of elves and ogres are replaced by archers and armored horses; knights and clerics by *nakharars* and *vosdigans*. Allies and enemies are revealed amidst fluctuating politics. Trade routes, forts and cities are established and defended, and players spend hours learning about and acting out actual war strategies, letting the dice determine the winds of war.

At the beginning of each game, characters are established by the roll of dice, earning power and charisma, deciding speed and wealth. Each player makes both moral and objective choices, winding into an elaborate and interwoven game of both chance and strategy. Such strategy games incorporate the world of the supernatural, including the realms of religion, myth and legend. Since Armenia's special architecture and terrain make it a truly unique platform for role playing, all that is needed is a thrust by innovative history teachers wishing to inspire their students' imaginations. Unfortunately, there is a lack of a sizable market among Armenians, and this is echoed by J. B. Hood, owner of Wargames Inc., which distributes the Essex miniatures to retailers in the United States.

He explained that at one time, Essex used

to mint more Armenian figures as allies and negotiators for Romans, Persians, Byzantines and Crusaders. In addition, there is the reality of an extensive military tradition, whether in building castles or crashing through enemy ranks.

One Armenian Dungeon Master, as the serious player is known, who has been at it for over two years, suggested the publishing of rules for an Armenian world, targeting the growing young adult population. A group meets at his house up to three times a week to continue their imagined adventures and to explore a realm that incorporates their heritage. One of the players has painted over one hundred historically accurate figures, similar to those featured here.

Just as role-playing games opened new dimensions for strategy game players, so too can such games inspire and capture the



Die-cast metal figures require painting according to authoritative color guides. Figures painted by Ara Piranian (top) and by Zareh Aratoun (bottom).



imagination of a new generation of Diaspora Armenians, escaping from the numerous questions of cultural identity into the boundless regions of historic detail and adventure, placing themselves at the center of everything from Tigran the Great's conquests to the legends of Sasun. When vivid pictures and facts fill the mind with awe and excitement, history can be said to have performed

the most difficult of tasks.

*The Osprey Books covering Armenian history are MAA 125, 175, 247, 147, and Elite 19. The figures can be ordered from Essex. All items should be available at fine hobby shops.*

*With reporting by Ara Piranian.*

By ARA PIRANIAN

## TENNIS'S CHARMING REVIVALIST

Andre Agassi once again occupies the spotlight in tennis, this time with his victory over Germany's No. 4 seed, Michael Stich. The match, which was played on September 11, makes Agassi the third unseeded player ever to win the U.S. Open championship. The victory earned



him a check for \$550,000 and a long hug and kiss from model-actress Brooke Shields, who has been dating Agassi since April of this year.

At the U.S. Tennis Center in Flushing Meadows, New York, Agassi dazzled a crowd of over 21,000 people with a performance that prompted J. Howard "Bumpy" Frazier, president of the U.S. Tennis Association, to call Agassi the "most popular tennis player in the world."

Agassi's victory comes at a time when tennis is becoming less popular, according to some observers. (In May, *Sports Illustrated* published a cover story titled "Is Tennis Dying?") Some credit PBR Street Gang Agassi for reviving the sport, thanks to his charm and popularity. Doug Smith of *USA Today* wrote, "Andre Agassi seems capable of being to tennis what Michael Jordan was to basketball."

"People want to watch Agassi. Kids want to watch him. When he plays tennis the way he did at the Open, he puts a charge into everything and comes up one of the exciting stars of American sports," Mike Lupica of

*New York Newsday* wrote. "This guy is a superstar, he's ridiculously large, he can dress up in goofy clothes on television and people still like him," an opponent, who was defeated during the semi-finals, said of him. ■

## GRABBING THE EMMY

As of today, neither the head of the CBS Studios Media Relations Department nor the production manager of *David's Mother*, Dennis Brown, have no idea where Emmy Award winner Michael Goorjian is.

"You're not the only one after him," said Brown. "Now that he's won the Emmy, thousands of opportunities are waiting for him."

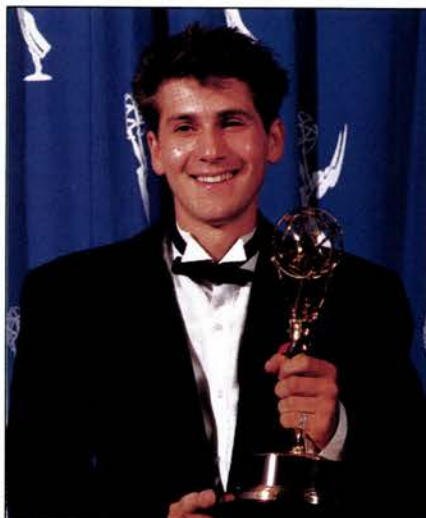
It was CBS and Brown who were so vital to the production of *David's Mother*, a film about an autistic teenager for which Goorjian won an Emmy for best supporting actor, beating such prominent actors as Alan Alda, Matthew Broderick and Richard Gere.

It was said that Goorjian's acting in the movie was so dramatic and real that director Robert Alan Ackerman and the CBS crew filming the movie often began wondering whether he was really autistic or not. That may be because Goorjian observed a group of autistic children for months before filming the movie, and because he had an acquaintance with an autistic child while growing up.

"A lot of what I did was based on what I remember of him. It was really one of those

things that when you're a kid, you don't forget," Goorjian explained.

Before receiving the Emmy, Goorjian had expressed the hope that the recognition would result in more projects that "go beyond the norm. I respect people who break away from what everybody else is doing. *David's Mother* was a chance to show that I can do something that not everybody can do." ■



## AMBASSADOR TURNS VP

Thirty-four-year-old Alexander Arzoumanian, Armenian Ambassador to the UN, has been elected one of the 21 vice presidents of the 49th UN General Assembly. Five of the vice-presidents are nominated by the permanent members of the Security Council, and the remaining 16 by the various regional groups of countries within the UN.

Arzoumanian's election before the General Assembly was by acclamation since his was the only name the 20-member Eastern European group chose to place for nomination, despite Azerbaijan's initial objections.



AIM/KEVIN O'NEILL

"The fact that Armenia, a young country, has been entrusted with the vice presidency of the UN is significant because it shows that Armenia is playing its own unique role in the mission and activities of the UN," says Arzoumanian. His election demonstrates the confidence of his colleagues from the Eastern Europe group, which includes most of the non-Asian countries of the former Soviet Union, as well as all of the countries of the former Eastern bloc, with whom Arzoumanian has worked as Armenian Ambassador. "Representing Armenia at the UN means participating fully in all of the UN's committees and activities, particularly those UN agencies with a presence in Armenia, such as the United Nations Development Fund, and UNICEF," explains Arzoumanian.

A mathematician before he became active in the Democratic Movement, Arzoumanian came to the US three years ago, shortly before Armenia broke from the Soviet Union. For a short time, he took on the roles of Armenia's Ambassador to both the US and the UN. ■

## GUARDING LEVON

Protecting President Levon Ter Petrossian during his recent visit to the United States was not something that secret



AIM / KEVORK DJANSEZIAN

service agent Monica Emmerson could have imagined doing four years ago, while working in the cargo department of an airline company.

Emmerson, whose mother's maiden name is Toungaian, had heard that Ter Petrossian was coming to the United States in August and asked her agency's dignitary protection department that she be assigned to him. She was chosen because of her ability to speak Armenian.

"It was a real nice visit and everything went smoothly from Washington, DC, to Los Angeles," Emmerson said.

While a student at San Francisco University, Emmerson had always been interested in law enforcement. Nothing seemed to materialize after her graduation in 1984 until one day, while working at Northwest Airlines, a secret service agent approached her and suggested that she could be a viable candidate for employment with the agency.

After 19 weeks of intense training in Glynco, Georgia, and Washington, DC, she became an agent. She has been with the San Francisco branch of the Secret Service Agency for two and a half years where her duties include investigating credit card fraud, forgery of government checks, telephone fraud and counterfeiting. "You could be in a five-star hotel wearing a suit and protecting famous heads of states one day, and the next day, you could be serving search warrants in the projects in some of the worst areas in San Francisco," she said.

No doubt that she prefers to protect dignitaries and famous people. Emmerson has been assigned to protect such dignitaries as Romania's then prime minister, Ion Iliescu and the prime minister of Ireland, Albert Reynolds. ■

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# CRISIS IS OPPORTUNITY

By GARINE ZEITLIAN

**I**ndependence has become both the blessing and the curse of Armenians worldwide. For Armenia, nation-building has become a task more colossal than freedom. For the Diaspora, identity-building has become a responsibility more nebulous than survival. In both places, however, Armenians face the same questions: Who are we? What do we want? Where do we go from here?

For most of this century, the yearning for freedom had linked Armenia and the Diaspora. It had provided Armenians in Armenia with a dream to make daily life bearable and a mechanism to seek absolution from the sin of 'sleeping with the enemy.' It had provided Armenians in the Diaspora with an identity and a mechanism to avoid the guilt of survival. The tenacious attachment to this yearning denied the recognition of the separateness of Diasporan and Soviet Armenian experiences.

Independence caught Diasporan organizations off guard. All these years, they had banked on bringing about independence. When it came, independence ripped through their legitimization strategies and their very *raison d'être* as the embattled leaders of a 'lost tribe.'

One million allegedly 'poor and helpless Soviet Armenians' demonstrated in the streets of Yerevan. Breaking with the impulsive tradition of Armenian self-expression, they engaged in a constitutionally legitimate struggle against the Soviet regime, conducted a war of attrition, coopted the language of the enemy, operated within the constructs of the enemy hierarchy and used its structural loopholes to destroy it without bloodshed. A "Glorious Revolution" revisited.

Diasporan organizations saw their historic role usurped by an 'indigenous' and young leadership—academic in its preparation, pragmatic in its revolutionary style, cerebral in its rhetoric, clear in its vision, realistic in its idealism, consistent in its drive, flexible in its moves, unwavering in its demands, comprehensible in its language and resilient in its relentlessness. When they came to power in 1991, these 'men on the spot' felt empowered by the success of their revolution, infatuated by their metamorphosis from victim to savior and ennobled by the knowledge that they had been instrumental in toppling 'the evil empire.'

Desperately seeking to reinvent themselves, traditional Diasporan institutions proclaimed themselves the experienced elders and began to patronize the 'men on the spot,' using their service to the homeland as their claim to fame.

After the initial exhilaration, the mess set in. The war in Karabakh, the dragging peace process, Azerbaijan's and Turkey's blockade of Armenia, the impact of the 1988 earthquake made fast economic recovery impossible. Power struggles created opposition parties, shook the unity of the 'men on the spot' and robbed citizens of their undefiled leaders. The infusion into local politics of the traditional political parties of the Diaspora and the reenactment of the American-Russian competition in the region tampered with the formation of indigenous civil society in Armenia. The continuing

difficulties of daily life generated dissatisfaction upon which the opposition capitalized to question the government and hold it responsible. Perceptions soon developed that the state is 'unable' to meet popular expectations such as hope or daily bread, that the government is 'incapable' of matching the speed with which the impatience of its population multiplied. This led average citizens to seek relationships that would empower them *now*, give them hope *now*, and feed their families *today*.

In these circumstances, strong men and social institutions whose traditional hold on Armenians had succumbed to the creation of the nation-state came in handy, again. The so-called 'Armenian Mafia,' family-based businesses, political parties and the Church reactivated feudal relations by providing services exclusively to their own religious, economic, political or paramilitary circles.

Independence confronts Armenians in Armenia and the Diaspora with different challenges. The crisis in Armenia is one of nation-building: empowerment and policy-making, the right to

representation and the responsibility to represent, opposing perspectives on legitimacy, the luxury of being able to do anything and the lurking danger of any decision being a precedent, conquering political uncertainty and defeating roadblocks to success. The recent reactivation of feudal relations force citizens in Armenia to make a choice. Modern feudalists can, once again, threaten the nature of religion, economics and politics, the very fabric of Armenian society and the survival of the Armenian state.

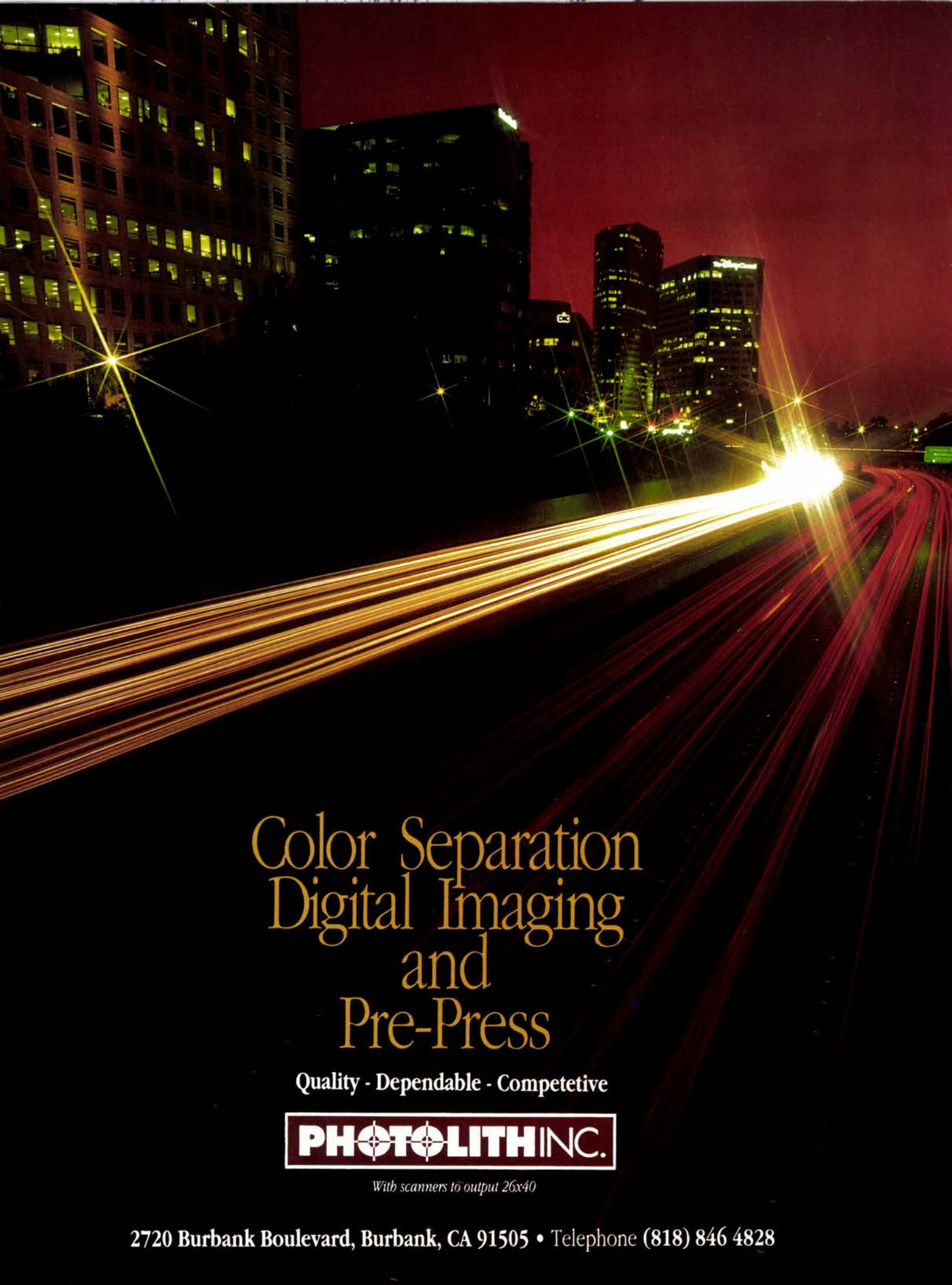
Armenians in the Diaspora face another challenge: how to create independence *from* Armenia—the only means to create an independent identity in the Diaspora for the Diaspora. The imperative of independence—by definition, a negation of dependence which feudalism entails—for Diasporan Armenians is to confront the hyphen that makes Armenian-

American, French-Armenian, Lebanese-Armenian, etc. The responsibility of hyphenated Armenians is not to dictate the 'perfect Armenia' to Armenia. The Diasporan vision of a 'perfect Armenia' is, after all, Diasporan. It is also a convenient mechanism that not only strips the Diasporan Armenian of the responsibility for self-knowledge and self-acceptance but also disguises this denial as responsibility for the fatherland. This mechanism, fueled by the Diasporan organizations who seek feudal patronage of Armenia, threatens both the process of nation-building in Armenia and identity-building in the Diaspora.

Crisis can be turned to opportunity. Feudalism is no longer a functional mechanism of survival and coexistence. Only a partnership of equals can allow for full communication and understanding, an acceptance of advantages and shortcomings and the planning of national goals both separate and in conjunction.

Navigating through this exhilarating mess is a historic opportunity and experience individuals are rarely offered. How one fares in this is a test of one's integrity, commitment, resilience, nobility, vision and future. ■

**Modern feudalists can, once again, threaten the nature of religion, economics and politics.**



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