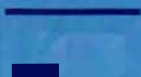




THE ARMENIAN DEMOCRATIC LIBERAL PARTY

By
Dr. Vatche Ghazarian



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Dr. VATCHE GHAZARIAN

Boston
1993

**THE
ARMENIAN
DEMOCRATIC
LIBERAL
PARTY**

**- HISTORY
- CREED
- MEMBERSHIP GUIDE**

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CONTENTS

- Foreword	5
- The Birth of Armenian Political Parties and their Raison d'être in the Diaspora	6
- The Political Party	8
- The Party Member	9
- Democracy	10
- Liberalism	12
- THE ARMENIAN DEMOCRATIC LIBERAL PARTY	
A. A Brief History	13
B. The ADL in Action	17
C. Goals	18
D. Political Creed and General Principles	19
E. The Armenian Democratic Liberal	20
F. The Organizational Structure	22
G. The Press	24
H. The March	25
I. The Flag and the Crest	25
J. The Member's Decalogue	26

FOREWORD

*"Democracy affirms the priority
- of the collective over the few;
- of rights against monopoly;
- of freedom against violence and slavery;
- of the individual as a free agent
under state control.
The limit of this control is drawn by the
free will and mature understanding of the
collective."* **Hratch Yervant**

Initially written in 1981, this booklet^{*} has been revised at a time when democracy has proved its advantage over competitive political doctrines. People around the world, especially in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, have adopted it as a way of life.

These changes, regardless of the accompanied turbulence, have ignited a spark of optimism in those of us who dream of prosperity and harmony among the peoples and nations of our globe.

We dedicate this booklet to you with the hope that you join the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party.

^{*} Any reference to masculine gender includes the feminine.

THE BIRTH OF ARMENIAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR RAISON D'ETRE IN THE DIASPORA

The birth of Armenian political parties occurred in the later half of the 19th century. Their origin was inevitably linked to the development of what is referred to as the Armenian Question. In simple terms, the Armenian Question pertains to the liberation of Armenian occupied lands from Turkey and the restoration of national sovereignty over those lands.

After the fall of the last two Armenian kingdoms of Ani in 1045 and of Cilicia in 1375, the Armenian nation was forced to live under tyrannical Ottoman and Persian regimes.

At that time, Armenians constituted the majority of the population living on their ancestral homelands. However, under Ottoman Turkish rule our people were oppressed and dispossessed; deprived of their basic rights of security for life and property and threatened by assimilation or exile. These conditions forced many to move to countries where living conditions were more favorable.

The situation became unbearable. By the beginning of the 17th century, freedom-loving Armenians set out to organize national liberation movements. A primary goal of these movements was to solicit aid from foreign governments, hoping that foreign intervention would put pressure on the Ottoman government to improve the living conditions of their Christian subjects.

In 1828, Eastern Armenia was annexed by Russia. Consequently, following the Treaty of Turkmenchai, a pro-Russian movement began in Western Armenia. This movement, coupled with various other factors, caused Ottoman persecutions to intensify, until the Armenians of Zeitoun finally rebelled in 1862.

From that time on, Europeans began viewing the Armenian Question from a new and different political perspective. It became an issue around which many European diplomatic circles centered their own agendas. Across Europe, pro-Armenian movements sprung up. These movements catalyzed the development of political thought among the Armenian intellectuals studying in Europe's major cities.

With the intensification of foreign interventions, the Ottoman government devised a plan to rid themselves of their "increasingly

troublesome" Christian subjects. In 1878, the Russian-Turkish war ended and the Treaty of San Stefano and the Berlin Congress occurred. It was then that the Ottoman intent to implement their policy of racial annihilation became more pronounced. The Armenian leadership soon realized that petitions and peaceful means were no longer enough to secure the fulfillment of their demands. It was time for armed struggle.

As of 1885, the Armenian political parties began to take shape. Responding to the conditions of the times, the parties advocated revolutionary means as a solution to the problems confronting their people. Their aim was to free the lands of historic Armenia under Turkish rule or to at least create conditions that allowed Armenians to live free and safe in their homeland.

But conditions did not improve. The year 1895 marked the first really organized massacres of our people by the Ottoman Turks. The political parties responded heroically. They organized self-defense operations during these massacres and later during the 1915 genocide. Thus, our political parties played a significant role in aborting the Turkish plan to totally annihilate our race.

Two of the most memorable battles took place in Vasbouragan (Van). Mgerditch Avedissian led the first armed defense in 1896 and Armenag Yegarian commanded the Armenian resistance against the Turks in 1915. In spite of these efforts, the 1915 massacre of 1.5 million Armenians while not successful in its goal of complete racial annihilation, did effectively removed the Armenian presence from Western Armenia.

Armenians who survived the Turkish genocide and deportations were dispersed all over the world. This forced dispersion of people created what we now call the Armenian Diaspora.

Armenian political parties lost their home base of operation, but not their *raison d'être*. As the refugees began to recover from the trauma of the genocide and relocation, they faced the task of preserving their national identity and of pursuing their just rights. To succeed, they needed to organize. The Armenian political parties led this process and began to establish the Armenian press, schools and centers in the new Diasporan communities. They defended the Armenian populace and institutions. They pursued Armenian rights and reparations. They shaped the Armenian political mind.

As long as the Armenian Diaspora exists, Armenian political parties will exist. The successful pursuit of Armenian rights and interests of a political and legal nature is impossible without an organized, collective power.

Needless to say, recent political changes in the Republic of Armenia have brought about a new dimension to the role of political parties in the Diaspora. It is premature to talk about the specific changes that will affect the parties. However, it is safe to conclude that the declaration of an independent Republic of Armenia in 1991 will cause a shift in priorities, tactics and strategies within the Diaspora.

With the rebirth of an independent Armenian state, the need for Armenian political parties to act in the Diaspora increases in importance. They will play an essential role in strengthening Armenia, while continuing to protect the interests of the Armenian communities in their respective countries. They will also provide Diaspora Armenians the opportunity to participate in the political life of the Republic of Armenia via their Armenia-based affiliate parties.

THE POLITICAL PARTY

Traditionally defined, a political party is the unity of individuals who share the same viewpoints and pursue the same political goals. A political party is organized for the purpose of exercising their authority within the political context of the day, either by assuming power through free elections or by influencing the policy of the ruling party in a given country.

Naturally, every party has its own creed and by-laws. The creed of a party outlines its political doctrine and provides ideological guidance to its members. The by-laws provide the rules which govern the relations between individual party members and groups, it clarifies both their duties and privileges.

The vitality of a political party depends upon its basic political standpoint and the nature of its goals. A party which pursues transitory goals loses its *raison d'être* once it achieves them; also, a party becomes lifeless, when its doctrine disintegrates.

The excellence of a party lies in its realistic approach. Realism is that mode of action, which takes into consideration the feasibility of a particular project and the means available for its fulfillment. It is important to choose a *modus operandi* that assures a projects maximum success with a minimum consumption of resources.

Also, a distinction must be made between aim and means. Aim is of primal importance and is immutable. The means can be changed according to the prevailing conditions. When the means becomes the aim, the party degenerates.

Political parties can be classified as conservative, moderate, radical and extremist.

Conservatism is defined as the traditional attachment to old ways, coupled with mistrust and suspicion towards new approaches. Taking the initiative is non-existent in conservative thinking. Change may lead to the disintegration of the party. A conservative is generally incapable of moving ahead with progress.

A moderate party believes in evolution rather than revolution.

Contrary to conservatives and moderates, radicals and extremists tend to bring about the destruction of existing systems. They disrupt the normal course of life and promote anarchy.

On the basis of organizational structure, political parties can be defined as centralized or decentralized. Generally, in the first case, all party units regardless of their geographical and administrative situation are controlled by one governing body. Whereas in the second case, the units operating within a certain geographical and administrative division are autonomous.

THE PARTY MEMBER

The party member possesses a high level of national and civil consciousness. In order to accomplish his national-political goals, he joins with others of like mind, and collectively, party members work toward the fulfillment of their mutual goals.

The party member joins a given political party by his free will and submits himself to its creed and by-laws.

The party member may willingly sacrifice part of his independence during the process of amalgamation of ideas and modes of action. In return, he experiences the exhilaration of having thus contributed to the fruition of the party's activities. The party member, by virtue of his role in shaping events, is a driving force in society and public life.

Often, people think that when an individual becomes a party member, he loses his right to free speech and thinking, and eventually becomes a narrow-minded partisan. In reality, individuals join the ranks of a party, because they consider the party's stance to be compatible with their own beliefs.

The party member, in appraising his personal capacity, comes to the conclusion that he can achieve more as a member of an active group than alone. Therefore, he agrees to subject himself to certain disciplinary rules, so that goals may be realized with united efforts. The individual combines his personal financial, intellectual and physical assets with like individuals' assets to increase his impact on society.

DEMOCRACY

The word *democracy* is derived from the Greek *demos* (people) and *kratos* (rule); the rule of the people.

According to world encyclopedias, democracy is the following:

(1) a government system, where political decisions are taken directly by all citizens who operate under the rule of a majority government (Direct Democracy);

(2) a government system, where the citizens apply their right of passing decisions through representatives elected and delegated by them (Representative Democracy);

(3) a government system, usually following the representative system, where majority rule is applied within the bounds of a field of activity decided upon constitutionally, guaranteeing freedom of speech

for minorities, freedom of faith and other rights (Liberal or Constitutional Democracy);

(4) a political and social system that tends to bring down to a minimum disparities between individuals, especially those that have resulted from the unequal distribution of personal wealth, even if by the definition of the previous three systems, its political aspect is not democratic (Social or Economic Democracy).

The democratic regime is based on three levels of authority:

- (1) Legislative (usually the parliament) which is elected by the people and passes laws according to the will of the people.
- (2) Executive, which after being approved by the legislative body implements the laws.
- (3) Judicial, which is independent of the previous two bodies and oversees the just application of the laws.

As a liberalist movement, democracy was shaped in the 18th century. European theorists began demanding that people be allowed to choose their own leaders. For the first time, the idea of all citizens, without exception, taking part in the political process via a secret vote was formulated.

Today, the followers of liberal democracy elect their representatives whom they then entrust to elect a leader. The opinion of the majority is always taken into consideration in elections. A majority is defined as more than half of the electorate.

In democracy, the majority has the right to do anything, except suppressing the basic rights of minorities. The latter, in turn, can resort to any means to present its views within the limits of human rights.

In order for democracy to succeed, it is essential that the voters be knowledgeable and show good judgment. Otherwise, balloting becomes a formality and opens the way for adventurous demagogues to indulge in excesses.

A sound and strong public opinion is indispensable. Education is imperative. The people must approach current issues with conscious awareness. The more educated the voters, the more vital the democracy.

In true democracies, the right to vote and the principles of secret ballot are always respected. That is to say, all citizens that have come of age and are not deprived of their right to vote because of insanity or criminal acts are considered eligible to vote without discrimination. Each citizen is entitled to one vote, which he casts in a secret balloting (to ensure freedom from restrictive pressures) for the representative of his choice.

The keystone of democratic principles is freedom. Freedom of speech and the press, freedom of religion, freedom to work, to learn, to establish parties and other types of organizations, to own property, etc. However, it is important that the individual remains within constitutional boundaries; not restricting the freedom of other individuals and not endangering the security of the state.

In democracy, all citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of origin, sex, faith or color. The stipulation of equality states that government must be established around people's similarities, not their differences. Democracy as a political system recognizes no authority higher than the will of the people. This is the key element of democratic philosophy.

In recent years, democracy has also acquired a moralistic sense. It has become a way of life, the essential feature of which is the passing of decisions with the participation of those individuals who will be assigned to implement those decisions. This raises the individual's sense of duty.

LIBERALISM

Liberalism favors man's spiritual freedom, claiming that no constitutional authority should exercise restraints on the individual. It considers such repression as an unwarranted interference which may lead to the blunting of an individual's drive to achieve.

In politics, liberalism as a doctrine, professes that constitutions, laws and political solutions must promote individual freedom based on the application of rational will.

In economics, liberalism somehow condenses the principles of capitalism.

THE ARMENIAN DEMOCRATIC LIBERAL PARTY

A - A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1885, a group of graduate students in Van, educated and inspired by Mgerditch Portukalian and Khrimian Hayrig (who later became the Catholicos of All Armenians) laid the foundations of the Armenagan Party. The Armenagan Party, founded by Mgerditch Avedissian, was the first Armenian political party and the predecessor of the ADL.

After taking root in Vasbouragan (Vilayet of Van) with more than 90 well-organized volunteer units, the party's influence quickly spread to other provinces of Western Armenia and to the Armenian communities of Persia, Bulgaria, Egypt and the United States.

Soon after, two other Armenian political parties were formed. The Henchak (Social Democrat) Party was established in 1887 and the Dashnak (Armenian Revolutionary Federation) Party was founded in 1890. Unlike the Armenagan Party, these parties centered their activities around public demonstrations, emphasizing such activities as vital to impress the Armenian rank and file, as well as to secure the much needed foreign government support.

Alternatively, the Armenagan Party operated discreetly. They emphasized education and the development of the cultural conscience of the Armenians living in the provinces. They also promoted the idea of armed struggle. The Armenagan Party amassed a sizable arsenal and an impressive number of selfless, patriotic young men devoted to the ideal of Armenian liberation.

What contributions did the Armenagan Party make to the nation?

(1) It led the successful defense of Vasbouragan in 1896 against Ottoman and foreign conspirators. Mgerditch Avedissian and 800 volunteers perished in this battle; however, their brave self-sacrifice saved the entire Armenian population of the province.

(2) It was the first to herald democratic principles and infuse the people with the hope of self-determination within the context of the Western Armenian reality.

(3) It was the first to call for a free and autonomous homeland. A goal it sought to achieve through revolutionary activities.

(4) In pursuit of an independent homeland, its members committed the first act of terrorism against Turkish authorities. However, the party always stayed away from using force as a means of promoting its views within Armenian circles. On the national front, the Armenagan Party became a symbol of solidarity, without social or religious discrimination.

(5) It offered a realistic strategy toward liberation and correctly assessed the players and conditions of the time. It placed liberation first, before social or economic theories.

(6) It focused on national interests and refused to weaken itself by instigating revolutionary activities in neighboring countries.

The Henschak Party was heavily engaged in socialist propaganda from day one. By 1896, activists such as Arpiar Arpiarian and Mihran Damadian felt the urgent need to review the party's past priorities. They concluded that the struggle for national liberation should take precedence over socialist ideology. In 1898 this group separated from the party and reorganized themselves under a new name, the ***Reorganized Henschak Party***.

The Reorganized Henschaks soon expanded their influence to include Constantinople, Egypt, the United States, Cilicia, Armenia Minor and the Balkans.

The Reorganized Henschaks, like the Armenagans, were against public demonstrations. Initially, they remained quite aloof from the ideological speech that characterized other parties. Instead, they preferred

discreet and secret revolutionary operations, focusing primarily on the liberation of Cilicia.

From the very first day of its existence, the party suffered from dissension over strategy. Although sharing the same objectives, some members were extremists, in favor of terrorism, and others were moderates, opposed to the use of violence. In 1906 these diverse views created a serious division within the party. Another split occurred. Its extremist faction operated under the Reorganized Henschak name until 1918, when its name changed to the *Azadagan* (Liberal) **Party**. The moderates united with the Armenagan Party in 1908 and together the two formed the Armenian Constitutional Democratic Party known as the **Ramgavar** (Armenian Constitutional Democratic) **Party**.

Consequently, the Ramgavar Party became a large and influential power within the international Armenian community. The party had on its agenda the liberation of Western Armenia and Cilicia, as well as the establishment of a democratic state on these lands.

What did the Ramgavar Party give to our people?

(1) With the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution (1908), the party halted revolutionary activities as long as the constitutional regime prevailed. However, in 1915 when the Young Turks began to organize and implement the genocide, party members lead the armed struggles of Van and Moussa Dag.

(2) It promoted the principles of democracy among our people.

(3) It actively supported the newly-created Armenian General Benevolent Union; many of its founders were party members.

(4) It pursued Armenian political rights by supporting the National Delegation and organizing the National Legion.

(5) Under the leadership of Mihran Damadian, it realized the temporary autonomy of Cilicia, which soon collapsed as a result of a French conspiracy.

(6) After the genocide, the party assumed the mission of organizing the communities of the Armenian Diaspora. A volunteer movement was organized to save Armenian orphans from the deserts of Syria and Iraq, a vision of national solidarity was fostered and a responsible political direction promoted by a strong and influential press was created.

(7) The party excelled in statesmanship. Even though it did not approve of the adventurous and short-sighted activities of the Dashnak leaders of the Republic of Armenia in 1919, it offered the Republic all of its support. It even undertook the creation of an air force. Finally in 1920, with the same mature political comprehension, it welcomed the creation of Soviet Armenia and leaving aside all the controversies related to this change, it devoted itself to fortifying the Armenian homeland.

By the end of 1920, the Republic of Armenia had fallen to the Bolsheviks and the Armenian Diaspora was in disarray. As a result, on October 1, 1921, after negotiations, the Ramgavar Party and the Azadagan (Liberal) Party merged to form the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL). Also assembled under the ADL banner were the Armenian Populist Party of Eastern Armenia (founded in 1917), the National Liberal Association of Europe, General Antranik's Movement for Armenia and other national unions.

The party's name had changed, but its principles had not. Thus today's ADL is a result of a golden legacy established through the efforts of many exceptional intellectual, political and military personalities.

The following people were part of this most valuable legacy:

- *Michael Babadjanian*, a celebrated statesman, member of the Russian Chamber of Deputies and of the Republic of Armenia Delegation;
- *Souren Bartevean*, an energetic writer and popular essayist;
- *Minas Berberian*, a distinguished and well known diplomat and state supervisor, Republic of Armenia;
- *James Chankalian*, the leader of the Armenian Legionnaires;
- *Arshag Chobanian*, called "The Ambassador of Armenian Culture" in France;
- *Mihran Damadian*, a hero of the Sassoon and Mush armed resistance and the leader of the Cilician liberation movement;
- *Samson Haroutiunian*, a statesman, Minister of Justice, Republic of Armenia;

- *Stepanos Malkhassiants*, a celebrated lexicographer and philologist;
- *Ardag Tarpinian*, the head of the provisional government of Vasbouragan and later President of the Chamber of the Deputies, Republic of Armenia;
- *Vahan Tekeyan*, one of our most renowned poets;
- *Leo/Arakel Papakhanian*, a distinguished historian, philologist and writer;
- *Mendor Pouniatian*, an internationally known economist;
- *Edgar Shahin*, an internationally known artist;
- *Yessayi Yaghoubian* and *Bedros Dmlakian*, leaders of the heroic defense of Moussa Dag;
- *Armenag Yegarian*, the leader and strategist of the 1915 heroic defense of Van.

B - THE ADL IN ACTION

In Armenia:

- (1) Initiated the first repatriation of Diaspora Armenians to Armenia in 1923 and actively supported the consequent repatriations;
- (2) Initiated the construction of new towns during the 1920s. These towns were financed by funds raised in the Armenian Diaspora;
- (3) Provided state-of-the-art technological equipment to institutions of higher education during the 1920's;
- (4) Actively supported the Armenian army during World War II;
- (5) Encouraged Diaspora Armenians to establish factories in Armenia during the 1960s;
- (6) After the devastating earthquake of December, 1988, ADL members were the first to establish joint ventures in Armenia;
- (7) Established the "ADL of Armenia" to promote and popularize liberal democracy in the homeland, 1990;
- (8) Was among the first to support the new process of independence initiated by the government of Armenia, 1991.

For the Armenian Cause:

(1) Took advantage of every possibility to constantly remind the Soviet authorities, in Yerevan as well as in Moscow, of our rights in Turkey, Azerbaidjan and Georgia. It was the ADL delegate, Mr. Hampartsoum Berberian that first raised the question of returning Karabakh to Armenia during the Khrouschév regime;

(2) Organized the First Armenian International Congress which took place in New York, 1946. The conference asked the victorious Allies for justice for our people through the liberation of occupied Armenian lands in Turkey;

(3) Initiated the international commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide (1965). A commemoration that all Armenian political parties, churches and various organizations participated in. Thus, the ADL inspired the younger generation to take a stand for the rights of their forefathers;

(4) Established Armenian Rights Councils in many countries to propagate the Armenian Cause and to find support for our just demands in international tribunals.

For the Diaspora Armenian Communities:

(1) Struggled for the prevalence of democratic principles in organizing the communities after the genocide;

(2) Worked for the preservation of the Armenian identity, establishing the Tekeyan Cultural Association, cultural and youth centers, as well as schools and publications the world over;

(3) Protected the civil rights of Armenians in their respective countries, whenever the need rose;

(4) Prepared leaders for our communities. Leaders who acted with the conviction that solidarity and harmony are the best vehicles in which to insure the safety and prosperity of our people.

C - GOALS

The ADL strives to attain the following goals:

- (1) to assure and preserve the independence and sovereignty of Armenia;
- (2) to restore the territorial integrity of Armenia under Armenian rule, with the liberation of the usurped Armenian lands;
- (3) to pursue, through states and organizations, international recognition of the Armenian Genocide and just compensation from Turkey for Armenian lands and properties;
- (4) to practice liberal democratic principles and strengthen the authority of the people's will in public life, within the boundaries of the Armenian state;
- (5) to work towards the economic, political, social and cultural advancement of Armenia;
- (6) to create favorable social, political and economic conditions, in order to promote the gathering of the Armenian nation in its homeland;
- (7) to strengthen the ties between the Armenian people living in Armenia and those in the Diaspora in order to accomplish the basic interests of the Armenian nation with unified efforts.

D - POLITICAL CREED AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Armenian Democratic Liberal Party is the true offspring of the Armenian nation. It genuinely expresses the strong desire of the latter to survive and prosper. The party works for the total restoration of the Armenian historical homeland.

It believes that the accomplishment of this noble cause is possible through the growth of the Armenian nation and with the coordinated efforts of the Armenian people without class discrimination.

ADL's ideological viewpoint is based on the supremacy of the people's will, the application of basic individual and collective rights, and the principles of social evolution.

The ADL believes that every citizen enjoys equal rights before the law and his civil liberties must remain inviolable at all times to assure against collective and government encroachments. It recognizes the citizens' rights of secret balloting, free enterprise, general and compulsory education, ownership, security and happiness. One of the state's duties is to provide insurance coverage to all workers for unemployment, sickness, accidents, old age and death.

Aiming at rapid and just economic advancement, the ADL opposes economic monopoly as well as unfair treatment of workers by employers. It supports the formation of cooperative companies by virtue of which private economies can be maximized. It encourages the organization of labor unions to protect the rights of workers. Thus, the ADL believes that it is possible for society to enjoy the greatest benefits through the voluntary association and cooperation of capital and talent.

The ADL is most prominently a national institution. The basic reason of its existence and the forceful motives of its activities have been and will always be to further the interests of the Armenian nation. By virtue of its realistic and patriotic policy, it was the ADL that welcomed the resurgence of the Armenian state (1918) from the very first day. With total devotion, the ADL offered the newly created Armenian homeland all of its resources. The party believes Armenia to be the foundation upon which Armenians will realize their national security and historic rights.

The ADL follows closely the continuous thriving of the Armenian homeland. It works to make Diaspora Armenians more enthusiastic about Armenia's economic and cultural resurgence, and promotes the idea of gathering all Armenians together in their homeland. With this realistic and patriotic stance, the ADL is the champion of national solidarity between Diaspora Armenians and those living in the fatherland.

E - THE ARMENIAN LIBERAL DEMOCRAT

Any Armenian of either sex, 18 years of age or older can join the ranks of the party. A candidate pledges to remain loyal, disciplined, devoted and ready to make sacrifices to the principles of the party.

Therefore, the first condition of membership is to be of Armenian descent.

To be 18 years of age or older is the second condition. It is important to note that an individual is not born a "party man." Membership is not hereditary; it involves personal conviction and principles.

The third condition of membership is to agree to the party's principles and to obey its laws. A liberal democrat joins the party ranks by his free will, without pressure or compulsion. A member, who no longer submits to the party's rules and principles, either resigns or is expelled.

The fourth condition of membership is the candidate's sound character and irreproachable morals. According to the ADL's regulations and rules, the following people are not eligible to become party members: (a) those who have joined another Armenian political party, (b) those who have been convicted of criminal charges, (c) those who are generally known in the given society to be undesirable characters.

The final membership step is taking the party's oath. By his solemn vow, the individual becoming a party member proves that he believes in the doctrine of the party and pledges to pursue the party's goals and the implementation of its by-laws.

Once the oath is taken, the party member is obliged to pay a one time initiation fee and annual membership dues. This way, the individual shows symbolically his willingness to assume financial sacrifices.

The obligations and the rights of the ADL member are as follows:

- (1) to respect fellow members and cooperate with them;
- (2) to follow the requirements of the by-laws and to obey directives issued by circulars;
- (3) to respect the disciplinary regulations;
- (4) to contribute to the strengthening and popularization of the party;

(5) to work towards the establishment and accomplishment of party ideals;

(6) to attend general membership meetings and lectures;

(7) to participate actively in the exchange of ideas and discussions during membership meetings;

(8) to pay annual dues;

(9) to carry out the duties entrusted to him by the leadership, always keeping the code of secrecy concerning confidential decisions;

(10) to subscribe to the party's newspaper and contribute to the dissemination of the party's publications;

(11) to elect the party's functioning bodies and to be elected to serve in them, according to the regulations and by-laws.

To be a party member involves privileges and rights which are bestowed, not for abuse or unlawful gains, but for unselfish service.

The ADL member disapproves of misanthropy. He is aware that he has no monopoly on patriotism. He condemns partisan fanaticism and upholds the idea of helpfulness. With this spirit, the ADL member strives at strengthening and improving all the basic factors and forces contributing to the preservation of the Armenian nation.

The ADL member knows how to sacrifice his ego to the collective will, if and when decisions taken by the majority do not conform to his personal opinions.

The ADL member stands unselfishly for his people, his principles and his country.

F - THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Armenian Democratic Liberal Party is centrally organized. All functioning bodies and members work interdependently. Committees account for their activities to the membership and the membership is accountable to the committees.

Having adopted the equal, direct and secret balloting system, the ADL follows the principles of representative democracy. In other words, members elect representatives whom they entrust to elect

committees that deal with legislative matters and that carry out the party's current agenda.

Judicial bodies act independently of executive bodies.

The following table gives a picture of ADL's organizational structure from top down:

***General Delegates Convention;
Central Committee;
District Delegates Conventions;
District Committees;
Chapter General Assemblies;
Chapter Executive Committees.***

The first, third and fifth bodies are legislative; the second, fourth and sixth are executive.

The Armenian Democratic Liberal party functions in Armenia and in the Armenian Diaspora. The following provisions pertain to the ADL in the Diaspora.

The backbone of the ADL organization is the local Chapter. A Chapter may consist of as few as five members and may include more than 100 members. A District must comprise at least 100 members.

A member can only belong to one Chapter and must remain in close contact with the Chapter Executive Committee. A party member contributes actively to the solution of issues involving the party and votes at the Chapter General Assembly. These assemblies are convened by the Executive Committee of the Chapter, or by the request of one-third of the Chapter's members.

The Chapter Executive Committee is elected by the General Assembly of all Chapter members. The Committee is accountable to both the Chapter General Assembly and the District Committee.

The Chapter Executive Committee runs the Chapter's current affairs and executes the decisions taken at the General Assembly, as well as the directives of the District Committee. At the same time, it keeps in contact with its members and organizations operating in its local area and becomes involved in community affairs.

The Chapter Executive Committee is elected either for a period of one year or two years. To be eligible for election a person must be an active party member for at least two years.

Each District organizes its Delegates Convention either once a year or every other year. The District Delegates Convention is the supreme legislative body to which the Chapters and the District Committees are accountable. Legislative matters are decided at the convention. Rules governing internal affairs are adopted based upon the party's constitutional laws. The Convention scrutinizes the activities of the District Committee and the constituent Chapters, reformulates the party's local policy, elects a new District Committee, and takes care of other business.

The District Delegates Convention is composed of representatives (delegates) from the District Chapters who are elected during Chapter General Assemblies.

The District Committee consists of 7 to 11 members who have been active party members for at least three years. The District Committee enacts the decisions of the District Delegates Convention and the Central Committee. It conducts the party's external affairs, establishes new Chapters and watches over the Chapters' activities, etc.

The District Committee is accountable to both the District Delegates Convention and the Central Committee.

At least once every three years, with the participation of the delegates of all Districts, the General Delegates Convention is held. This is the supreme legislative body of the party to which all Districts are accountable.

The General Delegates Convention formulates and adopts the constitution of the party, outlines the party's general policy, scrutinizes the Districts' activities and elects a new Central Committee.

Potential members of the Central Committee must be active party members for at least five years.

The Central Committee is responsible for executing the General Delegates Convention decisions, managing of the party's general activities and for following up the Districts' activities.

G - THE PRESS

The ADL promotes its goals through the publication of periodicals, newspapers and newsletters. Over the decades the newspapers and periodicals published by the ADL and by organizations, movements and individuals who share the ideals of the ADL has numbered over 200, covering more than 50 cities in 22 countries.

Today, the ADL Central Committee, District Committees and Chapters publish many newsletters, newspapers and periodicals such as *Baïkar* and *The Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, Watertown, Mass., USA; *Arev*, Cairo, Egypt; *Nor Or*, Altadena, Calif., USA; *Zartonk*, Beirut, Lebanon; *Nor Ashkhar*, Athens, Greece; *Sardarabad*, Buenos Aires, Argentina; *Abaka*, Montreal, Canada; *Miutium*, Sydney, Australia; *Erepouni*, London, UK; *La lettre de l'ADL*, Paris, France; *Azk*, Yerevan, Armenia; *Tsayn Ramgavarats*, Gumri, Armenia.

H - THE MARCH

We are the Ramgavar soldiers free
The true children of Armenian ancestry,
Armed with the faith of our homeland
Side by side we march undaunted.

Our glory is work and struggle
Our word is true and filled with vigor,
May all Armenians scattered asunder
Join us from the four corners of the universe.

And our eyes fixed on the Massis*
With vows we announce in unison,
We are the Ramgavar soldiers free
The true children of Armenian ancestry,
Armed with the faith of our homeland
Let's march side by side, undaunted.

* Massis is the traditional name for Mount Ararat.

I - THE FLAG AND THE CREST

Representing our territorial claims, the ADL flag has the twin peaks of Mount Ararat in its center, set against a blue background. Hope for a radiant future is symbolized by the dawning sun.

The crest, in the shape of a shield, has a shovel in the center which represents agriculture, a compass which symbolizes industry, and a quill which is the sign of intelligence. The strength resulting from such a union is represented by a bundle in the middle of the crest with a hatchet jutting out of it. To the left, at the top and to the right of the crest are engraved the party's three initials: A.D.L., respectively.

J - THE MEMBER'S DECALOGUE

I am a liberal democrat, because through my party I can:

(1) Exercise my obligations towards mankind, my people and myself;

(2) Attach myself to my national heritage and secure my people's march to eternity;

(3) Base the existence of my nation not only on cultural and spiritual values, but also on the soil of the homeland and on the freedom guaranteed by the Armenian state;

(4) Exercise the right of equal opportunities, which guarantees the elimination of human misery in the society;

(5) Keep a free state of mind and search for truth through the constant collision of ideas, viewpoints and experiments;

(6) Exercise the right of individual initiative as means for economic growth;

(7) Respect the freedom and human rights of other individuals in accordance to the freedom and rights that I enjoy;

(8) Participate in protecting and promoting international peace through cooperating with all nations;

(9) Try to guarantee for my nation its place and its contribution in the international community of nations;

(10) Love my country, regardless of its regime and/or ruling government.