

Boghos Nubar's Papers
and the
Armenian Question
1915-1918
Documents

Edited and translated by
Vatche Ghazarian

Waltham
Mayreni Publishing

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Ghazarian, Vatche

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To the survivors of the Armenian genocide and their descendants.

A special word of appreciation to:

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Glossary

Allies - See Triple Entente.

Armenia Major - A term synonymous with Greater Armenia, indicates all the territories inhabited by Armenians since the dawn of history, excluding Armenia Minor and Cilicia. At the beginning of the twentieth century Greater Armenia included the six Armenian provinces under Ottoman rule, and Armenia, Karabakh and Nakhitchevan under Russian rule.

Armenia Minor - The trans-Euphrates section of Armenia, west to Greater Armenia. The boundaries of Armenia Minor underwent many changes throughout history. In its largest form it lay between the southeastern shores of the Black Sea (including Trebizond) and the Taurus Mountains in Cilicia. At the turn of twentieth century, Armenia Minor was mainly included in the vilayet of Sivas, with parts of it in the vilayets of Erzerum, Trebizond, Kharput (Mamuret el-Aziz), Aleppo, and Adana. Armenia Minor was also called Lesser Armenia.

Catholicos - The supreme religious leader of the Armenian people.

Duma - The Russian Parliament.

Greater Armenia - See Armenia Major.

Lesser Armenia - See Armenia Minor. In this book the term Lesser Armenia is given to Cilicia, most probably based on the fact that the boundaries of Lesser Armenia once reached the Cilician Taurus mountain ranges.

Quai d'Orsay - The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Six Provinces - See Vilayet.

Sublime Porte - The Ottoman/Turkish government.

Tetrad Entente - The Triple Entente was also called Tetrad Entente after Italy joined Great Britain, France, and Russia against the Triple Alliance in 1915.

Triple Alliance - A name originally given to a treaty signed in 1882 between Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Italy. However, when World War I broke up in 1914, Italy first remained neutral. Instead, Turkey joined Austria-Hungary and Germany. In this book Triple Alliance is the unity of Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Turkey.

Triple Entente - Great Britain, France, and Russia.

Upper Armenia - The first province of Greater Armenia, known also as Province of Karin after its main city's name. From this highland begins the Euphrates River and other rivers. It was composed of nine districts in the seventh century and corresponded to the vilayet of Erzerum at the turn of the twentieth century.

Vilayet - Administrative unit in Turkey established in 1866, based on the Constitution of 1864. In late nineteenth century, the Armenian territories under Ottoman rule were included in the vilayets of Van, Erzerum, Bitlis, Kharput, and Trebizond. Cilicia was included in the vilayet of Adana. During World War I, there were six Armenian vilayets (provinces) which are mentioned in this book—Van, Bitlis, Erzerum, Kharput (Mamuret el-Aziz), Diyarbakir, and Sivas.

Preface

At the moment when the Great War began Armenia, divided between Russia and Turkey, repressed by force or actual massacre, had no defense ... A grim alternative was presented to the Armenian leaders ... They took the remarkable decision that if war should come, their people in Turkey and in Russia should do their duty to their respective Governments. They thought it better to face fratricidal strife in the quarrels of others than to stake their existence upon the victory of either side...

When Turkey attacked Russian Armenia, the Czar's Government, fearing that a successful defense of Caucasia by Armenians would dangerously inflame the Nationalist aspirations of the race, conveyed a hundred and fifty thousand Armenian conscripts to the Polish and Galician fronts and brought other Russian troops to defend Armenian hearths and homes in Caucasia. Few of these hundred and fifty thousand Armenian soldiers survived the European battles or were able to return to Caucasia before the end of the War. This was hard measure. But worse remained. The Turkish war plan failed. Their offensive against Caucasia in December, 1914 and January, 1915 was defeated. They recoiled in deep resentment. They accused the Armenians of the Turkish eastern districts of having acted as spies and agents on behalf of Russia, and of having assailed the Turkish lines of communication. These charges were probably true; but true or false, they provoked a vengeance which was also in accord with deliberate policy. In 1915 the Turkish Government began, and ruthlessly carried out, the infamous general massacre and deportation of Armenians in Asia Minor. Three or four hundred thousand men, women, and children escaped into Russian territory and others into Persia or Mesopotamia; but the clearance of the race from Asia Minor was about as complete as such an act, on a scale so great, could well be. It is supposed that about one and a quarter millions of Armenians were involved, of whom more than half perished. There is no reasonable doubt that this crime was planned and executed for political reasons. The opportunity presented itself for clearing Turkish soil of a Christian race opposed to all Turkish ambitions, cherishing National ambitions that could only be satisfied at the expense of Turkey and planted geographically between Turkish and Caucasian Moslems. It may well be that the British attack on the Gallipoli Peninsula stimulated the merciless fury of the Turkish Government. Even, thought the Pan-Turks, if Constantinople were to fall and Turkey lost the war, the clearance would have been effected and a permanent advantage for the future of the Turkish race would be gained...

The arrival of the Grand Duke Nicholas in the Caucasus at the beginning of 1916, his masterly capture of Erzeroum in February, 1916, and his conquests of Turkish territory in North-Eastern Asia Minor revived Armenian hopes. The entry of the United States raised them higher. But the Russian Revolution quenched this flicker.

Winston Churchill, *The World Crisis—1918–1928: The Aftermath*
(New York, 1929) 428–433.

On This Book

This book of correspondence, minutes, and memoranda is about the aspirations of a people for autonomy and a dignified life. It is about conflicting political interests and an unprecedented tragedy. It is about crumbling empires and emerging nations. It is about World War I.

The presented documents reflect the events of 1915 through 1918 from the perspective of the Armenian National Delegation, who sided with the Triple Entente (Russia, France, and Great Britain) in order to fight for Armenian rights, as well as the rights of all persecuted peoples against the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey).

These documents do not present the entirety of the negotiations entrusted to the Armenian National Delegation, even though they clearly outline the major developments during World War I.

The reason only a portion of the archives is translated here is a simple one. The originals of the documents presented in this book have vanished!

In 1923, Kapriel Noradounghian, Boghos Nubar's successor as the president of the Armenian National Delegation, asked Aram Andonian, the director of the Bibliothèque Nubar in Paris, France, to prepare "a concise translation of the most important documents" in the archive, paying special attention to the negotiations of the delegation.¹

Andonian did what he was asked. He translated the French and English documents, and, fortunately, copied the Armenian language correspondence. Strangely enough, though, the source material Andonian used was never returned to the archives.

Therefore, at this stage, the aim of this work was to translate "Andonian's documents," and put them into circulation.

A comparison of a sampling of Andonian's translations with some original documents kept at the State Central Archives in Yerevan, Armenia, was done. The documents showed a similarity of content which supports the conclusion that Andonian did a thorough job and that "his documents" should be considered, in their essence, as authentic as the missing originals.

On Boghos Nubar

A pharos of hope...

Yervant Odian, a famous Armenian satirist, in a biographical sketch on Boghos Nubar says: "When His Holiness the Catholicos formed the

¹ Boghos Nubar dictated and wrote his minutes in French—his first language. His second language was English. *Nubar and Nubarashen*, a publication of the General Directorship of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (Paris, 1929), 21.

Armenian Delegation for Europe and appointed Boghos Pasha president, this name suddenly gained an unprecedented popularity ... It became a pharos of hope to which all eyes turned.”²

Furthermore, Odian recalls Poincaré, the French president, referring to Boghos Nubar as “one of those few people who combines a highest moral with a great intellect.”³

Charged to represent a nation with no independent country as the head of the Armenian National Delegation and the official representative of the Catholicos of All Armenians, Boghos Nubar was politically the most centripetal Armenian figure during the years 1913 through 1918.

Boghos Nubar (1851–1930) was born in Constantinople to a family known for its dedication to the well-being of the Armenian people.

His great-great-grandfather, Nubar, ruled the Chaventour district in Karabakh. It is told that Nubar was a great warrior who successfully protected his district against enemies until the assassination of Mekhitar Sparapet, the head of the Armenian army, in 1730. After Mekhitar’s death, Nubar was forced to abandon his homeland and settle in Smyrna, in the Ottoman Empire.⁴

Boghos Nubar’s father, Nubar Pasha (1825–1899), was an astute politician who was thrice appointed prime minister of Egypt and was instrumental in introducing judiciary reforms in Egypt. He was also credited for playing an important role in the opening of the Suez Canal.⁵

Boghos Nubar was a graduate of Ecole Centrale of Paris as a technician-geometrician. In 1900, he was awarded a French gold medal and honorary degree for the invention of an automated plough. In 1906, he was again awarded a gold medal and another French honorary degree at Milan’s agricultural exposition.

In 1905, as the delegate of the Egyptian government to the first general convention of Rome’s International Agricultural Institute, Boghos Nubar was instrumental in founding the International Institute of Agriculture which then helped improve agricultural techniques in many parts of the world.

Boghos Nubar also helped reorganize the railway system in Egypt, and founded the town of Heliopolis adjacent to Cairo.

Over the years, Boghos Nubar was awarded the Belgian Ordre de Léopold and the Egyptian “Mejidieh,” “Osmanieh,” and “Nile” honorary degrees and medals for distinguished services.⁶

² Yervant Odian, *Boghos Pasha Nubar* (Istanbul, 1913), 3–4.

³ *Ibid.*, 92–93.

⁴ V. and B. Zartarian Bros., *Hishadagaran* (Monument), vol. II (Istanbul, 1911), 277.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 284–287.

⁶ *Nubar and Nubarashen*, a publication of the General Directorship of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (Paris, 1929), 5–7.

Boghos Nubar's services to the Armenian people began in the late nineteenth century after his election as chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Armenian Diocese in Alexandria, Egypt. As chairman he provided shelter and jobs to Armenian refugees fleeing the Ottoman massacres of 1895–1896. These massacres, perpetrated by Sultan Abdul Hamid, took 300,000 lives and forced tens of thousands additional Armenians to flee the Ottoman Empire and find refuge in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States.

Boghos Nubar's most significant Armenian achievement is generally considered to be the founding of the Armenian General Benevolent Union in Cairo, Egypt, in 1906. This membership organization, which soon boasted chapters throughout the world, became the largest Armenian philanthropic association in history. Though presented as nonpolitical by the founders,⁷ the union was political in nature.⁸ It was formed to “help the Armenians of the East advance intellectually and morally; improve their financial conditions; and encourage any publication which serves the stated purpose.”⁹

Boghos Nubar remained life-president of the union until his retirement in 1928. He donated his time and money to the strengthening of the union.

The union, in turn, brought widespread recognition for Boghos Nubar among Armenian communities throughout the world. He emerged as the kind of nonpartisan leader capable of channeling the unified participation of most Armenian political and nonpolitical organizations toward the realization of national goals. His personal wealth and his father's reputation as the brightest Armenian politician of modern times also were contributing factors in his emergence as a unique leader.¹⁰

Therefore, his appointment, in December 1912, to head the Armenian National Delegation by the spiritual leader of the Armenian people, the Catholicos of All Armenians, Kevork V, was accepted by all parties with almost no objection.

⁷ *Vosgemadian Haygagan Parekordzagan Enthanour Mioutian* (Golden-Album of the Armenian General Benevolent Union), Silver Jubilee: 1906–1931, vol. I (Paris, 1935), 25.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 452–453. Vahan Malezian, the general director of the union, stated that precautionary measures were taken to not indicate that the purpose of the union was to assist all those who suffer for being Armenian, and to try to free Armenians everywhere.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁰ During the negotiations at Berlin in 1878, Nubar Pasha Nubarian presented a plan for Armenian reforms, suggesting that Armenians ask for civil liberties under an Armenian general governor to be appointed for a term of six to seven years, with a structure similar to the one implemented in Lebanon. The Armenian representatives to Berlin rejected Nubar's plan as “very modest.” Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade Hayevrous Haraperoutiounnerou Louysin Dag* (Armenia and the Armenian Case in Light of Armeno-Russian Relations) (Cairo, 1957), 42–48.

On the Armenian Question

A lesson of iron spoon

The origin of the Armenian Question dates back to the fourteenth century when the last Armenian kingdom in Cilicia (Southern Anatolia) collapsed in 1375. It was then that the aspiration of reestablishing Armenian sovereignty was planted. However, the question officially gained recognition in the nineteenth century as part of the Eastern Question.

The term Eastern Question was first used in 1822, during the congress of the Holy Alliance in Verona, where the powers discussed the tense situation in the Balkans, upon eruption of the Greek liberation movement. At this point, the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire in Eastern Europe and Asia Minor became a major issue in world politics for the first time.¹¹

The Armenian Question, as such, surfaced at the end of the Russo-Turkish war of 1878, during negotiations which resulted in the Treaty of San Stefano (March 3, 1878) and its Article XVI. The article stated: "Since the evacuation of Russian troops from the territories which they occupy in Armenia and which ought to be returned to Turkey could give rise to conflicts and complications prejudicial to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte, with no further delay, promises to bring about the improvements and reforms called for by local needs in provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their safety against the Kurds and the Circassians."¹²

Article XVI, however, was soon changed into Article LXI during the Congress of Berlin on July 8, 1878. This version bound the Porte to introduce "without further loss of time such ameliorations and reforms as are called for by the local conditions of the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to take measures to protect them against the Circassians and Kurds."¹³

¹¹ "Eastern Question...means the problem or group of problems that result from the occupation of Constantinople and the Balkan Peninsula by the Turks ...The solution of the problem...depended upon the answer to two questions: Was Turkey to be executed entirely from Europe, and if so, how was her territory to be distributed? Was Russia, or Austria, or any other Power to win practical mastery of the Danube and Dardanelles by establishing a semi-protectorate over the Balkan nations or Turkey?" Charles Seymour, *The Diplomatic Background of the War 1870–1914* (New Haven, 1916), 195.

¹² Yves Ternon, *The Armenians—History of a Genocide* (New York, 1981), 51. This document is significant in many ways. Turkey accepted that the occupied territories called the Armenian provinces were Armenia; that there was a need for reforms; and that there was an issue of physical safety for the Armenians.

¹³ Sir A. W. Ward and G. P. Gooch, *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy 1783–1919*, (New York, 1923) 141.

The Treaty of Berlin sparked a turn in Armenian political thought. Disappointed Armenians embraced the idea of armed struggle—a by-product necessitated by the oppressive Ottoman regime. In a February 20, 1894, telegram Paul Cambon, the French ambassador to Constantinople, attributed the birth of the Armenian revolutionary phenomenon to the intrigues of the Ottomans.¹⁴ Many scholars adopted Cambon's theory,¹⁵ while others, such as Roy Douglas, related the rise of Armenian revolutionary tendencies to the failure of the European powers to take effective actions.¹⁶

This approach, however, wrongly deprives Armenians of their role as active participants in determining their destiny. No doubt, the Armenians were subject to manipulations by the Ottoman authorities and the European powers. But also, no doubt, they were keenly aware of the logic of history in the nineteenth century—armed resistance is the means of realizing national aspirations, whether modest or ambitious, whether security of life or independence.

Liberation movements in Turkish Europe,¹⁷ and the events in Zeitun,¹⁸ all preceding the Treaty of Berlin or coinciding with it, taught Armenian leaders that none of their national aspirations could be realized without the use of power. This belief was well illustrated by Archbishop Khrimian in a sermon delivered at Constantinople in 1878. Khrimian compared the Treaty of Berlin to a dish of liberty from which the Bulgarians, Serbs, and Montenegrins took their shares thanks to their iron spoons, while the Armenians ate nothing because their spoon was made of paper.¹⁹

The organization of Armenian armed societies and revolutionary parties took place at a time when the major European powers and the Ottoman

¹⁴ Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide* (Providence, 1995) 34–36.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 34–36. See also Yves Ternon, *The Armenians—History of a Genocide* (New York, 1981), 73.

¹⁶ Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide* (Providence, 1995), 36.

¹⁷ Serbia gained autonomy from the Ottoman Empire in 1815, after a revolt in 1804; Greece gained independence after the eight years' war in 1829; Bulgaria's independence in 1878 was a result of a rebellion which began in 1876.

¹⁸ Zeitun, known as the Armenian Montenegro, was granted semiautonomy in 1622. The Sublime Porte later made constant attempts to subjugate the town. In the nineteenth century, Zeitun revolted twice against Ottoman oppressive policies. The first was the revolt of 1862, which ended with a French intervention and the appointment of a Turkish governor, and the second began in 1877 and resulted in the reinstatement of the semiautonomous status of the town in 1879.

¹⁹ Louisa Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement—The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963), 28–29.

Empire were in constant conflict, and the European powers increased the intensity of their interventions on behalf of the Ottoman Empire's Christian population.

One such intervention was in May 1895, when the British, French, and Russians called for reforms in the Armenian provinces. The call was answered by widespread massacres organized by Abdul Hamid II. The sultan played on the conflicting interests of the powers to claim the lives of at least 300,000 Armenians.

This protogenocide offered the first evidence of a Turkish policy of ridding the empire of the Armenians and the Armenian Question.²⁰

Did Armenian revolutionaries provoke these massacres, and, later, the genocide? Ronald Suny brilliantly presents the hierarchy of preceding developments: how the failure of reform in the Ottoman Empire on legal grounds precipitated the search for alternatives (organized resistance); how resistance provoked responses which, in turn, provoked more resistance and foreign interventions; how the Ottoman government planned to eliminate the Armenian threat.²¹

In 1908 the Young Turk movement and the declaration of a new constitution brought the Armenians some hope that they would finally enjoy the freedom, justice, and equality they sought as Ottoman subjects. But the Young Turks soon demonstrated their intentions to follow the policy of their predecessors, when in the spring of 1909 approximately 30,000 Armenians were massacred in the Cilician city of Adana and surrounding villages.²²

The Balkan War of 1912–1913 ended with a partial dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. Turkey lost, almost entirely, its holdings in Europe. Thus, the Armenian Question was brought to a new juncture.

On the War and its Aims in Asia Minor

“Certain of the European states have desired that Ottoman power should be weakened if not destroyed, while others have desired that it should be reaffirmed. But to none of them has the fate of the Turkish Empire been a question of indifference.”
C. Seymour, *The Diplomatic Background of the War 1870–1914* (New Haven, 1916) 197.

World War I began on July 28, 1914, exactly a month after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo, Serbia. Pan-Germanism clashed with Pan-Slavism. The culmination of all colonialist

²⁰ In the sixteenth century, Sultan Selim I intended to massacre the whole of the Christian population of his dominion. Selim's designs became possible in the twentieth century when German advisors began to counsel the Turkish government. J. Selden Willmore, *The Great Crime and its Moral* (New York, 1917), 213–214.

²¹ Ronald Grigor Suny, *Armenia in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago, 1983), 16–17.

²² J. Selden Willmore, *The Great Crime and its Moral* (New York, 1917), 213–214.

plans divided Europe into two major groups—the Triple Entente, and the Triple Alliance.

On July 28, 1914, the Austro-Hungarians declared war on Serbia. Soon after, on August 1, Germany declared war on Russia; two days later France and Germany were caught in war; on August 4, Great Britain declared war on Germany; a day later Austria-Hungary declared war on Russia; a week later Britain and France jointly declared war on Austria-Hungary; and finally Turkey came to the picture, entering the war on November 1, 1914.

The stage was set. One of the most crucial dramas of the Armenian Question began to play.

* * *

Turkey's ambition included restoration of the Ottoman Empire and its development into a Pan-Turkic state, or, at least, the maintenance of its territorial integrity in Asia Minor. To do so, Turkey aligned with Germany, wrongly believing that Germany had no territorial ambitions, except a desire to strengthen the Ottoman Empire. By this time Britain had already established itself in Egypt; Italy had seized Tripoli in Africa; France was known for its desire for Syria; and Russia had demonstrated determination to possess Armenia and the Straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. It was not known, perhaps, to the Young Turks that the Germans "were striving for a gradual occupation of the entire territory in the form of a protectorate," as was concluded by the Austro-Hungarian military attaché at Constantinople.²³

Djemal, the Turkish war minister, was convinced—a belief probably shared by other Young Turks—that the Entente powers had promised to deliver Constantinople to Russia.²⁴ This led to the secret Turko-German treaty of August 2, 1914, by which Turkey agreed to intervene in any struggle in which Germany and its Austro-Hungarian ally might be engaged.

In order to maintain its territorial integrity, Turkey also had to rid itself of any and all internal threats. "The war gave the Turks the opportunity they had so long desired...the opportunity namely of settling the racial problems in their empire. In 1915, they struck out on a policy of 'Turkification' or of destruction outright of the alien elements in their midst. The Armenian deportations represented an extreme case of their activities."²⁵

The threat to hold Turkish leaders responsible for the Armenian massacres by the Allies, in 1915, apparently became an additional reason for the Turkish leaders to look upon Germany "as their only shelter from punishment by outraged Christianity."²⁶

²³ Bernadette E. Schmitt, *The Coming of the War 1914*, vol. I (New York, 1930), 92.

²⁴ Djemal Pasha, *Memoirs of a Turkish Statesman* (London, 1922), 67.

²⁵ Frank P. Chambers, *The War Behind the War 1914–1918* (New York, 1939), 87

²⁶ Charles F. Horne (ed.), *Source Records of the Great War*, vol. III (National Alumni, 1923), xxxi.

Since the days of Peter the Great and Catherine II, Russia's aim had been to rule the northeastern Mediterranean, turning the Black Sea into a Russian lake, and securing the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus under its control.²⁷

Upon Russia's defeat in Manchuria at the hands of Japan, winning control over the Straits became Russia's first concern. The rise of Germany had sealed off the Baltic Sea. Access to the Pacific Ocean was cut off by Japan, and reaching the Persian Gulf was sacrificed to Great Britain in 1907.²⁸

On August 16, 1914, the British, French, and Russian governments, unaware of the Turko-German pact, offered a guarantee of independence and territorial integrity to Turkey on the condition that it continue its neutrality—a game Turkey played successfully until its army was fully mobilized. It was only after Turkey's entry into the war that Russia was freed to revert to its historical ambition.²⁹

The Dardanelles was a pivotal area also desired by Austria-Hungary because of its importance to Austrian trade. Gaining control over the Danube River was meaningless without control of the Straits. Especially after Austria's defeat in Prussia in 1866, and its lost hopes for control over Central Europe, Austria's ambitions turned toward southeastern Europe where it confronted the Slavic resistance and Russia, the Slavic protector.

Germany was new to the game. It wasn't long ago that for Bismarck the whole Eastern Question was not worth the bones of a single "Pomeranian grenadier." But things changed. In its search for new markets, Germany turned its eyes to Mesopotamia, believing it could penetrate without much trouble.

The Turkish concession granted to Germany in 1899 to extend a railway from Konia to the Persian Gulf was the first step in the German plan. The emerging Baghdad railway project also meant emerging German domination in Mesopotamia, certainly seen as a threat by both Russia and Britain.

Rohrbach, the German ideologue—generally considered the mastermind behind the idea that led to the deportation of the Armenians to Mesopotamia as a reinforcement to the Baghdad railway project—had a theory that "England can be attacked and mortally wounded by land from Europe only in one place—Egypt."³⁰

²⁷ "For Russia the whole Eastern Question is summed up in these words: Under whose authority are the Straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles? Who is their possessor?" S. Goriainow, *Le Bosphore et les Dardanelles* (Paris, 1910), 1.

²⁸ Charles Seymour, *The Diplomatic Background of the War 1870–1914* (New Haven, 1916), 198–199.

²⁹ Edward Grey, *Twenty-Five Years*, vol. II (London, 1925), 173–174.

³⁰ Charles Seymour, *The Diplomatic Background of the War 1870–1914* (New Haven, 1916), 206.

After all, as described by Bismarck, Egypt was the “neck of the British Empire.” The loss of Egypt would mean cutting Britain from India, as well as from central and east Africa.

Rohrbach also suggested strengthening Turkey as a way to defeat the British and to gain control over the Moslems in Asia.

William II’s address to the sultan, asking him to tell the 300 million Moslems of the world that the kaiser is “their friend,”³¹ clearly indicated the link between Rohrbach’s theories and German diplomacy.

In 1913, when the German government sent General Liman von Sanders to Constantinople to train the Ottoman troops, the friction between Russia and Germany escalated into a direct confrontation. In a communique sent by Paul Cambon, the French ambassador to Constantinople, to the French government, it was stated that with Liman von Sander’s contract *the key to the straits* was put into German hands.³²

This was the state of affairs on the eve of World War I.

The Allies did not have a collectively formulated war aim. The war aims that developed sprang “from a tangle of contradictory motives. Each wanted to improve its position—almost as much against its present partners as against Germany.”³³

The first mutual agreement was reached between Russia and Great Britain against Germany to counter the threat to Mesopotamia and the straits. The Russians made it clear that they wanted the Straits. King George V, on November 13, 1914, told the Russian ambassador that the Straits must be Russian. Five days later, the British announced their intent to annex Egypt.

This was the prelude of negotiations for partitions in war zones and beyond after the war was over.

The negotiations led, on January 3, 1916, to the Sykes-Picot Agreement between France and Great Britain. However, the agreement was modified on April 26, 1916, to gain Russia’s approval. Another modification happened later, in April 1917, to include Italy in the agreement by allotting certain Ottoman territories to Italy.

By April 1916, the Sykes-Picot Agreement allotted Syria, Cilicia, and three Armenian provinces to France; Mesopotamia and Palestine to Britain, with the exception of Jerusalem; and Russia received Constantinople with the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, the province of Trebizond, and the remaining three Armenian provinces in Eastern Anatolia.

The Russian Revolution upset this whole scheme.

³¹ Herbert Henry Asquith, *The Genesis of the War* (New York, 1923), 82.

³² Sidney Bradshaw Fay, *The Origins of the World War* (New York, 1930), 515.

³³ *Ibid.*, 537.

On the Armenian National Delegation

A tool for Russia!

The sociopolitical condition of the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan War alarmed Armenians living in the Caucasus. In October 1912, Russian Armenians convened and appealed to the czar for an intervention. Later, on November 25, 1912, the Armenians of the Caucasus created a National Bureau in Tiflis, the Georgian capital.

Meanwhile, on November 10, 1912, the Catholicos of All Armenians invited Boghos Nubar to head the Armenian National Delegation³⁴ to advocate the Armenian problem before European powers who were discussing the Balkan War in London.³⁵

The Armenians worked on three levels: Boghos Nubar in Paris and London; Dr. Hagop Zavriev in Petrograd; and the Security Council of the Armenian Parliament in Constantinople.³⁶

The Security Council, in a report dated December 4, 1913, stated that even though the National Delegation was appointed by the Catholicos in response to the appeal of the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, and by the consent of the Russian government, the Security Council was the directing force, and Boghos Nubar closely collaborated with it.³⁷

Despite this statement, the tone for the activities of the National Delegation, and of the concerned Armenian bodies in general, was set by the Russian government.³⁸

³⁴ The National Delegation was comprised of Archbishop Kevork Utugian of Paris, primate of the Armenians in Europe; Yakoub Artin Pasha of Egypt, a founder of the Armenian General Benevolent Union and the president of the Egyptian Academy; Minas Cheraz of Paris, secretary of the Armenian Delegation to the Berlin Congress in 1878; and Haroutioun Mosditchian of London.

³⁵ Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade* (Armenia and the Armenian Case): documents (Cairo, 1946), 144–145.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 145.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 146–165.

³⁸ Evidence for Russia's predominant role is abundant. According to the above-mentioned report, the Armenian Patriarchate was supposed to formulate the final proposal "after obtaining the views of the Russian government about it." Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade* (Armenia and the Armenian Case): documents (Cairo, 1946), 151. After the proposal was ready, the Russian government told the Patriarchate that it preferred that the proposal be rephrased and submitted to the powers by Andre Mandelstam, the first dragoman of the Russian Embassy in Constantinople. *Ibid.*, 152. Boghos Nubar stayed in Paris instead of going to London because of the Russian government's opposition. Vorontsov-Dashkov, in his letter of December 22, 1912, immediately after Nubar's appointment, told the Catholicos that the imperial government "finds that it would be more beneficial for the Armenians to

The Armenian National Delegation's aim was to secure reforms in the Armenian provinces of the Ottoman Empire, based on the Treaty of Berlin and the reforms project of 1895, under collective supervision of the powers.³⁹ Asking for autonomy or independence was not part of the proposals of the delegation.

After negotiations between the Armenians and major European powers on one hand, and between major European powers and Turkey on the other, Turkey agreed to the reforms project and signed the agreement on February 8, 1914.

Thus, the Armenian National Delegation's mission was successfully completed. Even though the outcome did not meet the expectations of most Armenians, it was considered a major success, and Boghos Nubar was credited accordingly.

The outbreak of the Great War necessitated the activation of the Armenian National Delegation with a chain of events identical to the initial phase—the National Bureau of Tiflis, disturbed by news reaching it from the Armenian provinces, appealed to the Catholicos to intervene; the Catholicos, in turn, appealed on August 4, 1914, to the czar through the viceroy of the Caucasus; Vorontsov-Dashkov replied on September 2, 1914, announcing that Russia would see that the reforms in the Armenian provinces be carried out, provided that all Armenians, whether in the Caucasus or across the borders, follow his instructions.⁴⁰

According to the Catholicos' letter of August 4, the Armenians wanted: (1) to create an integral region from the Armenian provinces of Anatolia; (2) to appoint, in that region, a Christian governor suggested by Russia; (3) to apply self-governance in the region with equal representation of Christians and Moslems; (4) to trust the supervision of reforms exclusively to Russia.⁴¹

refrain from presenting the Armenian problem to the consortium of the powers in London, because [the Russians] suspect that the powers would reach an unanimous decision in that respect." Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade Hayevrou Haraperoutiounnerou Louysin Dag* (Armenia and the Armenian Case in Light of Armeno-Russian Relations) (Cairo, 1957), 156–157. In Paris, Boghos Nubar went to the Russian ambassador and asked him whether it was time to appeal to the powers or not. Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdane Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatghteroum 1828–1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828–1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 168–169.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade Hayevrou Haraperoutiounnerou Louysin Dag* (Armenia and the Armenian Case in Light of Armeno-Russian Relations) (Cairo, 1957), 174.

⁴¹ Nersesian and Sahagian (eds.), *Hayeri Tseghasbanoutiounne Osmanian Gays-routiounoum* (The Genocide of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire) (Yerevan, 1991), 331–332.

Immediately after Turkey's entering the war, the Catholicos reformulated the Armenian demands in a letter dated November 8, 1914, in which he requested that an autonomous Armenia be formed comprised of the six Armenian vilayets and Cilicia.⁴²

An ambiguous response was delivered this time by the czar himself to the Catholicos in Tiflis: "A bright future awaits the Armenians," and "The Armenian Question will be solved according to the expectations of the Armenians."⁴³

Discussions followed between Armenian representatives and the Russian foreign ministry in Petrograd. The result was a document prepared by the Armenians which outlined their demands and was considered as a plan of action, with no Russian commitment with regard to its realization (see document 8). Consequently, the revival of the Armenian National Delegation was decided.

On April 28, 1915, a telegram by the Catholicos to Boghos Nubar signaled the beginning of the second phase of the mission of the Armenian National Delegation.

During phase two, the delegation went through four stages:

(1) A period of active negotiations during a time when the Allies were optimistic about the outcome of the war⁴⁴ and were preoccupied with their military operations;

(2) A period of stalemate, when it was clear that the war would last longer than anticipated, and during which discussions of the minor problems of minor nations were placed on the back burner. This period ended with the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which included the Armenians;

(3) A period of heavy involvement in organizational matters related to Armenian volunteers and refugees. During this period, the Allies were in dire need of the manpower of minor nations, such as the Armenians. Characteristic of this period was sporadic negotiations and the reformulation of the Armenian demands in accordance with international developments, especially once the United States entered the war (April 6, 1917), and again when the Russian Revolution led to the final break-up of the delegation from Russia;

(4) A final period of extensive negotiations, together with the Delegation

⁴² Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade* (Armenia and the Armenian Case): documents (Cairo, 1946), 196–197.

⁴³ Jon Giragosian, *Aratchin Hamashkharhayin Baderazme yev Arevmdahayoutioun* (The First World War and the Western Armenians) (Yerevan, 1967), 229. Gilbert comments: "With these words, the fate of hundreds and thousands of Armenians was endangered, as Turkey saw in its own large Armenian minority a source of fifth column activity, treachery and disloyalty." Martin Gilbert, *The First World War—A Complete History* (New York, 1994), 108.

⁴⁴ Carlton J. H. Hayes, *A Brief History of the Great War* (New York, 1920), 80

of the Republic of Armenia, to ensure that Armenian aspirations would be satisfied by the Paris Peace Conference and subsequent treaties. This period was embarked upon in 1918, and continued until 1924, when the delegation was dissolved.

This book brings to life the first two periods and the sporadic negotiations which took place during the third period.

On Conflicting Interests

A matter of numbers...

What were the real intentions of the Allies vis-à-vis Western or Turkish Armenia and its population, and was it possible to match Armenian interests and demands with those of the Allies collectively or any one of them separately?

Great Britain had no interest in controlling the Armenian provinces. British foreign policy and aspiration focused on northern Africa and Mesopotamia. Britain's concern in the Armenian territories extended only in relation to its interests in Mesopotamia. The Armenian territories were primarily French and Russian concerns.

Given the British focus, its reluctance to give a positive answer to the Armenian appeals for an expedition in Cilicia is understandable,⁴⁵ and its hesitation to sign the collective warning issued on May 25, 1915, against the Sublime Porte, which held Turkish officials personally responsible for the Armenian massacres becomes clearer.⁴⁶

The massacres, however, were exploited by Britain in order to influence American public opinion especially and to bring the United States into the war.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Seemingly a French opposition put an end to Kitchener's initial plan of sending an expedition to Cilicia. An agreement dated January 27, 1915, between Churchill and Ogagnord clearly indicated French interests' supremacy in Cilicia.

⁴⁶ Benckendorff wrote to Sazonov about Grey's hesitation about signing a joint declaration. Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdane Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatghteroum 1828–1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828–1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 376–377. The British government had to be concerned not to provoke anti-British sentiments among its Moslem subjects. It was with similar concerns that the British government demanded that French authorities remove the Armenian survivors of Musa Dagh from Port Said, Egypt, which was a British protectorate. Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question 1915–1923* (London, 1984), 91.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 74–75, 80. Also see Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes puissances l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives Françaises 1914–1918* (Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1983), 67.

The tactic of engaging the United States in war by way of the Armenian issue was considered equally by Russia. Russian encouragement of the Catholicos of All Armenians to appeal to the president of the United States is evidence of its desire to involve both countries in the war.

Russia's interest in the Armenian provinces dated back to the days of Peter the Great. By 1912, during the Balkan War, Vorontsov-Dashkov initiated a new policy designed to agitate pro-Russian sentiments among the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire, especially in the territories of Eastern Anatolia that might easily become a battleground for Russia.⁴⁸

This change, though, was not accompanied by a change in policy vis-à-vis Turkish territorial integrity. Russia's primary concern was to maintain the territorial integrity of its neighbor in Asia for two reasons: (1) to prevent any European presence in the region as a result of an Ottoman disintegration; (2) to prevent an autonomous Armenia on its borders which might ignite disturbances among the Armenians of the Caucasus who were not happy Russian subjects.⁴⁹

This policy was perpetuated in Russia even after the Sykes-Picot Agreement of April 1916. Russia's preference, as stated by the foreign minister on December 21, 1916, was an independent Turkish state, as large as possible, inclined politically and economically toward Russia.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade Hayevrou Haraperoutiounnerou Louysin Dag* (Armenia and the Armenian Case in the Light of Armeno-Russian Relations) (Cairo, 1957), 150–153.

⁴⁹ Sazonov, in a letter dated November 30, 1912, addressed to the Russian ambassador in Constantinople, stated that he advised the Turkish ambassador in Petrograd that Turkey should initiate reforms in Western Armenia in order to prevent any European intervention or any unpleasant development such as the “misfortunate war in the Balkans.” Sazonov asked his ambassador to convey a similar message to the Turkish Foreign Minister—who was Kapriel Noradounghian at the time—that Russia was friendly towards Turkey, and that Russia would like to avoid disturbances on its border. Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdan Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatgheroun 1828–1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828–1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 154–155. It is interesting to know that, in 1911, Sazonov was convinced that a fast collapse of Turkey was not desirable, and that Russia should do everything possible within the sphere of diplomacy to postpone such an event. This was a reflection of the overall Russian diplomacy vis-à-vis Turkey. A Russian diplomat in the same period stated the that it was better for the Turkey of the Young Turks to ignite in flames rather than collapse and become a share for all kinds of ambitions. Jon Giragosian, *Yeridturkere Badmoutian Tadasdani Arach* (The Young Turks Before the Judgement of History), vol. I (Yerevan, 1982), 191.

⁵⁰ Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade Hayevrou Haraperoutiounnerou Louysin Dag* (Armenia and the Armenian Case in Light of Armeno-Russian Relations) (Cairo, 1957), 193.

It might be safe to conclude that the Russian policy was: (1) to maintain as a priority, if possible, the integrity of the Ottoman Empire; (2) otherwise, to annex and russify as much territory as possible, in case the dismemberment of the empire became inevitable in Asia Minor.

An Armenian autonomy was never welcomed by czarist Russia, and the Russian government's real intentions were clearly demonstrated by its colonization of Armenian provinces in Turkey.⁵¹

After Russia consented to allot Syria and Cilicia to France, the Armenian Question became dependent mainly on Russian and French policies, though the British were still involved and partners in deciding conditions of peace, as seen in the London pact of September 5, 1914.⁵²

The fact that Boghos Nubar was asked to revive the National Delegation in late April 1915, after Russia had secured both British and French agreement to annex Armenia and the Straits, indicates a possibility that the revival of the delegation was initiated by Russia to "renege from its commitment"—a conclusion rightfully reached by Boghos Nubar after his meeting with Izvolski on May 26, 1915.⁵³

The plan which guided Boghos Nubar's negotiations,⁵⁴ called for an autonomous Armenia—the six Armenian vilayets and Cilicia—within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire and under Allied protection.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Many military or civilian administrators of the Caucasian front suggested populating the occupied Armenian territories with Russian refugees. Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade Hayevrou Haraperoutiounnerou Louysin Dag* (Armenia and the Armenian Case in Light of Armeno-Russian Relations) (Cairo, 1957), 185–186. Accordingly, Catholicos Kevork V and the National Bureau of Tiflis raised their concerns to the Russian government in June and July, 1915, only to receive Machiavellian answers. *Ibid.*, 186–189. When Sazonov suggested on June 27, 1915, a moderate policy vis-à-vis occupied Armenian territories, as opposed to two extreme tendencies—autonomous Armenia under Russian protection, or the replacement of Armenians with Moslems—Vorontsov-Dashkov agreed immediately. Furthermore, he stated: "There is no Armenian problem within the current borders of the Russian Empire;" meaning the borders prior to the occupation of the Armenian provinces. Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdane Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatgheroum 1828_1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828_1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 396_399. The Russian colonization of Western Armenia was a theme constantly discussed in the Duma, the Russian media, and in the policies of General Yudenich, the commander of the Caucasian army, in the occupied Armenian territories. A. N. Mnatzaganian, *Hay Zhoghoverti Voghperkoutiounne* (The Tragedy of the Armenian People) (Yerevan, 1965), 68–69.

⁵² R. B. Mowat, *A History of European Diplomacy 1914–1925* (London, 1928), 7.

⁵³ See document 29.

⁵⁴ See document 67.

⁵⁵ See document 8.

Since the Russian government had agreed to allot Cilicia to France, it made no open commitment to the Armenian plan. Russia placed the burden of the plan's realization upon the Armenians themselves.

Furthermore, Russia declared to France that it would grant autonomy to Armenia rather than annex it.⁵⁶

The importance of this message lay in the possibilities it offered to the Armenians in shaping the theory of annexation of Cilicia to an autonomous Armenia in order to turn Armenia into a vibrant and self-sufficient state. Boghos Nubar developed the idea brilliantly in his memoranda and during his negotiations.

Thus, from the very beginning, Armenian aspirations were caught in the middle of conflicting Russian and French interests, both of which were based on the theory of annexation rather than autonomy.

After the failure of the Allies in the Dardanelles, Boghos Nubar—who was a pacifist and a conservative, and who categorically opposed the idea of armed struggle—came, in July 1915, to the conclusion that the Armenians should rely on themselves and on their volunteers.⁵⁷ It was too late though, for two reasons: (1) by mid-1915, close to 800,000 Armenians had already been massacred, depriving the Armenian provinces of the manpower to fight; (2) the Allies suffered from a severe shortage in ammunition, therefore, practically, they were unable to give any to the Armenians. In addition, by this time Russia was limiting the number of Armenian volunteers, fearing that they may bring about a movement of national liberation against it.⁵⁸

In August 1915, the Russian intentions were expressed through the first interpreter of the Russian Embassy in London. Sablin stated that Russia must annex Armenia for the good of the Armenians; otherwise, a new problem will be added to Russia's already existing problems with Poland and Bulgaria—Armenia irredanta.⁵⁹

By the end of 1915, Boghos Nubar arrived at three main conclusions: (1) because of the extermination of at least 800,000 Armenians, the Armenian Question was transformed into a new issue; (2) the volunteer movement was a source of trouble, being used by the Young Turks as justification for their Armenocidal plans; and (3) there was no sense in continuing negotiations with the Allies when all efforts would be fruitless.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ See document 16.

⁵⁷ See document 122.

⁵⁸ Dzadour Aghayan, *Hay Zhoghoverti Azadakragan Baykari Badmoutiounits* (From the History of the Struggle for Liberation of the Armenian People) (Yerevan, 1976), 373. Besides the 5,000 volunteers, there were 200,000 Armenians serving in the Russian army during World War I. Ibid., 373.

⁵⁹ See document 145.

⁶⁰ See document 171.

The hopes for Armenian autonomy, according to the initial plan of the Armenian National Delegation, suffered further by August 1916. France made it clear in March 1916 that it would not oppose any Russian policy in Armenia;⁶¹ England stated that it was giving Russia a free hand in settling the Armenian case despite its dissatisfaction with the Russian desire to annex Armenia;⁶² and Russia exposed its real agenda against Armenian autonomy under its new foreign minister Stürmer.⁶³

By mid-1916 it was time for Boghos Nubar to reformulate Armenian interests and to identify and acknowledge France as the state with which Armenian interests best coincided. According to the reformulated Armenian desires, France was to be allotted as vast a territory as possible in Asiatic Turkey, provided that France granted autonomy to the Armenians.⁶⁴

The French government insinuated that the Armenians could count on its total goodwill.⁶⁵ By the end of 1916, this evolved into a commitment by France to grant autonomy to the Armenians, especially after Boghos Nubar was included in the Sykes-Picot Agreement negotiations, and France received Boghos Nubar's agreement for Armenian legions to fight alongside France in Asiatic Turkey, and particularly in Cilicia.⁶⁶

This success was put at stake after the United States entered the war in April 1917, and after the Russian Provisional Government revised the foreign policy of Russia. It was time for the Armenian National Delegation to once again reformulate the Armenian desires. This time, the delegation reverted back to its initial plan with some modifications—the creation of a neutralized autonomous Armenia (the six vilayets and Cilicia, together with Mersin, and Alexandretta) under Allied protection, with a mandate to one power, preferably the United States.

The documents in this book do not cover the developments that followed and led to the Treaty of Sévres (August 10, 1920), which treated Armenia favorably, or later, to the Treaty of Lausanne (July 24, 1923), which reduced the Armenian Question to a matter of minority rights.

Despite Boghos Nubar's talent, and despite the commitment and courage of the many Armenian volunteers, the Armenian Question, in the sense of establishing Armenian autonomy, and, eventually, sovereignty in Western Armenia and Cilicia, was doomed to failure for a very simple yet significant reason—by 1918 the six Armenian provinces and Cilicia were almost entirely depopulated of Armenians due to deportation and genocide.

⁶¹ See document 181.

⁶² See document 188.

⁶³ See documents 202 and 204.

⁶⁴ See documents 204 and 225.

⁶⁵ See document 227.

⁶⁶ See documents 215 through 220, and 229.

Documents

“The maintenance of the Turkish Empire was, during many generations, regarded by statesmen of worldwide authority as essential to the maintenance of European peace. Why, it is asked, should the cause of peace be now associated with a complete reversal of this traditional policy?”

The answer is that circumstances have completely changed. It is unnecessary to consider now whether the creation of a reformed Turkey, mediating between hostile races in the Near East, was a scheme which, had the Sultan been sincere and the Powers united, could ever have been realized. It certainly can not be realized now. The Turkey of ‘Union and Progress’ is at least as barbarous and is far more aggressive than the Turkey of Sultan Abdul Hamid. In the hands of Germany it has ceased even in appearance to be a bulwark of peace and is openly used as an instrument of conquest. Under German officers Turkish soldiers are now fighting in lands from which they had long been expelled, and a Turkish Government, controlled, subsidized and supported by Germany, has been guilty of massacres in Armenia and Syria more horrible than any recorded in the history even of those unhappy countries. Evidently the interests of peace and the claims of nationality alike require that Turkish rule over alien races shall if possible be brought to an end...”

From the British supplement to Entente reply to
President Wilson, January 13, 1917.
James Brown Scott, *Official Statements of War Aims
and Peace Proposals* (Washington, 1921) 46–47.

Note

- a. The numbers that follow the document titles indicate the numbers on the source documents, *Bibliothèque Nubar*, Paris.
- b. The following abbreviations, used next to the numbers of the source documents, indicate the original language of the document and the source from which it was translated into English:
AA= Original is in Armenian, translated from Armenian;
EA= Original is in English, translated from Armenian;
FA= Original is in French, translated from Armenian;
FF= Original is in French, translated from French.
- c. All numeric annotations belong to the editor of this book, except document 103. All other annotations or footnotes belong to Aram Andonian, and are part of the source documents.
- d. All explanations in parentheses belong to Aram Andonian. The bracketed explanations are those of the editor of this book.

1

The War and the Armenians of Cilicia [Memorandum]
918–923 EA

Cairo, February 3, 1915

There is no need to write about the massacre and persecution of Armenians in Turkey in this concise memorandum. However, it would be helpful to mention that last year, after deliberate negotiations, we secured from the Sublime Porte a commitment to implement modest reforms in Armenia.¹

Turkey did not respect its commitment and even before entering the war tore up the agreement with the inspectors general who were assigned by the Sublime Porte upon the suggestion of the powers. Therefore, the Allies are the Armenians' only hope.

It is possible that Russia annex the provinces of Greater Armenia adjacent to the Caucasus. The Armenians have reason to believe that His Majesty the Czar would grant a kind of autonomy to them, under Russian rule, as it did to Poland.² Therefore, I will not discuss these matters in this memorandum.

¹ The Balkan War, 1912–1913, created a favorable atmosphere for the revival of the Armenian Question in order to improve the conditions of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. Since the Triple Entente was anxious to limit the German increasing influence in the Ottoman Empire, the Russian government encouraged the Catholicos of All Armenians to appeal through the viceroy of the Caucasus to the imperial government for an intervention in favor of reforms in the Armenian provinces. The reforms project, prepared by the Russian First Dragoman A. Mandelstam and Armenian representatives, was introduced and discussed in Constantinople in the meeting of the ambassadors of the Triple Entente and Triple Alliance. The project suggested the formation of one province from the six Armenian vilayets (Erzerum, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Kharput, and Sivas) under either an Ottoman Christian, or a European governor general to be appointed by the powers for five years. Germany opposed the project and succeeded in pressuring Russia to remodel it. In the final reforms agreement signed between Russia (on behalf of the powers) and Turkey on February 8, 1914, there was no mention of Armenia and Armenians. The agreement was reduced to reforms in the six vilayets of Eastern Anatolia by grouping these six vilayets into two provinces under two European inspectors general to be nominated by the powers and appointed by the sultan. Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdane Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatgheroum 1828–1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828–1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 149–358.

² After Napoleon's final defeat in 1815, Poland was repartitioned by the Vienna Congress, and a small self-governing Kingdom of Poland was established under Russian control. However, after the second revolt of the Polish in 1863, Russia implemented a policy of russification in the kingdom. The memorandum speaks only of the self-governance for obvious reasons.

The situation is more complex in Cilicia, or Lesser Armenia,³ which includes the regions of Zeitun, Marash, Aintab, etc., as well as the port of Alexandretta on the Mediterranean. Cilicia's status is dependent on the future course of the war. If the Russians, due to their victories, reach the sea before a peace accord, then it may be safe to predict an accord between the Allies for Lesser and Greater Armenia to be united under one regime. But what happens if a peace accord is signed before the Russians conquer Cilicia? We have to consider this option, too. Will it be left again under Turkish administration? Armenians are most afraid of this possibility, and they will not accept it, especially considering the most recent experience regarding the reforms and the Sublime Porte's unwillingness to abide with its commitment.

In fact, last year, when I was negotiating for reforms on behalf of all Armenians as the delegate of His Holiness the Catholicos to the powers, the populations of Cilicia, unable to wait anymore, were ready to revolt. A great deal of effort was required, together with the support of religious authorities, to prevent it, since a rebellion would have endangered European peace. Contrary to that, we will not be able to prevent a desperate act if our compatriots do not receive assurances that they will be free of the malicious past rule once the Turkish problem is settled. Minimally, they want annexation to an Allied power, or an Allied guarantee of autonomy. The latter solution would be a relief for the population of Lesser Armenia, and is of great importance, because the solution would neutralize the whole region where the Baghdad railway starts and ends in the port of Alexandretta. The international economic and political advantages gained by such an arrangement should not need to be underlined.

After His Majesty's British government decided to send an expedition to the shores of Alexandretta, General Sir John Maxwell honored me with a discussion asking for details on the kinds of support the Armenian population of Cilicia might offer to the expedition. In answer to his question, I hereby do not hesitate to announce that my compatriots will greet the British soldiers as liberators, and they will support them by all means, assuming that their local national authorities will not oppose such a move. Today, when no danger threatens European peace, because the war is a fact, I would be one of the first to advise my compatriots to join the British soldiers if I could be assured that they will not be subjected to revenge, as happened in the vilayets of Erzerum and Van. There, the Turks, after the Russian retreat to the Caucasus and upon the battles of Ardahan and Sarikamish, massacred the Armenians who joined the advancing Russian soldiers in Armenia at the beginning of the war and offered them support, in hopes that the Russian occupation was final.⁴

³ In Boghos Nubar's papers Lesser Armenia is synonymous for Cilicia.

⁴ One of the objectives of the Turks was to capture the Baku oil fields and penetrate

If England plans to seize the Cilician shore only temporarily and plans to retreat after the peace accord, the Armenians will not accept the possibility of Turkish revenge. In such a case, it is understood that we would not be able to encourage them to participate in hostile actions. Therefore, their participation can be secured only by a commitment from His Majesty's British government that they will not be abandoned after the war, that Cilicia will be annexed to an Allied power, or that the region will be granted a special autonomy and neutrality guaranteed by the powers.

In such conditions, we would be able to offer the expedition Cilician compatriots who would be invaluable support, knowing the land and the people [of Cilicia]. Thus, the British soldiers would be assured perfect and total support by the Armenians who need only guns, since the Turkish authorities have constantly disarmed them in order to prevent them from resisting the atrocities. I would like to mention that the Armenians of Cilicia, and especially those living in the mountainous region of Zeitun, demonstrated a military talent during the 1895 revolt, having resisted, for months and months, a Turkish army of 30,000.⁵

to Central Asia. To do so, they had to capture Kars first which, together with Ardahan, was under Russia since 1878. Predicting the Turkish plan, Russia advanced first to Erzerum and occupied Koprikeui on November 20, 1914. A Turkish offensive followed about the middle of December. Russian troops were forced back for a short while. The battle of Sarikamish (close to Kars) and Ardahan, which ended on January 17, 1915, prevented the advance of the Turkish army toward the Caucasus, but it had grievous consequences on the Armenian population of the battlefield. "In only three days, the Turks massacred more than 10,000 Armenians north of Lake Van." M. V. Arzoumanian, *Taravor Koyamard* (Centuries-old Struggle) (Yerevan, 1989), 339.

⁵ The resistance began in mid-October as a result of the oppressive measures of Turkish officials. The Turkish army, first under the command of Ali Bey, then Ramzi Pasha, and finally Edhem Pasha, suffered considerable casualties (around 20,000 according to the *Yellow Book*), even though it had over 50,000 troops on the battleground. The confrontation ended on February 9, 1896, after two-week-long negotiations between the Turks, the Armenians, and the consuls of Russia, France, Austria, Great Britain, Italy, and Germany. Zeitun was granted a semiautonomous status under a Christian governor. Kr. H. Kalousdian, *Marash gam Kermanig yev Heros Zeitun* (Marash or Kermanig, and Hero Zeitun) (New York, 1934), 155–169.

2

Victor Bérard to Boghos Nubar
924–927 FA

Paris, February 5, 1915

Dear Sir and Friend:

Back in August [of 1914], the Dashnaktsutun¹ sent me to Mr. Izvolski to inform him that all Armenian organizations would service Russia.

— What are the Armenian demands? [asked the ambassador.]

— European reforms in seven vilayets² joined in one district, with a government controlled by the Entente, whether it exercises its control directly through its delegates, or trusts it to one of its members alone, by assigning a Russian, a British, or a French governor, together with two commissioners, each one of them from the other two nationalities.

— But what kind of a reform? Autonomy? Independence?

— Neither autonomy, nor independence, nor elected parliament. None of the mentioned, at least at the moment, that would have a political nature. [The Armenians want] peace, administration, a tight fist, and prosperity through four aged reforms—gendarmerie, justice, finance, and public construction.

This appeal was immediately cabled to Petrograd. Soon after, thousands of Armenians joined the Russian army, and the viceroy of the Caucasus made promises [to the Armenians].³ The French newspapers advertised this evening the publication of an *Orange Book** that contains all correspondence

¹ The Armenian Revolutionary Federation—also known as the Dashnaks—was established in Tiflis in 1890. The party's initial aim was to secure the freedom of Western Armenia (the six Armenian vilayets) through the people's war. Later, the party gradually included in its goals the struggle against the czar's regime, too.

² Cilicia and the six Armenian provinces occupied by Turkey.

³ Vorontsov-Dashkov, the viceroy of the Caucasus, in his letter of September 2, 1914, wrote to the Catholicos that the Russian government will under no circumstances make concessions with regard to the Armenian Question, and that reforms in the Armenian provinces of Turkey should be carried on according to the initial Russian plan, under Russian supervision. This letter was also a call for the Armenians in the Caucasus and "across the borders" to strictly follow his instructions and to get ready to implement Russian instructions in case war erupts with Turkey. Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade Hayevroun Haraperoutunnerou Louysin Dag* (Armenia and the Armenian Case in Light of Armeno-Russian Relations) (Cairo, 1957), 174.

* By permission of the Russian Foreign Ministry, the *Orange Book* was translated into Armenian in 1915 by Mr. Setrag Avakian, Esq., under the following title, *A Collection of Diplomatic Documents—The Reforms in Armenia from November 12, 1912 to May 10, 1914*, in Tiflis, ("Ebokha" Press). Half of the proceeds generated by book sales were donated to Armenian refugees.

pertinent to the 1913 reforms and proves that Russia was seeking after full reforms but was met by German opposition. “This *Orange Book*,” says the communiqué of the Russian embassy, “is the new chart of the Armenian nation.”

I wish to see Mersin and Adana turned into Armenian [cities], as well as greet an Armenia stretched from Mersin to Sinop and from Sivas to Van. That day I, too, will sing my hymn of Simeon, “Nune dimittas servum tuum Domine, qua oculi mei viderunt!”[†] I would see something that has been one of the dreams of my whole life.

To tell you all what I think, permit me to add that a unity should follow this war—a Kurdish-Armenian mass between the Black Sea and the Cyprus Sea; between a Turkey composed of Konia and Ankara and the current Russo-Iranian borders, and the Baghdad railway stretched from Alexandretta to Mosul, having Arabia as its southern border. The firm supervision of a gendarmerie for ten to fifteen years would revive the Armenian prosperity and the Kurdish-Armenian association everywhere. At the same time, European reforms, both administrative and financial, would allow the race and the country to resurrect and prove themselves worthy. Gradual inclusion of natives in larger number in all kinds of offices, under a European control [would be implemented]. This type of European education for fifteen to twenty years ... and the rest our successors would see. I don’t dare to tell you yet that you have succeeded. But I do firmly believe that the victory of the Entente will mean “Armenian Poland.”⁴

[†] O Lord! Set free your servant, for my eyes have seen the salvation.

⁴ Bérard wanted to say that Armenia will be granted self-governance just like Poland when it was under Russian rule.

3

Boghos Nubar to Mikael Varandian
948–954 FA

Heliopolis, April 7, 1915

Dear Varandian:

Your letter of February 25, written from Ruschuk, which took a month to reach me, caused me both pleasure and concern.

I am anxiously following the events, and I believe we can hope that the Armenian Question will be solved according to our wishes. It is obvious that modest reforms are not the problem anymore. The stupid act of the Turkish authorities who led their country to suicide¹ has changed the whole situation with regard to Armenian problems. Due to current circumstances, it is not possible to accept past solutions. The most important point supporting us during our negotiations was the unanimous concern of the powers to avoid a general war. That concern is irrelevant now, since Europe has turned into a large war zone, and since the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire has become imperative. New solutions are needed for this new situation.

I am pleased that the Russian public opinion seems in favor of an [Armenian] autonomy. Mr. Sazonov's declaration is encouraging² and I firmly hope that during the final arrangements—scheduled to follow the Russian victories which will happen soon, now that winter is over—the czar's government will be inspired by a liberal spirit and by the principle of nationalities. The current kingdom has demonstrated many evidences in this regard. In spite of the rarity of the Russian news, I am under the impression that the governing circle has begun to understand the great advantages that will result from arrangements based on liberal thoughts for our compatriots of Armenia.

There is no doubt that the Armenian volunteers, who rushed to the

¹ Boghos Nubar considered the Turkish participation in World War I as a “stupid” and “suicidal” act and was convinced that it would definitely mean the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire after the war ended.

² On February 9, 1915, Sazonov made the following declaration on the Armenians in the Duma: “The Russian government disinterestedly endeavored to alleviate the lot of the Armenians, and the Russo-Turkish agreement of January 26, 1914, is a historical document in which Turkey recognizes the privileged position of Russia in the Armenian Question. When the war ends, this exclusive position of Russia will be employed by the imperial government in a direction favorable to the Armenian population. Having drawn the sword in the defense of Serbia, Russia is acting under the influence of her sentiments toward a sister nation whose grandeur of soul in the present war has closely riveted the two countries.” *The New York Times Current History*, vol. II, April 1915–September 1915 (New York, 1915), 94–95.

Caucasus as soon as the hostilities were aroused and courageously fought side by side with their liberators, accomplished a great deal for our cause.³ I recall the fears we had during the Balkan War.⁴ Then we had learned that a group of Armenian volunteers, encouraged by Greece, were about to head for Cilicia to organize a revolt there. I did everything to prevent such an act, believing it would have jeopardized the success of our negotiations, and thanks to the wisdom of our people, the danger disappeared. However, the situation is not the same today; war has erupted, and the volunteers, by fighting side by side with the Allies, will strengthen our cause and create new rights for us. Thus, our voice will be stronger when it is time to formulate our just and modest demands.

Meanwhile, we should get ready to again knock on the doors and defend our cause, without neglecting that, as always, we will encounter difficulties whenever conflicts arise between the powers and their interests. We should actively propagate [our cause] and use the media. It is with this intention that I appealed to our compatriots and initiated a fund-raising for the Defense of Our National Interests under the auspices of His Holiness the Catholicos. As you will notice from the enclosed circulars, I wanted to do this fund-raising independently from the Armenian General Union, because of its

³ On September 10, 1914, before even the declaration of war by Turkey against Russia, the Administrative Council of the Armenian Volunteer Groups was formed in Tiflis, Georgia. This move had followed the petition of Catholicos Kevork V to the Viceroy Vorontsov-Dashkov on August 5/18, 1914, in favor of the Armenians in Turkey. M. Nersesian and R. Sahagian (eds.), *Hayeri Tseghasbanoutioun Osmanian Gaysroutiounoun* (The genocide of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire) (Yerevan, 1991), 330–332.

The Armenian volunteers of the Caucasus numbered 4,500 in February 1915. A total of 8,000 volunteers participated in the war alongside Russia before the dismissal of the volunteer groups in December 1915, and the enlistment of those volunteers in the regular Russian army. Tavit Ananun, *Rusahayeri Hasaragagan Zarkatsoume* (The Social Development of Russian Armenians), vol. III (Venice, 1926), 529, 542, 552–553.

Once the number of the Armenian volunteers reached 5,000, Vorontsov-Dashkov ordered to “temporarily” stop the enlistment, objecting that there was not enough ammunition. Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdane Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatghteroum 1828–1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828–1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 371.

⁴ After Turkish suspicious maneuvers along the Bulgarian frontier, the members of the Balkan League—Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, and Bulgaria—mobilized their troops and, despite the warning of the great powers, declared war against Turkey on October 8, 1912. The Allies advanced fairly easily until the meeting of the powers in London on December 16, 1912, in order to settle the Balkan question. War resumed on February 3, 1913, and came to an end on May 30, 1913, by the Treaty of London. Turkey lost most of its European possessions. Boghos Nubar’s fears were related to the first phase of the Balkan War.

political nature, which is beyond the union's jurisdiction according to its by-laws.⁵ (I would like to abruptly mention that 200,000 francs were raised through the fund-raising that I initiated in the union's name for the refugees in the Caucasus.)

We need to be united, as we were during the negotiations for reforms, in order to function effectively. Our success depends on that [unity]. It is fortunate that the unity exists in general. This is obvious from correspondence I receive from everywhere. The only upsetting voice I heard was from Egypt, where some compatriots dare to impose their will on us, oppose us, and create an ambiguity.⁶ That is a reversed patriotism. It might be helpful to keep you informed on the nature of the means they are using. You are well aware that the situation in Egypt is very critical since Turkey entered the war. There was a great fear that a Moslem fanaticism would erupt if Turkish troops came closer. As soon as I heard that the Allies intended to land their troops in Alexandretta, I appealed to their representatives and suggested the support of Armenian volunteers. All three replied that they had no current plans, and that they would not hesitate to inform me [should things change]. Besides, the military and political authorities of the occupant government [England] advised me to do nothing and not to allow any enlistment or fund-raising to occur for volunteers in Egypt, since there is great need for wisdom in the midst of a declaration of sovereignty, a change in the sultanate, a plea for a holy war (Jihad), and a threat of a Turkish invasion. I promised them and I informed our Primate and the notables of the [Egyptian Armenian] community. However, I was taken by surprise when, within a short time, some [community leaders] began to head a fund-raising effort for volunteers, putting me in the position of a perfidious [man] vis-à-vis the authorities. You understand my indignation for sure. In response to my criticism, these same people tried to create ambiguity and spread rumors that I oppose the volunteers. I was the first to suggest a volunteer movement and to announce, upon initiating the fund-raising for the Defense of Our National Interests, that the matter was related to national interests in its broadest meaning and that events might bring up the need for additional support. But enough talking on this matter.

I refer to your letter and repeat that I perfectly agree with you that the time to revive our struggle is close. But it is quite early now; we need to wait until the war is over. Diplomats are overburdened now with the war and

⁵ The mentioned organization is the Armenian General Benevolent Union. It was established by Boghos Nubar and his colleagues in Cairo, in 1906, in order to assist the Armenians in Armenia whenever need be and to help them improve their economic and educational conditions, as a benevolent, nonpolitical, philanthropic organization. *Vosgemadian Haygagan Parekordzagan Enthanour Mioutian* (Golden-Album of the Armenian General Benevolent Union), Silver Jubilee, 1906–1931, vol. I (Paris, 1935), 8.

⁶ Boghos Nubar refers to the Dashnaks.

related negotiations. Many politicians, especially British parliamentarians, passed through Egypt; all suggested that it would be premature to talk on the Armenian Question prior to clarification of the situation. Our cause and its solution are dependent on the course of the events.

When it's time for negotiations, and if I don't encounter opposition or arguments that make every effort useless, I will be ready to work again. In that case, I will need your personal support, which I had the chance to appreciate during our struggle for reforms. I believe I can count on you.

4

Boghos Nubar to Mikael Papadjanian
979–982 FA

Heliopolis, April 19, 1915

Dear Mr. Papadjanian and Friend:

Recently I received the *Orange Book* on Armenia which you kindly sent me. It reached me after more than a month in transit, since it was mailed to Paris. The newspapers had already reported the publication of said book, and I was curious to have a copy; therefore, you understand how much I am obliged to you for sending it to me.

I have succeeded in arranging for the translation of the most important sections. They support the conviction I reached during my negotiations—that without the initiative and the relentless efforts of the Russian government, we would have gained nothing, due to the German opposition supported by intrigues which have been brought to light by this book. However, all these have a retroactive meaning only, because the Turks, committing a suicide, violated their commitment and sent home the two inspectors general before they entered the war.

We need not be upset about that. The experience clearly indicated that the reforms either would have not been implemented or would have been avoided due to endless intrigues.

Thanks to the stupid act of the Turkish leaders, the Armenian Question has totally changed course. Solutions which were imperative in 1913, in order to avoid a war, are now obsolete, since Europe is already at war. Our compatriots can truly be assured that, in all cases, they will be free from the Turkish yoke, whatever the preferred solution might be. They have put all their faith in Russia which, as Mr. Sazonov stated in the Duma, has committed itself to the Armenian cause, pledging to liberate Armenians from their centuries-old subjugation. This, for sure, will depend on the course of military actions; therefore, we should be happy that Armenian volunteers from around the world are rushing to the Caucasus to fight alongside the Russian army against the common enemy. The more perfect the victory, the more drastic will be the solution given to our cause.

The accounts published in the newspapers on Russia are almost entirely related to military actions, which is natural. You can conclude that we are not well informed about the current trends in Russia with regard to the Armenian Question. I learned from a partial translation of an article published in *Rech* that Miliukov spoke in a very favorable manner for the Armenians and came to a conclusion about Cilicia that might mean a great deal for us if the Russian government's opinion coincides with his.¹

¹ Miliukov was of the opinion that Cilicia should be annexed to Armenia to Russia's satisfaction. (See document 42.)

I would like to ask you to keep me informed on this matter and on any matter related to our cause when you get the chance to write. I will be much obliged, because it will be very helpful to stay aware of the trends in public opinion and, if possible, the intentions of the [Russian] government.

Wishing a total victory and a quick peace accord, please extend my respect to Mrs. Papadjanian, and accept, my dear friend, my sincerest regards.

5

Boghos Nubar to Sahag Catholicos of Cilicia

991–998 FA

[Not delivered]

Heliopolis (Cairo), April 17/30, 1915

His Holiness Sahag Khabaian
Catholicos of Holy Sea of Cilicia
Sis

Your Holiness:

I don't need to explain to your Holiness that I was against all revolutionary or rebellious actions of my compatriots which presumably were geared toward improving the conditions of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. I was confident that we were not in a position to impose our national will upon Turkey, less so on Europe, and that Europe, preoccupied with its political and economical interests, would not have paid much attention to our complaints, leaving us alone with our oppressors. Any ill-calculated action would have further deteriorated our situation instead of improving it.

It was for this reason that two years ago I did all I could to stop the rebellious attempt of a handful of indiscreet compatriots in Cilicia, and I am very grateful to your Holiness for seconding my efforts with your support.

Up until recently, the aim of prudent Armenians was the preservation of our race in our homeland, avoiding any action that might cause terrible reactions. Therefore, we had no choice but to willingly or unwillingly adjust to the situation imposed upon us by our oppressors.

For as long as Europe was willing to protect the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, it was beyond my comprehension to accept that we could have departed from a cautious policy and yet expected a better future!

But the European war and Turkey's unexpected participation in it are about to shake the very existence of the Ottoman Empire.

Turkey's hostile conduct against the Allies, its friends, will not be forgiven. The dismemberment of the empire seems inevitable this time, and all oppressed peoples and Armenians will immensely benefit from it.

I am confident that by the time you receive this letter Constantinople will be in the hands of the Allies. Besides, you will be witnessing the landing of Allied soldiers in our beloved Cilicia. These soldiers will be under orders not to leave the country until the fate of Cilician Armenians is decided.

I ought to mention to your Holiness that the holy cause of our martyred people has been the subject of my total attention from the day Turkey began its hostility, and I have made many appeals to the representatives of the Allied powers.

Upon orders received from His Holiness the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin—who kindly honored me by his confidence and reappointed me His Representative in Europe and president of the National Delegation—I will leave for Paris and London within a few days in order to follow closely the international developments and to benefit from the sympathy which is increased with regard to our cause amongst official circles and in the public opinion. Last, but not least, [I leave for Paris] in order to try to secure a future which would be, as much as possible, in accord with our national aspirations in a way that prevents any future friction with the Turkish government.

I am pleased to announce to Your Holiness that there is a total harmony between His Holiness Catholicos' views and the National Delegation. I have reason to hope that our plan would be accepted by the Allies favorably.

There is no need to go into details here, but those who will bring this letter to you, [...] will explain to Your Holiness our demands.¹

I don't need to bring to Your Holiness' attention that every oppressed people needs to comply with certain duties in order to be worthy of liberation. Otherwise, all efforts would be endangered no matter how positive they are.

For example, our compatriots in the Caucasus have gained the sympathy of the Russian government and the people in favor of the Armenian cause by sending thousands of volunteers to the battlefield at their own expense. These volunteers courageously fought against the common enemy alongside Russian troops.

In the same way, in France, the small Armenian community sent a few hundred volunteers to fight in the trenches.

Having in mind these examples, I thought that the duty of Cilician Armenians would be to assist the Allies by all possible means when the Allied expedition lands there.

The assistance should not be bound merely by a warm reception and some small services. It should include a unified rebellion of the Armenians against Turkish authorities wherever possible.

I have already brought the idea of a rebellion to the Allies' attention in case of a landing, provided that they would supply all necessary guns and ammunition to our compatriots. I am pleased to inform you that my suggestion found favorable grounds.

I would like to add that the couriers are accompanying the expedition and are entrusted with the duty of propagating [our ideas] to the Armenians of Cilicia.

* Two lines are left open in the original text to write down the names of the couriers.

¹ It is obvious that this letter was supposed to be sent to the Catholicos of Cilicia with messengers, upon the approval of the British government to land an expedition in Cilicia. It might be safe to guess that those messengers were to be the three unknown people mentioned in document 84, too.

Given the fact that our people, after frequent disappointments and still unaware of current developments, would more easily listen to their religious leader, rather than foreigners, I would dare to ask Your Holiness to ease the task of our propagators by personally telling the believers the truth.

Let them know that after five centuries of subjugation, we have never faced a better chance for our salvation.

6

Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar

[Telegram]

? FA

Etchmiadzin, April 22, 1915

(received on 27 April)

Your Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Heliopolis

News received from Sofia¹ and other sources confirm the recurrence of massacres in Erzerum, Dedjan (Derdjan)* and Zeitun. Bloody turbulence is reported in Bitlis, Van, [and] Mush. Violence [and] crimes in Cilicia. Economic devastation. I appealed to Minister Sazonov, President Wilson, [and] the king of Italy,² asking [for their] intervention. I urge you, as my representative and president of the Armenian Delegation, to do your utmost for the protection of our people in Turkey. Cable me.

¹ The source should be Reverend Ghevont Tourian, the Armenian primate of Bulgaria.

* The office of the Pasha has written *Hadjen*. Most probably it should be Derdjan, since Hadjen was still quiet at that time.

² Victor Emmanuel III, who had succeeded his assassinated father, King Humbert, on July 29, 1900. After stating the recurrence of massacres and systematic oppression against Armenians in Turkey, the Catholicos asked for an intervention in order to protect an ancient Christian people cruelly persecuted and abandoned to the frenzy of the Turkish fanaticism. Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes puissances l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives Françaises 1914–1918* (Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1983), 14.

7

Khounounts, President of Armenian National Bureau¹ to the
United Armenian Association of London²

[Telegram]

1027 FA

Tiflis, April 28, 1915

More news is arriving about the massacre of the Turkish Armenians. Organize a public reaction in Europe to influence governments and to urge them to take effective actions to prevent the massacres.

¹ The Armenian National Bureau of Tiflis was organized on November 25, 1912, in order to maintain contacts with Russian authorities and assist Boghos Nubar in his pursuit of Armenian national interests. After its convention of February 20–22, 1915, the bureau had Alexander Khatisian and Hovsep Khounounts as its vice presidents. Nine out of twenty-one members of the bureau were Dashnaks, two were Meshakians, and the rest had no specific affiliation. The bureau was considered a tool in the hands of the Dashnaks. Tavit Ananun, *Rusahayeri Hasaragagan Zarkatsoume* (The Social Development of Russian Armenians), vol. III (Venice, 1926), 550.

² The United Armenian Association of London (or the Armenian United Association of London) was founded in 1898 and reconstructed in 1913 under the presidency of Lieutenant-Colonel G. M. Gregory. The honorary secretary was A. Yeretsian. The association edited a periodical called *Ararat: A Searchlight on Armenia*.

8

The Petrograd Plan¹

[Handed to Boghos Nubar by Dr. Zavriev]
1065–1068 FA

[May 1915]

Top Secret

While the Armenians in the Caucasus were preoccupied in their daily operations, their representatives in Petrograd were in constant contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to a series of negotiations, it is possible to conclude that, although without a definite plan about the Armenian Question, the ministry expects the Armenians to be satisfied with the following points that Russia may propose to the nations:

(a) The creation of an autonomous Armenia within the borders of the Ottoman Empire.

(b) The preservation of Turkish sovereignty, to be restricted to the conservation of the flag and the nomination by the Sultan of the governor general to be elected by the Allies. It would be unacceptable to interfere in the internal affairs of Armenia, and no Turkish military presence should be necessary in Armenia.

(c) The protection of Armenia by Russia, England, and France.

(d) Armenia's borders (excluding the western and southern regions, which are populated almost entirely by Moslems) will include the six vilayets, together with Cilicia and Mersin as its seaport on the Mediterranean (also excluded are the Bay of Alexandretta and Yumurtalik).

(e) A plan for autonomy, along the initial lines of the Russian reform proposals introduced in the summer of 1913 in Constantinople, but modified according to the changing political conditions of the times.

The representatives of the Armenians accepted these conditions and agreed to assume the responsibility of lobbying for the plan, especially for the unification of Cilicia with the six provinces, before the governments of

¹ This very important document is a concise version of a document handed over by Zavriev to the Russian ambassadors in London and Paris. For the expanded version see: Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdane Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatghteroum 1828–1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828–1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 371–374. An annotation clarifies that Benckendorff and Izvolski were informed by a cable dated April 17, 1915, that Zavriev is leaving for London and Paris “with the aim of promoting Armenian aspirations in front of the governments and the public opinion of the mentioned countries.” The telegram further added that “the ministry knew Zavriev excellently.” Therefore, the ambassadors were asked to support him and acquaint him with dignitaries.

France and Great Britain. They also agreed on their obligation to influence the public opinion of these two nations.

As a result, it was decided to send Armenian representatives to France and England.

The ministry consented to this and even promised to reinforce the campaign through its ambassadors in Paris and London.

However, it was also considered that such an obvious intervention by the Russian ambassadors may cause some negative impressions on France and England vis-à-vis the Armenian delegates, especially regarding the Cilician question.

Therefore, it was agreed upon with the minister that the Armenians should proceed mainly on their own, without the obvious support of Russia's ambassadors, but in case of difficulties, the Russian ambassadors should try to help them at their discretion.

As for the policy to be followed, the ministry proposed that the delegates should work toward the realization of the autonomy of Turkish Armenia within the framework of the five articles mentioned above.

While conveying the foregoing facts to Your Excellency for information, I would like to underline that the Petrograd meetings have kept their confidentiality; they are known only to the Catholicos and to a certain number of people who are delegated to responsible positions by the Armenians. It is also important to point out that the minister made no open commitment. However, both parties demonstrated great sincerity and were convinced that a concurrent operation was necessary, as the gains were equal for them; an air of confidence was apparent on both sides.

9

Arshag Tchobanian to Boghos Nubar

? FA

London, May 8, 1915

Your Excellency:

I am very pleased that you will arrive in Paris soon. Our cause was put on the table from the day [the Allies] decided on the conquest of Constantinople, even though no one talks about it publicly. I have done whatever I could to lay the groundwork together with our friends in Paris and London. There is a lot to be done. Your arrival is a most fortunate fact.

I would have been in Paris to meet with you immediately upon your arrival, but I have to stay here for another seven to eight days. I will be in Paris on the 15th or 16th [of May], because Lacous-Gayet, member of the Academy, has invited me to lecture on the 25th on "Armenia under the Turkish Yoke." This would be one of a series of lectures organized by the "Foyer" to present the cases of the peoples oppressed by Germans, Austrians, and Turks. I will write to you immediately upon my return in order to set an appointment. There are many things I would like to inform you about.

Circumstances are in favor of our cause and will become more favorable, because, as I have never doubted, the Allies will win. At this moment though, the situation is horrifying for our compatriots in Armenia and Constantinople. I learned from Mr. Williams that the American and the Italian governments have intervened at Constantinople, upon the insistence of the British and Russian governments. I wrote to Mr. Gout asking him to suggest to Mr. Delcassé to similarly appeal to the American and the Italian governments for continued support of our compatriots. I have no doubts that the French government will do that, if it has not yet been done.

I am not quite sure whether an Armenian conspiracy has taken place in Constantinople or not, nor whether the Turkish government itself has created it or not in order to oppress the Armenians.¹ Our compatriots are facing a

¹ The talks about Armenian conspiracy in Constantinople and in Turkey, in general, were not totally untrue, and they were used as a pretext by the Turkish government to indulge in its policy of deportation and annihilation against Armenians. The idea was put into wide circulation by Germany, too, in order to protect its image, since it was accused of encouraging the Turks. The main accusation against Armenians was their assistance to Russia. James Morgan Read, *Atrocity Propaganda 1914–1919* (New Haven, 1941), 118–119, 218–222. Germans and Turks must have known that a delegate from Zeitun had informed the Russians in February 1915 that 15,000 Armenians in Zeitun were ready to take arms against Turkey and assist Russia. Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes puissances l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives Françaises 1914–1918* (Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1983), 7. As stated by numerous scholars, no excuse could justify the deportation of Armenians from areas far away from the battlefield, and the mass murder of unarmed people.

great crisis which may be the last. The Turks and the Kurds can kill individuals only; they will never succeed in killing the Armenian nation. I have total confidence in the future of our people.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my deepest respect.

10**Lord Bryce to Boghos Nubar
1008–1009 EA**

London, May 9, 1915

Dear Excellency:

The letter you sent me, indeed, contains a record in savageness and crime.¹ I write in haste to advise you by the only means I can think of. That is, that the Armenians of Paris, or some of them, have to address an appeal under your leadership to the president of the United States, who is the head of the biggest neutral state, asking him to issue an effective warning to the Turkish government against its attempt to annihilate a whole nation. Together with the appeal, you need to send a copy of the letter from Constantinople, as well as other evidences that you might collect with regard to the same situation. The United States has a special reason to warn [Turkey] because their missionaries are scattered all over Asiatic Turkey where they have established magnificent institutions and have always stayed away from any political agenda.

It is possible that the majority of the people deported from their homes are massacred by now. But a part of it still could be saved, and the only hope for such a thing is an appeal by the United States. The appeal could be sent through the American ambassador in Paris. Time should not be lost.

I am afraid that our government, and the French likewise, will be incapable of doing anything, because we are already involved in war.

P. S. I myself will write to the American ambassador here.

¹ We could not find out which letter Bryce was talking about.

11**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Victor Bérard****[Excerpts]****1010 FA**

Paris, May 10, 1915

With regard to Armenia (says Bérard), a Kurdish Armenia should be created, not an autonomous Armenia, or better still, an autonomous Eastern Anatolia that would include the six vilayets, as well as the entire region bordering on its west by a straight line extending from Sinop on the Black Sea down to Mersin on the Mediterranean. In this Eastern Anatolian territory the following four reforms must be implemented: justice, gendarmerie, finance, and public constructions. All these without the protection of the Allies.

12

Aneurin Williams to Boghos Nubar
1011–1013 EA

London, May 10, 1915

Your Excellency:

A fortnight ago, Lieutenant-Colonel Gregory sent me the copy of a telegram which he received from Tiflis.¹ I immediately wrote to Mr. Primrose, who is now advisor to the Foreign Office, urging that our government appeal to the United States to warn the [Sublime] Porte that it will be held responsible for the massacres. The following morning, I learned that the *Westminster Gazette*, a few days ago, reported that the American government has indeed criticized the Sublime Porte with regard to not the alleged, but the actual massacres that have taken place. Consequently I went to see Mr. Primrose, who promised to give the matter prompt consideration. Now he has, indeed, done that, as attested by the enclosed copy of his secretary's letter.* You will also find enclosed a copy of the letter and telegram which I sent to the State Department in Washington on Monday.[†] I do not know if these observations will be of any use. Nevertheless, it was the only possible action we could have taken before the imminent massacres. Most certainly, you will be glad to know that Mr. Primrose has great sympathy for the Armenian nation. Probably, you must have also heard that, on the opening day of the parliamentary session, April 14, I raised the following question:

Mr. Aneurin Williams: Directs his question to the minister of foreign affairs, whether the government of His Majesty, when the present war is over, will work toward creating an autonomous state for the Armenian people living in Asiatic Turkey similar to the promise made by the Russian government to Poland, or not?

I received the following answer:

"The honorable member can rest assured that His Majesty's government will take into consideration, with sympathy, the interests of the Armenian nation. However, under the present circumstances, it is not possible to determine future political arrangements."

I was very pleased to hear that the Catholicos has asked you again to assume the presidency of the Armenian Delegation and that you will be returning to Paris. Certainly, we shall see you here, too. The British Armenia Committee² keeps following the developments and is in constant

¹ See document 7.

* See Mr. Locock's letter of May 4, 1915.

[†] See Mr. Aneurin Williams' letter of May 3, 1915.

² The British Armenia Committee was "a small body of Englishmen" established to

communication with the Foreign Office. We also work to rouse the interest of the press about the future status of Armenia after the war. But I must confess that, except for the *Manchester Guardian*, it is very difficult to focus the attention of the press on this problem.

[Annex]

Aneurin Williams to the State Department, Washington
1076–1077 EA

The State Department
Washington

London, May 3, 1915

Sir:

Lieutenant-Colonel Gregory, the president of the United Armenian Association of London, and myself cabled you the following [message] today:

“The State Department,
“Washington.

“We have been informed by telegram that new massacres are threatening the Armenians of Turkey. Please advise your ambassador in Constantinople to warn the Sublime Porte.

Aneurin Williams, the British Armenia Committee
Gregory, the United Armenian Association of London.”

No doubt that the Armenians suffered tremendously during this war, and the news about the massacres is arriving through a reliable source in Tiflis. I think I am in a position to assure you that we have the full sympathy of the British Foreign Office, but it is certain that, for the moment, they are incapable of exercising pressure on the Sublime Porte. We have, therefore, taken the liberty of cabling you, hoping that your ambassador in Constantinople may intervene to prevent the Armenians from being victims again of massacres that have happened frequently.

I can assure you that everything you do regarding this situation shall gratify every Armenian around the world.

promote the Armenian cause, either at the end of 1912 or the beginning of 1913, in London, under the chairmanship of Aneurin Williams, a member of the Parliament (MP). The committee included other MPs such as Noel Buxton and T. P. O’Conner, both mentioned in this book.

[Annex]
Guy Locock to Aneurin Williams
1078 EA

FOREIGN OFFICE

London, May 4, 1915

Mr. Aneurin Williams
London

Dear Sir:

In response to your letter of May 2 and yesterday's visit, Mr. Primrose would like me to inform you that His Majesty's government has been informed that the governments of the United States and Italy have intervened in Constantinople with regard to the situation that exists in Armenia.

His Majesty's ambassadors to Rome and Washington have been in contact with the respective governments concerning this matter.

13**Meeting of Boghos Nubar With Mr. Izvolski
1014 FA**

Paris, May 11, 1915

I asked him if he had received instructions from Petrograd on the Armenian Question. Following his negative reply, I informed him about my new post and read to him the declaration that Dr. Zavriev delivered to his colleague, (Count Benckendorff), in London.¹

I left a copy of it with him.

Mr. Izvolski read the declaration attentively and recommended utmost secrecy to me.

After exchanging opinions on the Armenian Question and the war in general, Mr. Izvolski asked me to see him again after my meeting with Mr. Delcassé.

¹ See document 8.

14**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Jean Gout
1015–1018 FA**

[Undated]

According to Mr. Gout, there are many solutions:

1. Preserving Turkey in Asia, under a trusteeship, by the concentration and decentralization of different nations;
2. Spheres of influence. In this case a new war will erupt in no time.
3. Dismemberment of Turkey.

Mr. Gout prefers the first [option], although he takes into consideration that future developments might make [the first option] impossible and enforce the dismemberment. In that case, France should get its share which would be composed of Syria and Cilicia, including Zeitun.

I brought to his attention the fact that the English had ambitions in Alexandretta. He replied that only the English living in Egypt and the proponents of colonial expansion advocate that goal, but not London.

Mr. Gout finds the annexation of Cilicia to Syria necessary. Otherwise, France's share would be very small compared to that of England's, who would take hold of Mesopotamia and the entire Arabian peninsula, together with the Red Sea, which would then become an English Sea. Italy, and, perhaps, Greece—if it cared to rectify its king's mistake¹—would have their share, too.

I wanted to know what he meant by "annexation." Perhaps, making the territory a French province, with a French governor, or perhaps a sort of sovereignty as it was in Egypt.

Mr. Gout agreed that it would have been possible if Syria had a prominent leader, or at least, a dynasty which could produce one. But that is not the situation in Syria where there is a mixture of races and religions. Therefore, it should be governed by a French official.

I pointed out that this was not the case in Cilicia, where there are notable families who could easily be recognized by the population as leaders, provided, of course, they had France's assistance and protection. Because—I wanted him to clearly understand my viewpoint—I am not asking for independence, nor a simple autonomy without external ties. I propose a protected autonomy that would remain neutral by the guarantee of world states.

Mr. Gout: "Are you sure that you will find a leader in Cilicia, where there also live many Turks and Greeks? As I told you, France cannot be satisfied by Syria only; it must also have Cilicia."

¹ King Constantine had assured his relative the kaiser that Greece would not wage war against Germany. Venizelos, the prime minister, on the other hand, chose a policy of benevolent neutrality toward the Allies and eventual participation in the war on their side in return for territorial concessions in Asia Minor.

Myself: "You understand, of course, that we, the Armenians, gain a lot by renouncing our Turkish citizenship and becoming French nationals. You also understand that we would prefer autonomy in order to be able to express ourselves as a nation. Wouldn't France also consider this a better solution? By taking over Cilicia, France would be in direct contact with Russia, through Armenia Major. Wouldn't it be better to confront Russia with a neutral country guaranteed by the world states? Because the case of Belgium will not be repeated for a long time to come, no one will dare to tear 'a piece of paper'."²

Mr. Gout: "No doubt your idea of a buffer state is encouraging. But does Russia want, indeed, to reach the Mediterranean? It has already an access through the Dardanelles, but it falls in a lake, restricted by Gibraltar and Suez. We have the same situation in Toulon and Marseilles, but we are not enclosed; we have the ocean."

Myself: "Russia does not insist on reaching the sea through Cilicia, because so far it has not scored a decisive war victory to gain sufficient confidence for such a demand. It is satisfied at the moment with Constantinople. But that won't last for long. Wouldn't it be wise politically to take advantage of the current situation and create before Russia a barrier that it wouldn't dare to reverse, given the neutrality guaranteed by the world powers signed by Russia too? There are other international interests, too, in the Alexandretta region and the Baghdad rail terminal that could create problems. In this regard, wouldn't it be most favorable to neutralize that region and not hinder the course of trade for the Allies?"

I further elaborated these arguments that seemed to interest Mr. Gout. He did not refute them openly. As it was almost noon, I excused myself.

While leaving, I told him that the English, too, seemed to have claims on Syria. Mr. Gout said that he was aware of this and that a portion of the Moslem population of the region was sympathetic to them. But, he added, the Christians of Syria were sided with France.

I mentioned, in passing, that I had heard about the disposition of the English wanting to negotiate with France for some other territory in exchange for Syria.

"Which one?" asked Mr. Gout.

Since Nigeria was one of the offers of substitution, I mentioned that.

"Nigeria," said Mr. Gout, "is not of the same value as Syria. It's a country of Negroes. Besides, such an exchange would be very unpopular amongst the English."

² In 1831, European powers declared Belgium an "independent and perpetually neutral state." In April 1839, all concerned parties, after agreeing in London about outstanding issues with regard to Belgium, renewed their recognition of the neutrality of Belgium. "The Germans brushed aside the guarantees of 1839 as 'a scrap of paper.'" A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (Oxford, 1954), 535.

15

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Philippe Berthelot
1022–1029 FA

Paris, May 12, 1915

Mr. Berthelot said that it was still unclear what solution would be adopted for Asia Minor. France would still prefer to preserve [the territorial integrity] of Asiatic Turkey under a rigorous control.

When I mentioned to him that no control would ever restrain the Turkish government, and that nothing would be achieved and the badly needed solution of the Eastern Question would be postponed, Mr. Berthelot replied that, in case the Ottoman Empire was to be preserved, precautions should then be taken to make its control by the world powers positive.

I brought to his attention that Armenians would not be willing to live under Turkish rule anymore. And if no consideration was given to their wish, then they would revolt. On the other hand, I added that I did not think events would take such a turn, and I believed that partition would become imperative, keeping a reduced Turkish Empire with Konia as its capital. According to this hypothesis, I added, it would seem quite certain that Russia would receive Constantinople and the straits, England would have Mesopotamia, and France would take over Syria.

Mr. Berthelot: "Syria, together with Cilicia."

Myself: "True. I read about it in the *Bulletin de l'Asie Française*. If you permit me, I will discuss Cilicia a little later. First I would like to tell you about our people's aspirations."

I detailed our plan: "An autonomous Armenia neutralized and protected; collective protection of the Allied powers and not of Russia alone; otherwise, sooner or later, it would lead to annexation. To make such an Armenia self-sufficient, it should include all the Armenian provinces, together with Cilicia; otherwise it would have been amputated. Moreover, if this Armenia consisted only of the six provinces, it would be very difficult, in the future, to avoid annexation by Russia. In case Cilicia falls under French rule, as it is desired, then France alone would have to deal with Russia directly and would be the sole obstacle for a Russian expansion toward the sea."

Mr. Berthelot interrupted me by saying that Russia would have access to the Mediterranean through the Dardanelles.

"Of course," I replied, "but that will not stop Russia from trying to gain control of a passageway through Cilicia, which is the only way for them to reach the Mediterranean by land without any disruption. If Russia seems to be satisfied today with Constantinople alone, it is because its victories in Armenia are not significant enough to enable it to claim Cilicia, too. There is no doubt that Russia will never relinquish that goal. However, if Cilicia is included in a neutral autonomous Armenia, open to trade before all nations,

then Russia will have a free trade route and the Allies will thus create an inviolable buffer state.

"This is one of the arguments in favor of leaving Cilicia to Armenia, reserving Syria and Alexandretta for France. Another equally strong argument is the free trade route via the Baghdad railway.

"Before the war, the Baghdad railway was a German line, and the whole region through which the railway ran was under German control. The war brought an end to that situation. The railway became an international line, as well as the only land route to India for English trade. If France annexes the whole shoreline, starting from Palestine to Taurus, to the north of Cilicia, then the emergence of the Baghdad railway will have to be through a French territory, and consequently, it will be blocked. Do you believe that England would not object to that? Seems to me that it would be impossible for England not to seek to come to an agreement with its ally to secure an unhindered, free passageway toward India."

Mr. Berthelot said that they could readily come to an agreement about that matter.

I answered by saying that any agreement of this nature, similar to the one concerning Tangiers,¹ would be a source of complications, and it would be beneficial to avoid it.

Mr. Berthelot said that the Baghdad railway was not the only one. Picking up a paper from the desk, he showed me studies that had been made on other rail lines which began in the south of Palestine and ran through the desert, thus providing a passageway.

I told him that I knew about these lines; they were planned, in order to create an independent rail system, when the Baghdad railway was still a German line. "But the situation is not the same today. By having the Baghdad rail line under its control, England would not be willing to build another expensive railway through a desert that would not bring any profit, and that would serve only at its terminal locations."

Mr. Berthelot brought to my attention the fact that the same situation existed for the transatlantic liners, which could not haul any freight between America and Europe, in other words, between their starting point and destination.

Indeed, I said, but there is no rail service along that route. However, that was not the point of contention. The argument is whether to take advantage of an already existing profitable line or to establish another line destined to securing no profit. All these difficulties would disappear with the solution that we were suggesting: to leave Cilicia to an autonomous and neutral Armenia, thus establishing a terminal that provides a safe passageway to the

¹ After the establishment of the French protectorate over Morocco by the Treaty of Fez (1912), the northern Moroccan seaport of Tangier was given a special international regime, a multinational administration, in order to avoid future conflicts.

English and international trade. At the same time, leaving Alexandretta, together with the territory extending through Aleppo to the Euphrates, to France.

Mr. Berthelot said that what I told him contains new points that require some thought, and that it was not possible to answer immediately.

I reminded Mr. Berthelot that I just wanted him to give thorough consideration to my suggestion, just as I had been doing ever since I had undertaken the mission. I expressed hope that he would be persuaded about the advantages of the plan that I had brought to his attention; advantages from both French and Armenian perspectives. In any case, this was the only way to allow the establishment of a situation that will be vivid, stable, and free of entanglements and conflicts.

We agreed that I would ask for a formal meeting with Mr. Delcassé, through his secretary, to discuss my plan with him.

Mr. Berthelot left with me the impression of a person who was afraid to express himself freely and give opinions, since he was not a chief [officer]. However, he seemed to grasp the advantages of this new solution that had not crossed his mind [previously].

During the meeting, Mr. Berthelot further mentioned that Russia had unequivocally committed itself to support France, leaving the latter free to choose its share, as it deemed fit, in Asia Minor. Thus Russia would not object to France taking over Cilicia with Syria.

I replied that it was not possible for Russia to raise objections at the moment, since France alone was taking the brunt of the war. But an objection is not the question at all. The point is to decide, according to my arguments, what would be most profitable for France? To annex all of Cilicia up to the Taurus Mountains to Syria, or to stop on the northern edge of the Baghdad line, keeping Alexandretta and Aleppo?

16**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Denys Cochin
1030–1037 FA**

May 12, 1915

To begin our discussion, Mr. Denys Cochin talked about the war. He blamed Russia for having pushed France into war, without extending it sufficient help after, especially since the Russian defeats, including the latest one in the Carpathians. He complained about the British army, too; nevertheless, he praised the bravery of the army and the nobility of the English people, while pointing out the peculiar organization of their army that for every fighting soldier two or three support staff were needed. The effectiveness of those huge British cannons was minimal in the Dardanelles, since the nitroglycerin content of their gunpowder wore out the cannons. It was because of this reason that to avoid early wear and tear, the gunners, in peace time, trained with half-filled cannons, which, of course, did not provide adequate training in target shooting. Consequently, in the Dardanelles, the inexperienced gunners performed poorly when cannons were charged to capacity.

After a few other observations, we started talking about Armenia. I informed him of my appointment [as the head of the Armenian Delegation] and the nature of my mission.

Mr. Denys Cochin was of the opinion that Turkey would be dismembered. The Russians would take Constantinople and the Dardanelles, the Italians would receive Adalia, while the English would take Mesopotamia, and the French would get hold of Syria and Cilicia. If Greece entered the war, it would get Smyrna, provided the king had not opposed Venizelos, who was willing to relinquish Kavalla in return for Smyrna.

Mr. Denys Cochin also mentioned, in passing, that Venizelos was a greater [statesman] than Bismarck and that he could be compared to Cavour.

He reassured me that, a couple of months before, Izvolski had told him about Russia's readiness to grant autonomy to Armenia.

I told him that I felt very happy hearing this from him, and that I believed, too, that at the moment Russia was willing to grant us autonomy, but it might not support the same policy in the future, just as it did not want to discuss it at the beginning of the war, when its armies invaded the Armenian provinces and were at the gates of Erzerum. Today it backs up this policy, as its armies have retreated from Armenia, but tomorrow, if Russia captures Constantinople, it would once again change its mind. That is why I would like to seize the opportunity and win a commitment from Russia, with England's and France's concurrence. But I must admit that France's desire of incorporating Cilicia into Syria is a hindrance to my plan.

Denys Cochin: "Why?"

Myself: "Because [outside of Cilicia] what was going to be left to constitute an autonomous Armenia would not be self-sufficient; it would be a dismembered Armenia. Armenia Major, which is a high mountainous region, would not be able to sustain itself without a plains territory, such as Cilicia. Before elaborating any further, I must explain clearly what we mean by autonomous Armenia and what its role and significance could be. We do not want to live anymore as a subjugated nation; nor do we want autonomy in its broadest sense. We do not want such an autonomy, because Armenia is not capable at the present to self-govern without foreign protection. That is why we are asking for a neutral autonomous protectorate, guaranteed by the Allies. I say neutral, because Armenia should not have an army, but a police force to keep law and order. And I believe that Belgium's case will not be repeated, since no one, for quite some time, will think of violating a treaty of neutrality. Thus Armenia will become a neutral, buffer state between the Turks established in Konia, and Russia, in case the latter tries to reach the Mediterranean. It will not be the same situation, if France takes over Cilicia, because Russia, having a common border, will absorb Upper Armenia. Therefore, France will have to deal with Russia alone to block its expansion to the sea, as it won't have the opportunity to confront Russia with a neutral Armenia with the support of the other Allied nations, England, and, perhaps, even Italy."

Denys Cochin: "Then what will happen to Alexandretta?"

Myself: "Alexandretta will become part of Syria together with a territory extending toward Aleppo and beyond. But here is yet another argument in support of my suggested plan; perhaps, even a stronger argument than the one of a 'buffer state'. I have in mind the international scale of the interests in and around Alexandretta where the terminal of the Baghdad railway exists. The English have vital economic interests at that point. They have two routes leading to India: by sea, through Suez, and by land with the Baghdad rail line. If France occupies Syria and Cilicia, including the Baghdad rail terminal, it will block the route leading to India. This is a matter of contention among friends and allies today, and I believe an agreement can be reached easily. But we must also consider that, in the future, their relationship could become less cordial, and therefore, it is necessary to take preventive measures to avoid all kinds of complications that might arise. That's why, in order to solve this problem once and for all and eradicate the possibility of newer conflicts, the free passage of the Baghdad rail line must be taken into consideration and secured."

Denys Cochin: "Then following your argument, Alexandretta should be given to England."

Myself: "Not at all. If Cilicia is annexed to a neutral Armenia, the free passage of the Baghdad line becomes guaranteed. Mersin or Yumurtalik, which are already linked or would be linked to the Baghdad railway system,

shall become terminals equivalent to Alexandretta. This must be decided between France and England.

“To sum it up, allow me to say that if Cilicia, with no interruption, is united with Syria, it will block the route to India and, consequently, become a source of future problems. Whereas, if Cilicia is joined to a neutral Armenia, all these difficulties disappear; the road becomes clear of hindrances and border customs, advantageous to everyone, and creates a buffer zone, thus guaranteeing continuous stability in Asia Minor, in the mentioned regions.”

Mr. Denys Cochin, who had followed me attentively, kindly told me that there were strong points in my arguments. He promised to talk about it to Mr. Delcassé. He asked me to see him again, after my visit to the ministry, and discuss with him future actions.

N. B. During the meeting, Mr. Denys Cochin asked me how Armenia would be able to govern itself by native elements, since they lacked the capability. I told him that for the early stage, we would do as my father¹ had successfully done in Egypt: that is, to ask for the cooperation of Europe, leaving the management of administrative matters, legal affairs, as well as the gendarmerie or militia, to their experts.

¹ Boghos Nubar's father, Nubar Pasha Nubarian (1825–1899), was appointed prime minister of Egypt thrice (1878–1879, 1884–1888, 1894–1895).

17**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Clemenceau**

[Excerpt]

1038 FA

Paris, May 13, 1915

(Boghos Nubar Pasha presented his theories the same way as he did with Mr. Gout.)

Mr. Clemenceau said that all the arguments seemed acceptable to him, but he insisted that Alexandretta should be retained for France.

As a conclusion, I asked him if he agreed to my plan. Mr. Clemenceau answered in the affirmative and promised to bring his assistance. I thanked him and asked him not to write anything before my meeting with Mr. Delcassé. He promised, asserting that I should meet Mr. Delcassé, while he warned me that Mr. Delcassé was a pretentious man, claiming to know everything, and therefore, I had to always be cautious.

18**The Armenian Committee of Manchester to Boghos Nubar
1046–1050 EA**

Manchester, May 13, 1915

Most Eminent Sir:

The Armenian Committee of Manchester is overjoyed to learn that, according to our Catholicos' wish, Your Excellency has, as the representative of His Holiness, resumed his mission to bring the Armenian cause to a successful ending.

In the meantime, we would like to brief Your Excellency on certain developments that took place during your absence and that grasped our attention. First of all, our committee had to focus its efforts on removing some of the harsh restrictions that were affecting the Armenians, as well as other foreign elements; although these measures were taken to prevent, especially, those foreigners who had become a serious danger to commercial and other profits, they were also hindering the activities of the large Armenian community. With a view to improving the situation, our committee called a general meeting, and authorized a task force of five members to apply to municipal officials and other authorities, and to do their utmost to protect our compatriots.

The task force, together with the [Armenian] committee in London, adopted a certain *modus operandi* and, after some appeals, was able to have the majority of these restrictions removed, and we were given the title of "foreigner friends." We would like to point out that, through our Archbishop and two committee members, we had applied to the Russian ambassador and requested his support and assistance concerning this very same problem. We are pleased to inform you that the ambassador received our representatives warmly and expressed his satisfaction that we had sought Russia's protection; he also appealed to the Foreign Office for a favorable disposition toward the Armenians.

Then, following the initiative of the British Armenia Committee of London that we should prepare a written document to formulate the aspirations of the Armenian nation, we called a meeting and asked members from Paris, London, and Manchester to participate. At this meeting, we had the good fortune of hearing the opinions of Dr. Zavriev, who had just arrived.

After long deliberations and exchanges of ideas, the members unanimously adopted a memorandum outlining the aspirations of the Armenians; the document was intended for the general assembly of the British Armenia Committee, which was to be held at the Parliament. However, in that memorandum, because of the objections, assurances, and remarks of Dr. Zavriev—who pointed at a semi-official body as his source—we had not sufficiently insisted on offering Russia the protection of an autonomous

Armenia, even though the general opinion of our representatives was against [Dr. Zavriev's points].

When the document was presented to the members of the British Armenia Committee, they pointed out that it contradicted another memorandum that contained the Armenian requests and was sent informally to the British Armenia Committee some time ago. Under the circumstances, they asked us to modify our document to make it congruent with the other one and, above all, enhance its practicability before presenting it to the committee. The Armenian delegates of Manchester had a meeting soon after their return and, following long discussions, decided not to submit any document outlining the requests of the Armenians to any official or semi-official bodies. They agreed to avoid such a serious move without the consent of the Catholicos, or of Your Excellency, the official representative of His Holiness. The delegates of London and Paris expressed their consent about the agreed.

Consequently, the Manchester Committee wishes you to organize a meeting in London, together with all the delegates of the other Armenian communities and, under your chairmanship, decide the content of this serious document. It is only after assessing all the viewpoints that, if Your Excellency deems it appropriate, the memorandum should be presented to the British Armenia Committee.

We remain respectfully yours,

H. Kamberian, Secretary
M. M. Manoukian, Chairman

P. S. Please find attached the resolution adopted by the assembly in London on April 19, 1915.

[Annex]
Resolution
1063 EA

London, April 20, 1915¹

The delegates of the London, Paris, and Manchester communities, at their meeting of April 20, 1915, held in London at the Grand Eastern Hotel, adopted unanimously the following resolution outlining the Armenian requests, to be presented to the British Armenia Committee, which protects the Armenian interests in this country.

The Armenian nation wishes that at the end of the present war, the six Armenian provinces, together with Cilicia, be liberated from Turkish rule

¹ Note that the resolution is dated April 20, instead of April 19, which is the date of the preceding letter!

and given to an autonomous government under the collective patronage of Russia, Great Britain, and France, subject to regulations to be established by these governments.

The three Allied nations, which express their sympathy toward the Armenian cause, can use, as a basis for the creation of an autonomous Armenia, the Russian reform proposals of June 1913, that were agreed upon by England and France. The final proposal should also reflect all the changes and eventualities created by the present war and thus emphasize the imperative nature of the new conditions; among them the most important is the unification of the six Armenian provinces with Cilicia and the retention of Mersin as a neutral, commercial access to the Mediterranean.

19**Aneurin Williams to Noel Buxton**
1079 EA

London, May 14, 1915

Mr. Noel Buxton
London

Dear Noel:

We learned the horrible stories of the massacres perpetrated by the Turks in Armenia. A few of these stories reached us through Bulgaria, as you will see from the attached clipping. I met Primrose once or twice; he has conferred with Tchobanian, and I think he is very sympathetic to the cause. It seems that our government, through the United States, has done everything within its power; Italy, too, has filed complaints with Constantinople. [Lieutenant-Colonel G. M.] Gregory points out that Bulgaria still enjoys a good, friendly relationship with Turkey to be able to exercise its pressure, and therefore, he wonders if you could cable there asking for a similar pressure.

According to Bryce, it is important for us to make the Turkish leaders realize that they shall be held personally responsible.

20**Boghos Nubar to Aneurin Williams
1051–1052 FA**

Paris, May 14, 1915

I received your letter of May 10 upon my arrival in Paris. I have come here on a new mission, on behalf of His Holiness, as his only representative in Europe.

Naturally, I am thinking of visiting London as soon as possible. However, before my visit, I thought it was important to contact the government to find out exactly their actual intentions regarding the Armenian Question.

I would like to thank you for the appeals that you have made in regard to the massacres. The Catholicos sent me a telegram stating that he has also appealed to President Wilson and the king of Italy, who have brought the matter to the attention of the Sublime Porte but without any success; we hear that the massacres are still continuing with gradual increase. Unfortunately, I don't know what can be done; witnessing the barbaric acts of the Germans, it is no wonder that the Turks are trying to imitate their ally.

Please accept, Mr. Williams, the expression of my very devoted sentiments.

21**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Robert de Caix**

[Excerpt]

1059 FA

Paris, May 16, 1915

Mr. Robert de Caix is of the opinion that it will be a great loss for France if the Ottoman Empire disappears, and that it would be beneficial for France to keep Turkey within its historical borders. However, he realizes that this is not possible anymore and agrees that France should get the largest possible part from it.

22**H. N. Mosditchian to Boghos Nubar
1060–1062 EA**

London, May 17, 1915

Dear Pasha:

I am grateful to Your Excellency's letter of May 12, which I received only this morning. I shall be very happy and proud if I could bring my modest contribution to our national cause, as a member of the delegation named by His Holiness the Catholicos of All Armenians, and presided by you, as the only representative of His Holiness.

To tell the truth, like all Armenians of the world, I am also pleased to see the realization of our hopes. That is, to find our cause in your capable and experienced hands in its final stage. In the meantime, the Armenian Political Committee of London, realizing the importance of the present developments on the future of Armenia, did its utmost to alert the British Armenia Committee; however, we were cautious and decided not to present the Armenian requests to the latter, as we were not authorized to make such a move. Though the chairman of our London Committee, Lieutenant-Colonel Gregory, has already informed you about the meeting, which took place here a few days ago, together with all the representatives of Manchester Armenians, Mr. Tchobanian, and Dr. Zavriev. Mr. Tchobanian represented the Armenians of Paris, whereas Dr. Zavriev the Armenian opinions in Russia. During the meeting we tried to outline everything that could reflect the Armenian ambitions, and keeping this in mind, we voted a resolution; I have the honor of enclosing a copy.* (The words "commercial and non-militarized" at the end of the resolution were suggested by Mr. Aneurin Williams during one of the sessions of the British Armenia Committee, where they had unofficially read this memorandum.) I have no doubt that Dr. Zavriev and Mr. Tchobanian have already explained to Your Excellency the considerations which influenced the formulation of the above-mentioned resolution.

We informed the British Armenia Committee about Your Excellency's mission and stated that it was part of Your Excellency's mandate to present the requests and aspirations of Armenians in a finalized document.

I am sure that Your Excellency has his reasons to stay in Paris for a few days before arriving in London. As I explained to Dr. Zavriev and Mr. Tchobanian, at the moment, there is more to accomplish in Paris than there is here in London.

P. S. Mr. Tchobanian left last Saturday. I am forwarding the letter addressed to him to Paris. My present address is Lloyd's Avenue, London E. C., and not Lloyd's Avenue, as it was before.

* See the Resolution of April 20, 1915 (document 18).

23**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Georges Leygues**
1072 FA

Paris, May 19, 1915

Like the officials at Quai d'Orsay, Mr. Leygues also regrets the decline of the Ottoman Empire; however, he agrees that it is not possible to save it anymore.

24

Lieutenant-Colonel G. M. Gregory to Boghos Nubar
1073–1074 EA

London, May 20, 1915

Your Excellency:

Pursuant to my letter of May 15, I have the honor of passing on to Your Excellency, for your information, the copies of Member of Parliament Mr. Aneurin Williams' correspondence regarding the actual horrifying situation in Armenia; Mr. Williams started this correspondence upon our suggestions.¹

I would also like to inform you that, recently, Dr. Zavriev gave Mr. Mosditchian, one of our committee members, the copy of a telegram about the same situation in Armenia; he had received it from Tiflis. Mr. Mosditchian met with Lord Bryce and Mr. Aneurin Williams yesterday, but we don't think that that meeting could change things much. Lord Bryce believes that it is important to notify the Turkish leaders that they should be held personally responsible, but the Foreign Office disagrees with him, considering that such a threat may subject the Armenians to greater vengeance.

¹ No copies were attached to this letter, and we could not find the mentioned letter of 15 May.

25**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. de Margerie
1050–1056 FA**

Paris, May 22, 1915

After a general conversation and exchange of pleasantries, Mr. de Margerie wished to know the nature of my visit.

I at once exposed the predicaments under which I had been delegated by the Catholicos and had come to Paris and London to request the assistance of both governments for the Armenian autonomy. I explained to him what we mean by autonomy, which should be protected by all [Allied] powers collectively, and should be neutralized.

Mr. de Margerie understood me. He stated that this meant the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire and that, although it was a possibility, it was not yet certain; he also mentioned that the French government had naturally considered a number of solutions—dismemberment or the creation of spheres of influence, or even the retention of the empire in Asia only, as Europe was out of the question (for Turkey).

I told him that I had never considered the complete disappearance of the empire; but it was necessary to confine it to the Turkish section of the country, which would include Brusa, Konia, Ankara, Kastamonou, etc., representing an area almost equivalent to two-thirds the size of France. Our goal, however, was the liberation of the Armenians from Turkish rule, which they would not be able to endure anymore without rebelling. Otherwise, the Eastern Question would remain pending and create an unstable situation and cause another war. This danger could disappear only through autonomy. I added that Russia was well disposed to grant us autonomy, and it was in line with their actual foreign policy, promoting the creation of autonomous nations on its borders. I also brought to his attention that what we requested was the collective protectorate of the Allies, of Italy—if it was going to be established in Adalia—and even of Turkey, as it would become a neighboring country. I added that the question of a collective protectorate could not create any antagonism on the part of Russia; in fact, France could very well promote the idea, at their friendly negotiations in the near future, as a security measure.

Mr. de Margerie, after agreeing with me, wished to draw my attention to the fact that in case Asiatic Turkey had to be divided according to the proposed plan, France would claim Syria (except for the Holy Land—Jerusalem, Bethlehem, for which there would probably be another regime not decided yet), and Cilicia all the way to the Taurus region. Mr. de Margerie then wanted to know what I thought about the size of the autonomous Armenia.

I answered that if France had decided to have Cilicia, we had no other

choice but to agree, and, in fact, to express our gratitude for having saved us from the Turks. I also added that, Cilicia, after becoming a French property, together with our compatriots living there would certainly prosper, and I would be the first one to buy land in that country. However, I reminded him that it was not the best solution, neither for Armenia nor for France. If that would be the case, it would leave only the six provinces to create an autonomous Armenia; in other words, a country that would consist of mountains and highlands, lacking the fertile fields of Cilicia. Such a dismembered Armenia, under the protection of Russia (as in that case there would be no necessity for a collective protectorate), would one day be devoured by them, just like Bulgaria, which had taken over Eastern Rumelia. Consequently, France would be left alone against Russia, as a single obstacle blocking the Russians from penetrating the Mediterranean. I emphasized that this was Russia's intention and it would remain unchanged.

Mr. de Margerie said that Russia was in full accord with France and would agree to annexing Cilicia to Syria.

I told him that it did not surprise me, since Russia owed France, as the latter played a decisive role in the war. It was important, however, to know if it was to France's advantage to take Cilicia. I mentioned to him one of my considerations that taking over Syria would make France an obstacle for Russia the day the latter decided to materialize its plans on the Mediterranean. This possibility would automatically vanish if Cilicia had to be annexed to an autonomous Armenia and become a buffer state and a hindrance for Russian expansion under the collective protection of the nations. The other argument concerned the Baghdad rail terminal. Before the war, this railway was under German management; the country it ran through and also Cilicia, where the railway started, were both within the German sphere of influence. After the war the Baghdad line would become international and this would be one of the major consequences of the war.

Mr. de Margerie nodded in agreement.

I added my doubt that since it was indispensable for England to retain a free passage via the Baghdad line, the English would never agree to the idea that the railway should pass through a French territory.

Mr. de Margerie mentioned that he was aware of the English military intentions of occupying Alexandretta.

I agreed that it was possible, but I also reminded him that France would not consent to separating Alexandretta, as well as Aleppo, Urfa, and the entire hinterland, all the way beyond the Euphrates, from Syria. It seemed that, under the circumstances, the question of annexing Cilicia to an autonomous Armenia would become a crucial factor for an agreement, and, in the meantime, make the idea of having one of the seaports of Cilicia, such as Mersin or Yumurtalik, quite a possibility. In this way, England would secure a free trade route into the hinterland and should have no reason to claim Alexandretta.

To summarize my ideas, I stated that if the French were determined to join Cilicia to Syria, then the Armenians would welcome them in Cilicia and express their gratitude; they would be assured that under the protection of France, Armenians would prosper and enjoy their freedom. However, from an Armenian point of view, that could not be the ideal solution; it goes without saying that we sincerely hoped to revive our nation, which has such a glorious past. Whereas, with a complete Armenia, consisting of Armenia Major and Armenia Minor or Cilicia, it would have been possible to start an autonomous country, create a buffer zone, and solve, in the meantime, the problem of the Baghdad railway terminal, and thus satisfy all the parties concerned.

Mr. de Margerie, after listening carefully to my arguments, declared that my viewpoints were new, and as they were not yet studied, he could not pronounce much; however, he admitted that they merited serious consideration. He advised me to expose my views to the minister whom I shall see this afternoon.

Before adjourning, he asked me my opinion about the interior structure of an autonomous Armenia. I answered that the country should have a European head of state, authorized with a vast mandate.

“An able military,” he suggested.

“Yes,” I replied, “a person who has already proved himself, and is above all, a good leader. Besides him, we should also invite the Europeans to collaborate in matters of finance, law, public construction, etc.”

As I was leaving, Mr. de Margerie announced that the Russians had captured Van.¹

“The Russians and the Armenians,” I stressed, “because the Armenians constitute forty percent of the Caucasian army, without counting the volunteers, fighting in the Van region.”

P. S. At the beginning of our meeting, Mr. de Margerie, among other things, told me that Italy had decided to join the Allies since the initial stages of the war, in August, but the country needed to be prepared. Quai d’Orsay had never doubted it.

* The Russians captured Van with the help of Armenian volunteers on May 20, 1915, after the Armenian population of Van had successfully resisted the Turkish army for almost a month.

26**Boghos Nubar's Interview with Delcassé
1039–1045 FA**

Paris, May 22, 1915

While welcoming me, Mr. Delcassé reminded me of our last year's meeting to discuss the reforms; he had not forgotten it. Then he asked me about the nature of my visit.

I first outlined the events that had urged the Catholicos to send me to Paris and London. I explained to him our plan for a protected autonomy. The moment I pointed out that it was not possible for Armenians to live under Turkish rule, he interrupted, saying that no one should count on Turkey anymore.

Regarding the question of autonomy, I told him that Russia was sympathetic toward Armenians, and the idea of autonomy, in general, was well received there; he assured me that he was fully aware of Russia's position.

I resumed my views on the annexation of Cilicia to Syria and on the consequences of the Baghdad railway terminal, in the same way as I had done with Mr. de Margerie. I especially emphasized our future gratitude vis-à-vis France, if it ever liberated us from Turkey, and enabled Cilicia to prosper under a French mandate.

While I explained, Mr. Delcassé demonstrated reservation and announced that under the actual circumstances, he could not make any commitment; future developments could change everything. He told me that he had followed my arguments carefully and asked me to continue.

I repeated the same views, which I had expressed to Mr. de Margerie on that day.

When I was finished, Mr. Delcassé wished to know the size of the Armenian population.

I told him that it was over 1 million in the six provinces and approximately 400,000 in Cilicia.

He pointed out that that is not a majority. I reminded him that the Armenians, as a race, were a majority, since the rest of the population was composed of different races, such as the Turks, Kurds, Turkmens, etc. I also added that, among them, the Armenians were the most cultured and crucial ethnic group.¹

¹ According to the *Salname* (official calendar of the Ottoman Empire), the Armenian provinces contained 1,330,000 Armenian; 530,000 Turks; 120,000 Kurds; and 82,300 others (total 2,062,300) at the time the Congress of Berlin was being convened (1878). A statistic prepared for the Paris Peace Conference by the United Armenian Delegation, based on surveys conducted in 1912, was mentioned that in the Armenian provinces there were 1,718,000 Muslims; 1,185,000 Christians; 254,000

As for the question of the Baghdad rail terminal, Mr. Delcassé stated that he did not agree with me entirely.

“This railway, as you stated correctly, shall become an international line and will be subject to an agreement drawn between the nations. I cannot understand why the British should have a terminal within the Persian Gulf, and the Russians in Constantinople, and France have none in Alexandretta. I think it would be easy to reach an agreement that could favor the commercial activities of all three nations equally, without jeopardizing them. Such an agreement may even become a reason for the nations to get closer,” since their interests require avoidance from discords in order to not endanger their trade on such an international route.

Mr. Delcassé seemed to be so pleased with his remark that I hesitated to respond and left the question to be discussed by the other parties, especially by the British. It was evident that this subject would become one of the crucial items on the agenda to be discussed at future negotiations among the Allies.

Coming back to the question of autonomy under collective protectorate, Mr. Delcassé assured me that I could count on France to express its sympathy toward the problem when the Allies began to study it; he did not, however, deny that France would avoid arrangements that would cause Russia's opposition. Then he advised me to go to London to acquaint them with my viewpoints. He also suggested that, if necessary, I should also go to Petrograd; in this way, he said, the three governments will be aware of the Armenian ambitions and will become familiar with all the details to come to a decision. He added that they would proceed with a favorable spirit toward the Armenians.

When they announced the arrival of the Russian ambassador, I took my leave. At the door, Mr. Delcassé told me that they had received a telegram announcing Russia's invasion of Van. I answered the same way as I had responded to Mr. de Margerie that morning, pointing out that Armenians had contributed immensely to their victory, as forty percent of the Caucasian army consisted of Armenian soldiers, without counting the volunteer groups, who were equipped as a result of funds made available by our compatriots.

My impression of these meetings with Mr. Delcassé and with other officials of the ministry is that France has already agreed with Russia about Cilicia and will be claiming it together with Syria; this plan is not a question of need or ambition for supremacy. The French government does not really want this; in fact, this is one of the reasons why France would prefer the

others. The breakdown of these numbers, according to nationalities, gave the following picture: 1,018,000 Armenians; 666,000 Turks; 424,000 Kurds, etc. These figures clearly indicated the dominance of Armenians in the Armenian provinces taken as a whole. Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade* (Armenia and the Armenian Case): documents (Cairo, 1946), 90–92, 252.

Ottoman Empire not to be divided. Nevertheless, since this division is inevitable, and its two Allies will receive the lion's share—Mesopotamia to England, possibly with a kingdom in Arabia, and Constantinople to Russia, along with expanded borders on the Caucasian side—Quai d'Orsay thinks that after all its sacrifice, France should not abstain or be satisfied with Syria alone. That's why the government plans to annex the fertile lands of Cilicia to Syria. France shall definitely insist on it during the negotiations. However, it is important to point out that France has not yet come to any agreement with England in this respect. Mr. Delcassé's tone regarding the Baghdad rail terminal revealed that they had not consulted England on this matter, otherwise he would have told me that they had agreed with the English government, just as Mr. Gout and Mr. Berthelot had pointed out with regard to the Cilician problem. Now we have to see if this solution will be acceptable to London, and that they won't be looking for other arguments to reach an agreement on the Baghdad question.

Another point, which is clear to me, is that France will try to satisfy Russia regarding the Armenian Question and stay away from solutions that could raise Russia's objection.

As a result of all these, we may conclude that France will encourage the autonomy of the six provinces and the question of collective protection, provided Russia would not insist on becoming the only protector.

In short, this is the general present atmosphere at Quai d'Orsay. I would like to emphasize, however, that there has not yet been any serious negotiation regarding Armenia, nor has there been any agreement with England on the Baghdad question.

Therefore, London remains the only party who could object and propose a different solution in order to obtain a better assurance for British interests, especially for the terminal point of the highway communicating with India; this may change the proposed solution for Cilicia.

Besides this, we may also expect one or two Allies to send troops to Alexandretta; such an action may change the problem.

27

Mr. Veselitsky to Boghos Nubar
1088–1089 FA

London, May 25, 1915

Your Excellency:

Encouraged by your warm reception in Paris, in October 1913, I would like to introduce myself by refreshing your memory. An Armenian friend told me that you would soon be arriving in London. I am sure that my article, which had appeared in *Novoye Vremia*, following my meeting with you, was brought to your attention. I also wrote about you, after your spectacular letter to *The Times*, in which you had presented Russia as one of the nations interested in Armenians. On another occasion, when the world was still at peace, I had referred almost abstrusely to your sound suggestion regarding the German proposals.* Ever since, the Armenian Question has made considerable advances with Russia, as well as with its Allies. You can be sure that here we have quite a few enthusiastic English groups sympathetic to the Armenian cause; I have, among them, many good colleagues and friends.

I would be indebted to you if you could let me know your approximate date of arrival, and permit me to meet you to pay my homage. I am sure that our ambassador would also be pleased to meet with you. He is one of my former colleagues, just like Mr. Izvolski, and he is younger than I am.

I would personally be happy to do my best for the Armenian cause and would beg of you to accept my services in that respect.

I remain respectfully your most humble servant,

E. de Veselitsky
London correspondent of *Novoye Vremia*
since 1892

* On the occasion of negotiations for reforms.

28

Boghos Nubar to Lieutenant-Colonel G. M. Gregory
1090–1091 FA

Paris, May 25, 1915

Mr. G. M. Gregory
President of United Armenian Association
(Political Committee)
London

Dear Sir:

I received your letter of May 20, about the appeals which you and Mr. A. Williams have made with regard to the [Armenian] massacres in Turkey. I feel it my duty to express to you my gratitude for the efforts of your committee vis-à-vis our national interests.

As you might have been informed, our Catholicos has cabled President Wilson and the king of Italy to intervene at the Sublime Porte, and I have, on my part, applied to the American ambassador for the same purpose. Furthermore, a week ago, Mr. Izvolski showed me a declaration prepared by himself, in which he held the Turkish ministers responsible; he was even thinking of asking the French and English governments to sign it together with Russia. Today, much to my satisfaction, I read the joint declaration in the papers;¹ it means that the Allies are taking our cause seriously and are ready to offer us their complete collaboration.

¹ The joint declaration published in *The Times* on May 24, 1915, stated: "For the past month, Kurds and the Turkish population of Armenia have been engaged in massacring Armenians with the connivance and help of the Ottoman authorities. Such massacres took place about the middle of April at Erzerum, Dertshau [Derjan], Mush, Zeitun, and in all Cilicia.

The inhabitants of about a hundred villages near Van were all assassinated. In the town itself the Armenian quarter is besieged by Kurds. At the same time the Ottoman government at Constantinople is raging against the inoffensive Armenian population. In the face of these fresh crimes committed by Turkey, the Allied Governments announce publicly to the Sublime Porte that they will hold all members of the Government, as well as such of their agents as are implicated, personally responsible for such massacres."

It is worthy to mention that this text was adopted upon the initiative of Sazonov "in order to satisfy Armenian opinion in Russia." The proposed text accused Turkey of committing the crimes against "Christianity and civilization," but the British government chose to omit those words. Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes puissances l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives Françaises 1914–1918* (Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1983), 25–28. The Turkish government, on June 4, 1915, having consulted with the German ambassador in Constantiople, replied that it was merely

Presently, I don't think that we can do much; we may, perhaps, undertake a press campaign, which may, under the present circumstances, remain rather ineffective.

exercising its sovereign right to self-defense, and that the responsibility for anything that happened in the Armenian provinces must be borne by the Entente powers who had *organized and directed the revolutionary movement* in the first place. Martin Gilbert, *The First World War—a Complete History* (New York, 1994), 166.

29

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Izvolski
1092–1094 FA

Paris, May 26, 1915

When I arrived at the embassy, Zavriev, who had asked for an appointment separately, was already there.

I asked [Izvolski] if he had received any instructions from Petrograd about the Armenian Question.

He told me that he had received nothing besides the confirmation of the agreement recorded in Zavriev's report, which was the result of an academic conversation rather than commitments.¹

He asked me if I had been satisfied with my meetings with the political dignitaries in Paris.

I explained quickly that many of them accepted our plan, as proposed in Zavriev's report, but I also added that, according to Quai d'Orsay, Russians had already consented to the idea of annexing Cilicia to Syria, in case the Asiatic Turkey had to be divided. I had been assured about this at Quai d'Orsay, and under such circumstances, of course, if and when France decided to take Cilicia, along with Syria, the Armenians could by no means prevent it from happening.

I also stated to Mr. Izvolski all my arguments, especially the one about the Baghdad rail terminal, which particularly interested England.

Mr. Izvolski, as usual, did not say much. When I mentioned that the negotiations were getting complicated, since Russia had not yet manifested its true disposition vis-à-vis the Armenians as described in Zavriev's report, he answered that it was better to be reserved.

It is evident that Russia has let France decide for itself about Syria and Cilicia, as I was assured by Quai d'Orsay. I have the impression that, today, Russia is regretting for having set France free regarding Cilicia at least, and since it is not able to renege from its promise, is now looking for a

¹ In his cable of May 5/18, 1915, to Izvolski Sazonov stated: "The discussions with Armenians were of an academic nature. No specific plan was suggested to Zavriev. To Zavriev's request that Cilicia should be included in the Armenian territory according to the aspirations of Armenians, it was replied that we are not in a position to accommodate it because of the superior interests of France in Cilicia." Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdane Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatghteroum 1828–1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828–1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 375. Another cable sent by Sazonov to the aid of the viceroy in the Caucasus on April 9/22, 1915, mentioned that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not yet reached a final conclusion in regard to Turkish Armenia. *Ibid.*, 368–369.

possibility to remedy this predicament. Possibly, it is because of this situation that Russia has agreed to leave Cilicia to the Armenians and annex it to an autonomous Armenia. Quai d'Orsay, however, is denying this reality. As long as Russia does not propose, France will never modify its claim on Cilicia. On the other hand, it is also possible that Russia expects England to express its objection to the Baghdad rail terminal.

Before leaving, as I had talked about my trip to London next week, Mr. Izvolski requested that I get in touch with him before my departure; he would like to cable the Russian ambassador to London and notify him of my arrival.

30**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Couyba***

(Excerpts)

1095–1096 FA

Paris, May 26, 1915

Mr. Couyba suggested that in order to succeed, we should not propose the complete annexation of Cilicia to an autonomous Armenia; we should be satisfied, instead, with a section that secures access to the sea.

We agreed that this solution might provide a better ground for agreement, and I promised to consider it during my negotiations.

At the meeting, following Mr. Couyba's request to have the name of the future head of state of autonomous Armenia, Mr. Tchobanian recommended Prince Louis Napoleon, who is a General of the Russian army and quite popular in the country.¹

Certainly, this could have been a very good choice, but Mr. Couyba thinks that the Prince might not accept it.

* During the meeting, Nerses Khan Nersesian, a friend of Mr. Couyba's, and Arshag Tchobanian, accompanied the pasha.

¹ Prince Louis Napoleon, an officer of many years of service in the Russian army, was appointed as governor general of Yerevan by the Viceroy Vorontsov-Dashkov in 1905. Christopher Walker, *Armenia—the Survival of a Nation* (New York, 1984), 75.

31**Boghos Nubar to Sir Francis Bertie
1097–1098 FA**

Paris, May 27, 1915

Mr. Ambassador:

I read in *The Times* the official declaration that the government of His Majesty the King has issued simultaneously with the French and Russian governments, holding the Turkish ministers and their collaborators personally responsible for the ongoing massacres in Armenia. I feel privileged, as the special envoy of His Holiness, the Catholicos of All Armenians, and the president of the Armenian National Delegation, to ask Your Excellency to convey the deepest gratitude of my compatriots to His Excellency, the minister of foreign affairs, for his vigorous and magnanimous remarks.

The Triple Entente inspires in us confidence for an approaching salvation and the accomplishment of our national goals, through raising their voices in favor of the Armenians, who have been subjected to Turkish harassments for centuries, and by officially declaring themselves protectors of our unfortunate nation.

32**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Francis Bertie**

[Excerpt]
1103–1104 FA

Paris, May 27, 1915

I told him all about my letter to Sir Edward Grey,¹ in which I had thanked the Allies for their note of warning to the Sublime Porte, with regard to the Armenian massacres.

I hesitated to give too many details on the nature of my mission, in order to avoid the possibility of transmitting incomplete information to London before my arrival. He promised to pass my letter on to Sir Edward Grey the same evening.

We talked about the war; he thought that it was getting long and it would even go beyond winter. The British army has now 3 million soldiers, but there are no more volunteers joining it.

They have positive evidence that submarines have crossed the North Sea and the Gibraltar. He thinks that these submarines are fueled along the Portuguese, Spanish, and African coasts by ships that belong to neutral countries.

He also says that according to a reliable source, Germans have crucified infants and Canadian soldiers.

I asked him if the rumors about lack of ammunition were true. He admitted that ammunition was on the decline and that Marshal French had demanded a special type of bomb, and Mr. Asquith, thinking that they were shipped, had even announced it in the Parliament. However, later on, he had discovered that the minister of war had not sent them. It is not evident who is to be blamed. The problem stems from lack of competence. Fortunately, the situation has been improved after the creation of the Ministry of Armament.

¹ Copy is missing.

33**Boghos Nubar to Mr. T. Delcassé
1101–1102 FA**

Paris, May 27, 1915

Mr. Minister:

As the special envoy of His Holiness, the Catholicos of All Armenians, and the president of the Armenian Delegation, I take upon myself to offer to your government my deepest gratitude for the forceful and equally magnanimous declaration, which your government, along with the British and Russian governments, issued to the Sublime Porte, holding the Turkish ministers and their collaborators personally responsible for the ongoing massacres in Armenia.

The Triple Entente states, which are fighting heroically for the victory of rights and civilization, for justice and emancipation of persecuted nations, asserted by their humanitarian gestures their commitment to protect the Armenians, who are nurturing once again, after centuries of oppression, the hope to be free and rebuild their national autonomy.

France, which has been traditionally the protector of the Christians of the East, will most assuredly fulfill its role to the fullest at this crucial stage, allowing a nation to survive, a nation that has given the undeniable proof of its vitality throughout history. Such faith will make the Armenians put behind them all the sufferings that they still endure in their struggle to accomplish their goals.

34

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Izvol'ski
1099–1100 FA

Paris, May 27, 1915

Mr. Ambassador:

I read in the press the official declaration made by your government's initiative, which was simultaneously diffused by the British and French governments, holding the Turkish ministers and their agents personally responsible for the massacres carried out in Armenia. I feel honored, as the representative of His Holiness, the Catholicos of All Armenians, and as the president of the Armenian National Delegation, to ask Your Excellency to convey the deepest gratitude of our compatriots to His Excellency the foreign minister, for his vigorous, and, at the same time, magnanimous remarks.

The Triple Entente inspires in us confidence for an approaching salvation and the accomplishment of our national goals, through raising their voices in favor of the Armenians, who have been subjected to Turkish harassments for centuries, and by officially declaring themselves protectors of our unfortunate nation.

The ultimate battle that is raging now in support of justice, civilization, and the liberation of persecuted nations, inspired the Armenians to spontaneously, and by the means at their disposal, fight alongside the Imperial army, aiming at the reestablishment of their national autonomy, under the patronage of Russia and its Allies. This faith will make them endure all kinds of sacrifices that they are still making until the fulfillment of their dream.

I assure you that I speak on behalf of my compatriots, by entrusting the faith of my unfortunate people to His Most Excellent Majesty, the Czar. I am confident that he will strive, with the help of his Allies, to accomplish the liberation of the Armenians, on the day when the faith of all persecuted nations will be finally decided.

35**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Georges Clemenceau**

[Excerpt]

1105 FA

Paris, May 27, 1915

Mr. Clemenceau replied that Alexandretta and Syria must be relinquished to France. After this is accomplished, he agrees that the rest of Cilicia must be left to us, with an opening to the sea.

36

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Veselitsky
1112–1113 FA

Paris, May 28, 1915

Mr. Veselitsky
London

Dear Sir:

I received, with great pleasure, your letter of May 25. I am truly touched that you cherish the memory of that unique encounter we had back in 1913. I thank you sincerely for everything you have done and written in support of our cause. I confirm, too, that since then great strides have been taken toward bringing our cause to a final solution.

I shall come to London, soon after the completion of some meetings, probably by the end of next week. Certainly, I shall have the pleasure of meeting you then. I rely upon your favorable support, which you had so willingly promised to extend to us.

P. S. I intend to stay at the Claridge, if accommodation is available.

37

Levon Meguerditchian to Boghos Nubar
1107–1110 FA

Alexandria, May 28, 1915

His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha
Paris

Your Excellency:

I have the privilege of informing you that I will board the S. S. *Ispahan* of *Messageries Maritimes* on June 12. There are no ships leaving Alexandria before that date, and even if there were, I would not be ready.

This morning I cabled you the following:

“The Armenians of Zeitun have retreated to their mountains to avoid being drafted in the Turkish army. The regiment that had been assigned the task of pursuing them is annihilated. Now they are engaged in a battle against 20,000 Turkish soldiers. Their situation will become quite distressing, if they do not receive help in time.”

According to reliable sources, those who have avoided the draft have, indeed, found refuge in the mountains. Their number is increasing continuously with those refugees coming from Deort-Yol, Hadjin, and the surrounding areas.

Naturally, lacking arms and ammunition, young Armenians from Zeitun have attacked a Turkish army convoy carrying arms and confiscated them. After accomplishing this feat, they have retreated to the mountains. The Turks have sent 500 soldiers in their pursuit, but the Armenians of Zeitun have completely exterminated them. Enraged by this defeat, the German officers, in command of the Turkish army, have sent new Turkish forces to Zeitun; according to travelers coming from Syria, the number of these soldiers is close to 30,000. Even if this number does not seem overwhelming to the Armenians of Zeitun, I personally reduced it by 10,000 and reported it to you as 20,000 in my telegram. You must remember that during the 1895 rebellion, the Ottoman government was forced to send 50,000 soldiers to quell the movement under the command of famous Edhem Pasha, the victor of the war with Greece in 1897. Edhem Pasha sieged Zeitun for two months with no result at all.

However, now the situation is different. The rebellion of the Armenians of Zeitun is spontaneous and they have not taken any preparatory measures. Furthermore, there is the active help of Germany to Turkey. I am afraid that these brave people, who symbolize our fighting spirit, will succumb to the superior, organized Turkish army.

Unfortunately, at the moment, we cannot rely upon the Allies for their help, since they have focused their attention on Gallipoli. Perhaps, it would

be possible to approach Italy with the same promises that you accorded to the others. Rumors are circulating here that Italian soldiers will soon land on the Cilician shore, upon the initiative of their government. For reasons well known to Your Excellency, it would, perhaps, be preferable to submit an official petition by you and, according to the conditions that you are well aware of, promise our help to Italy. According to rumors, this country would like to lay claims upon the bay area of Alexandretta, and I believe that the help offered by the Armenians would be taken into consideration at the final negotiations.

P. S. Here many restrictions are imposed upon all Turkish nationals wanting to travel to Europe. These measures have been taken after the betrayal of certain Turkish nationals of Greek origin was revealed. These Greeks were involved in arms smuggling and espionage for Turkey. I revealed this situation and submitted a report to Mr. Storss. In order to travel to Europe, Turkish nationals must secure the permission of General Maxwell. I wrote to him and explained the nature of my mission. He replied positively, promising to furnish me with the necessary documents, provided I go see him. Therefore, I shall be leaving for Cairo tonight.

38

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Victor Bérard
1115–1116 FA

Paris, May 29, 1915

I informed him all about my meetings without concealing my disappointment that many people I talked to regretted the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire and that they would have liked to preserve it, if it were possible.

Mr. Bérard said that it was not possible anymore to safeguard the Ottoman Empire beyond its Turkish vilayets, along the Black Sea, and in Eastern Anatolia, and in Konia, the capital.

Mr. Bérard consistently referred to Armenia as “Eastern Anatolia.”

I told him that it is not acceptable for a nation, which had been able to survive, despite the centuries-old oppression, and give up its name, especially on the eve of restitution.

He tried to convince me that to avoid the name Armenia would immensely facilitate the solution and that it was necessary (especially) on account of the Kurdish existence.

I answered that we would also propose the foundation of an autonomous Kurdistan in the southern regions of Diyarbakir, which were populated mainly by Kurds. As for those Kurds, residing within the Armenian provinces, most were converted Armenians. [Henceforth} they would live harmoniously with the Armenians without the incitement of Turkish officials against the population.

Mr. Bérard mentioned that Mr. Clemenceau had lost a lot of his influence. By now, he should have become the prime minister, but his personal hostilities and constant attacks against the government had damaged him. No one reads *L'homme enchaîné** anymore.

* Clemenceau started to publish the newspaper, *L'homme libre* under the name of *L'homme enchaîné*, which the government had discontinued.

39

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Chavinon

[Excerpt]

1114 FA

Paris, May 29, 1915

Mr. Chavinon told me that Izvolski is pursuing his personal policy and it was he who advocated war and dragged France into it.

40**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Edgard Rohelse**

[Excerpt]

1117–1119 FA

Paris, May 29, 1915

I showed him Meguerditchian's telegram, informing that 20,000 Turkish soldiers were sent to Zeitun, and asked him if he could render us a service by publishing it. He agreed to it at once and gave his instructions to put it in the issue that would appear in an hour.

Mr. Rohelse was of the opinion that there was not much to be done and that an effort from Quai d'Orsay would not produce better results than the ultimatum given by the Allies, holding the Turkish ministers personally responsible for the massacres.

(Later on the pasha explains, in detail, to Mr. Rohelse, with his usual arguments, the Armenian Question. He outlines his interviews and requests as follows:)

1. An autonomous Armenia, and possibly a neutral one, under the protectorate of all Allies.

2. Russia shall never resign from its goal of reaching the Mediterranean; if France invades Cilicia, France then will be an obstacle for Russia and the latter will fight for it.

3. This situation will only be remedied if Cilicia is to be annexed to an autonomous Armenia instead of confining it only to the six provinces. Consequently, there will appear a neutral state, and it will provide Russia with an opening to the sea, creating a safe passage for its trade. Then Russia will have no reason to expand all the way down to the Mediterranean.

4. I reminded him that Miliukov, in one of his articles, had suggested that, in case Russia had to spread down to the Mediterranean, it should be obliged to keep a naval force equal in size and in importance to those of the French and the British in the Mediterranean and even in the Atlantic. With an autonomous Armenia, Russia should free itself from such obligations, as its trade will have the necessary export facilities.

5. I also mentioned the argument concerning the Baghdad railway terminal, running through a neutral Armenia, without obstacles, open to all, especially to the British. Moreover, I pointed out that as a result of this solution, it would be possible to persuade England to give up its ambitions in Alexandretta; its trade route with India would be guaranteed through a terminal that always would be under its disposal.

Mr. Rohelse, after listening to me and following everything on the map I had prepared for our proposals, declared that my arguments were most interesting, that they contained a unique and attractive solution, and that he was ready to support them.

41**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Celestin Jonnart***

[Excerpt]
1129–1130 FA

Paris, May 31, 1915

(The pasha gives explanations about the Armenian Question to Mr. Jonnart; Nubar's arguments seem very interesting to Jonnart)

He asked me if I had met Mr. Delcassé and explained the matter to him. I told him that I had not been able to expose everything in detail, but I had, at least, discussed the main points with him.

Mr. Jonnart advised me that it was not sufficient and that it is necessary to prepare a complete memorandum beyond my brief report,[†] and clarify in it the points which I had explained to him. Because, he added, Mr. Delcassé reads all memoranda that are addressed to him.

Naturally, I agreed to prepare that memorandum, and we decided to have lunch together on Thursday so that I could hand it to him in person, profiting from the occasion.

Mr. Jonnart promised that he would also talk to Mr. Delcassé and requested that I send him copies of my brief report and of the map that accompanied it.

* Yakoub Artin Pasha, a member of the National Delegation, and Mr. Bonnet, the General Secretary of the Suez Canal Company, were also present at the meeting.

[†] The pasha had prepared the concise report for Mr. Rohelse, the political editor of *Temps*.

42**The Armenian Question**

[A Brief Memorandum]

1120–1125 FA

Paris, June 1915

Last year, the Sublime Porte decided to promulgate, in the Armenian provinces, the reforms, which were initiated by Russia, after long and difficult discussions and agreed upon on February 8, 1914. The *Orange Book* on the Armenian Question that was first published by the Russian government reveals all the obstacles the Triple Entente had to overcome. These hindrances were created mainly because of German opposition. The Armenians, at the time, believed that the Ottoman government would truly respect its commitment and, by carrying out the reforms, would put an end, once and for all, to oppression and massacres, thus allowing these unfortunate people, who were primarily seeking their security, to live in peace.

However, at the beginning of the war, even before joining with Germany, the Sublime Porte tore up its commitment and dismissed the two inspectors general, who were officially appointed by the powers, according to the reforms agreement. Henceforth, the reforms can no longer be a question. The Armenian cause should take a new course, when the future of Asiatic Turkey shall be decided after the Turkish defeat, which is not too far away.

No matter what the decisions of the Allies might be, it is not possible to take into consideration any solution that would keep the Armenians under Turkish bondage. Armenians would strongly refuse to resume their servile existence any longer. Together with His Holiness, Kevork V, their Supreme Head, Armenians would request the Allies, striving for the liberation of oppressed nations, to create an autonomous and neutral Armenia under their protectorate.

The following brief notes are aimed at summarizing a few of the principal conditions that are related to the Question:

1. To create an autonomous and neutral Armenia, under the control and protection of the Allied nations, namely, France, England, and Russia.

2. It will comprise the six Armenian provinces and western Cilicia to secure a free access to the sea.

3. It is also possible to create a Kurdistan, if it is deemed to be advantageous, placed between Mesopotamia on the south and the vilayets of Van and Diyarbakir on the north. Some of the Kurdish regions of these provinces could be annexed to Kurdistan.

4. In case of the dismemberment of Asiatic Turkey, we might expect the Ottoman Empire to have Konia as the capital and keep the entire territory on the southeastern part of Armenia, all the way to the Black Sea, excluding

Adalia, which will be given to Italy, Smyrna to Greece, Constantinople to Russia, Mesopotamia to England, and Syria, with Alexandretta and part of Cilicia, to France. In such a case, Armenians hope that France would be willing to leave the western region of Cilicia to Armenia, in order to help them establish a perfectly self-sufficient national union; in this way, Russia will also have an access to the sea, a free passageway for its trade through a neutral country.

Indeed, it is indispensable for Russia, especially from an economic viewpoint, to have a free access to the Mediterranean. Since the only route leading to the access is through Armenia, a territorial expansion has long been Russia's ambition. Russia will not quit this ambition until it is realized.

If a European nation takes possession of the entire Cilicia, that access will be blocked and become the cause of disputes; the situation has to be taken into consideration now, in order to avoid eventual problems. However, the annexation of western Cilicia, with a seaport on the Mediterranean to Armenia, may eradicate all such possible disagreements. In this way, Russia will be fully satisfied for having secured itself a free access through a neutral country open to all, but, in the meantime, dependent, as it would be under the collective protection of the nations, including Russia. Consequently, the latter will have no ambitions to expand to the sea. This solution will be considered preferable, even in Russia by all those who think that expansion to the sea should make it imperative for Russia to create a seaport and keep in that region a fleet as large as the French and the English ones. Mr. Miliukov, the Leader of the Cadet Party in the Duma, shares the same view.¹

With an autonomous Armenia expanding down to the Mediterranean, Russia will avoid this heavy burden, as it will enjoy all the advantages of having an access to the sea without increasing its naval force.

Therefore, the partial annexation of Cilicia to an autonomous Armenia would be to Russia's advantage. We can be sure that to obtain it, Russia would like to have Armenia under the collective suzerainty of the Allies, creating thus a buffer state.

Boghos Nubar

¹ Cadet is short for the words "constitutional democrat" given to the Peoples' Freedom Party. It was established in October 1905, although some consider it definitely organized at its second congress (January 5–11, 1906). The party advocated a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy for Russia and became the center power in the Duma where it initiated the progressive bloc.

43

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Albin Rozet

[Excerpt]

1126–1128 FA

Paris, June 1, 1915

I found him to be as much of a turkophile as he was before the war. He agreed that the Turks were at fault in declaring war against the Allies, but added that the real culprit was France. He said that if France had granted the Turks, before the war, the millions of francs that now it is wasting in order to capture the Dardanelles, it would not be faced with the urgency of fighting against the Turks.

I revealed to him my viewpoint (about the Armenian Question). From the very beginning I realized that he opposed my views and looked for counterarguments. When I told him that for Armenia, as well as for Russia, a commercial route was needed to allow them free access to the sea, he interrupted me, saying that I was pleading for Russia's cause. He went on to explain that it was beyond his comprehension why Russia, after taking over Constantinople, should also take Armenia; he thought that if Russia assures a route through Cilicia, which is claimed by France, Armenia would be practically and immediately surrendered to Russia.

I told him that I had no responsibility to stand for Russian interests, which could be adequately accomplished by its ambassadors, and I had come solely to defend the Armenian cause. And if, I said, I mentioned Russian and French interests, while exposing my plan, it was because I tried to show that those interests were concordant with ours.

(The pasha goes on presenting his arguments in favor of his plan, but Mr. Rozet remains adamant and insists that France must occupy all of Cilicia, that Russia has no right whatsoever to any free access on the Mediterranean and he asserts that there will be no future disputes between France and Russia in that respect. With equal obstinacy, he refuses to accept the argument about the Baghdad railway, indicating that England has no reason to seek a port other than Alexandretta. He also does not accept the argument that part of the Baghdad railway should run through autonomous Armenia, which would be the case if part of Cilicia is given to Armenia.)

He added that, after all, those were his personal views and that the matter would be resolved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Later on, it could even be debated before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Council of Deputies.

44

Mikael Varandian to Dr. Zavriev

[Telegram]

1131 FA

Tiflis, June 3, 1915

Zavriev
Hotel Splendide
Avenue Carnot
Paris

Turks were completely defeated in [the city of] Van and the province.
The victorious Russian army is in Van. [There is] great enthusiasm.

Varandian

45**Mikael Varandian to Boghos Nubar**

[Telegram]

? FA

Tiflis, June 3, 1915

Boghos Nubar Pasha

Paris

Unexpected success. Van was conquered by the insurgents, after battles lasting one month. The victorious Russian army is in Van. In spite of the continuous bombing, the Armenian districts have suffered little damage. By virtue of the battles, Shadakh, Lim, and other regions were saved. The battles are still raging. The front divisions are entering Bitlis. Sasun offers strong resistance. [There is] great misery all over. Need for emergency assistance. Some groups are exploiting our name. I ask you earnestly that you allow the publication of sections of your letter of April 27.¹ My address—the National Bureau.

¹ See document 3.

46**Handwritten Note of Boghos Nubar
1132 FA**

June 3, 1915

In response to our request to obtain information, they advise us to go to Russia.¹

They tell us informally that the Allies are about to formulate an agreement with the intention of solving the Armenian Question. The solution, which is being studied now, is the following: autonomy to Armenia with a Republican Constitution under the protection of Russia, England, and France (similar to Tunisia). They add that the principles of protectorate will be put into effect mainly to settle the thorny issues of nationalities. This is the same regime that will be exercised in Albania by Italy, in Croatia by the Allies, and, perhaps, in Bohemia and Poland, too. But these questions are being discussed only theoretically at the present, so that they will be ready for settlement at the right moment.

¹ It is not clear whom Boghos Nubar refers to as “they.”

47

Banquet Given by Mr. Jonnart*

[Excerpt]

1134–1138 FA

Paris, June 3, 1915

As we sat down, Mr. Jonnart directed a few remarks to Mr. Delcassé, explaining to him that he had wished to create an opportunity for me to meet the minister in my official capacity which I had already explained to him. He also added that I had, at the same time, given him ample information about the Armenian Question, that had seemed to interest him. Mr. Jonnart said that, because of the interest, he had advised me to prepare a memorandum to be submitted to the minister, to explain, in detail, our problem, and give all the pertinent arguments supporting our cause. Mr. Jonnart added that he had assured me of the minister's habit of reading all the memoranda submitted to him.

In reply, Mr. Delcassé said that it was indeed a customary practice for him to examine everything personally so that, after being acquainted completely with the matter, he could make his decision. He promised to read my memorandum with due attention. He asked if my memorandum would, in essence, be similar to the verbal explanations I had given to him at Quai d'Orsay during my last visit.

I answered, saying that during my first short visit, which was interrupted by the arrival of the Russian ambassador, I had not been able to bring out all the details and, naturally, my arguments were cut short. I told him that since he had promised to read my memorandum, I reserved the right to expose in it the Armenian Question completely and would consider the suggested solution as satisfactory to all parties. Therefore, we agreed that I would prepare the memorandum and submit it to Mr. Piccioni, Mr. Delcassé's executive secretary, once it was ready.

To complete my report about the discussions concerning the Armenian Question during the banquet, I would like to add that Mr. Jonnart, whom I have kept informed of my meeting with Mr. Albin Rozet and his unsympathetic attitude, made a remark, in order to forewarn Mr. Delcassé before Mr. Rozet would talk to him. Therefore, Mr. Jonnart mentioned that, among the several political figures I had met and who had agreed to my proposed solution, in general, only Mr. Albin Rozet had opposed it. But, he went on, saying that it had not surprised me, because I was personally aware of Mr. Rozet's opinion and especially of his political leniency toward Moslems in general and Turks in particular.

* At this luncheon there was also Mr. Xavier Charme, Mr. Bonnet, and Yakoub Artin Pasha, member of the National Delegation.

Mr. Jonnart's speech was quite dignified and tinged with fine sarcasm. Mr. Delcassé smiled, and even though he did not express any opinion, he seemed to say that he agreed with the remarks made about Mr. Rozet.

The banquet lasted two and one-half hours. Many issues were discussed and Mr. Delcassé expressed his opinion freely.

I transcribe some of his words.

He said that since the beginning of the war, he never doubted that Italy would join the Allies. He had expressed that opinion back in 1902, in a speech delivered at the National Assembly. He further stated that, during diplomatic negotiations, he had never encountered so much loyalty and good judgment as the Italians had manifested during the ten months prior to their participation in the war.

Regarding Kaiser William, he said that the kaiser is the one who receives the maximum and the most inaccurate information.

Referring to the Dardanelles, he said that he could not understand why soldiers had to land from the southern edge. Even though he admitted he was ignorant in military matters, he said that it would be more logical if the invading troops had landed at the northern end of Boulayir, from where they could launch their attacks on the Turkish strongholds. If they had failed [during the Balkan wars] to overrun their strongholds, it was because they had lacked naval support. But since the Allies had their fleet in the Aegean Sea, they could have attacked these fortifications through the middle, which would eventually turn the situation to their favor.

I mention this episode, since I have always reasoned the same way.

Mr. Delcassé also gave us some very interesting information regarding the submarines. He has a sound knowledge about these matters because he was once the minister of naval affairs.

48**Boghos Nubar to Archbishop Kevork Utugian
1139 AA**

Paris, June 5, 1915

Most Reverend Archbishop
Kevork Utugian
Manchester

Your Eminence:

I am enclosing a copy of His Holiness' encyclical, which I received only a few days ago, with no other letter accompanying it.¹ As you will notice, the Supreme Patriarch, besides outlining the nature of our mission, also mentions, in a most fatherly and concerned language, the recent massacres and underlines the necessity of protesting the ongoing savagery.

I thought that I would have left for England by now, but I had a lot of work pertinent to our national cause. I shall leave as soon as I am through with it.

¹ No copy of the encyclical was attached.

49**The Armenian Question**

[Memorandum presented to Mr. Delcassé]

1142–1155 FA

Paris, June 6, 1915

Last year, the Sublime Porte decided to promulgate, in the Armenian provinces, the reforms initiated by Russia, and following long and difficult discussions, agreed upon on February 8, 1914. The *Orange Book* on the Armenian Question, which was first published by the Russian government, reveals all the obstacles the Triple Entente had to overcome. These hindrances were created mainly because of German opposition. The Armenians, at the time, believed that the Ottoman government would truly respect its commitment and, by carrying out the reforms, would put an end, once and for all, to oppression and massacres, thus allowing these unfortunate people, who were primarily seeking their security, to live in peace.

However, at the beginning of the war, even before joining with Germany, the Sublime Porte tore up the recommendations and dismissed the two inspectors general, who were, according to the reform agreement, officially appointed by the powers. Henceforth, the reforms can no longer be a question. The Armenian cause will only be accomplished when the future of Asiatic Turkey will be decided after the Turkish defeat, which is not too far away.

No matter what the decisions of the Allies may be, it is not possible to keep the Armenians under Turkish bondage; Armenians would strongly refuse to resume their servile existence any longer. Together with His Holiness, Kevork V, their Supreme Head, Armenians would request the Allies, striving for the liberation of oppressed nations, to create an autonomous and neutral Armenia under their collective patronage.*

Armenians have realized that they can very well manage to live in an autonomous Armenia. The Armenian nation, during its long history of Turkish rule, despite the countless oppressions, has been able to safeguard its integrity, national identity, language, and religion, thus providing undeniable proof about its determination to survive. Up to this day, Armenians are the most industrious and active elements in Turkey, and they have assumed the role of representing the culture and civilization of Europe.

It is with the same intention of safeguarding the civilization that numerous Armenians, proud of their struggle alongside the Allied powers for justice and rights, joined the French army from the beginning of this war

* If they also wish to consider the Kurds, it is possible to offer them a similar regime in Kurdistan, in other words, within the southern regions of Van and Bitlis, with some other Kurdish populated areas of these vilayets.

while thousands of other Armenian volunteers are fighting in the Caucasus alongside the Russian army. The Armenians, who represent more than one-third of the Russian troops, have given their lives for the victory of Russia.

And just recently our volunteers, with the help of Armenian rebels in Van, resisted the Turkish army for more than a month, until the victorious Russians entered Van.

Russians immensely appreciated the Armenian support and their loyalty; those Armenians declared clearly in the Duma that they were quite pleased and happy with their actual state, but they fought simply for the safety and welfare of their brothers in Turkey, without any personal expectation. Because of such reasons, Armenians are convinced that after the victory, during the final decisions, the government of His Majesty the Czar, which promised Poland autonomy and manifested proof enough about its policy of promoting freedom, shall accept the dawning of a nation in Turkish Armenia, and with the help of the Allies, grant them autonomy under the protection of Russia and those states which strived for the salvation of this nation.

We believe that a brief outline might help one to appreciate the lawful demands and aspirations of the Armenian people.

The most important and largest Armenian population live in Greater Armenia and the Cilician prairies and mountains. It is in this region that the Armenian tragedy is taking place; it is here that the Armenians shed their blood to win their national cause; and again it is here that the Armenian people hope to realize their centuries-old dream.

Between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, Cilicia was the cradle of the last Armenian Kingdom of Roupinian and Lusignan dynasties. This same region is still replete with the memories of that glorious past. It was during this period that the Armenians joined with the crusaders,¹ and with their assistance, they protected their kingdom against attacks from outside, and especially against Turkish mobs,[†] and managed to keep it intact. Sis, their capital, where still exists the Armenian Catholicosate of the Cilician See,²

¹ Ever since the crusades initiated by Pope Urban II in 1095, Armenians took part in them. In 1097, the crusades took over Darson, Adana, and Memestia from the Seldjuks with the help of Armenians. It was during these crusades that Prince Leon III of Cilicia received the crown from the Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa and was recognized as king of Cilicia.

[†] The kings of Armenia signed several treaties with the kings of French Crusaders, e.g., the king of Jerusalem, Jean de Brenne, Baudouin de Bouillon, and the Lusignans reigning in Cyprus, and enjoyed France's protection until the fall of the Cilician Kingdom (1375), during the reign of Lusignan Leon VI, who died in Paris and was buried at the Basilica of Saint-Denis.

² In 1293, the Catholicosate of All Armenians moved from Etchmiadzin to Sis due to political developments. After its return to Etchmiadzin in 1441, Cilician Armenians continued to maintain a Catholicosate in Sis.

was the center of arts and learning, and Payas had become the largest trading port in the East.

Zeitun, the Montenegro of Cilicia, maintained a semiautonomous status until today, thanks to its independent and fighting spirit. Telegrams inform us that the people of Zeitun are presently resisting 20,000 Turkish troops.

According to the statistical information released by the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1912, which was most probably prepared quite meticulously, there are 1,018,000 Armenians living in the six provinces, compared to 660,000 Turks and 240,000 Kurds. There are close to 300,000 Armenians in Cilicia. The Moslems, who consist of different rival denominations, do not represent a unified mass and lack culture and patriotic spirit.

On the other hand, such statistics cannot be taken into consideration without underlining the fact that it was because of systematic persecution, continuous massacres, forceful conversions, difficulties, and mass deportations that the number of Armenians decreased; more than 300,000 were massacred during the reign of Abdul Hamid³ and 30,000 in 1909 during the Young Turks' regime.⁴ The horrifying Turkish vengeance, during this present war, against a peace-loving and unarmed nation, will, of course, decrease their number even more. It is important to point out that there were only 400,000 Greeks in Greece when their kingdom was reestablished;⁵ furthermore, as Paul Doumer declared in his emotional and eloquent speech about Armenia, during the negotiations the number of dead with the actual living population should be taken into consideration. In the same speech, he also pointed out that, if the Turks had always massacred the Armenians with the intention of annihilating them, they had not been able to kill the Armenian nation that, with its extraordinary spirit for survival, kept existing in Asia Minor, while other nations had disappeared a long time ago.

The majority of those Armenians scattered in the other parts of Turkey, and those refugees who have found shelter in the Caucasus, America, Europe, and Egypt, would probably return and settle in the autonomous Armenia; it is also necessary to mention that the ones who were forcefully converted [into Islam] would have the opportunity to return to their religion and nationality of origin.

³ Abdul Hamid II's massacres of 1894–1896, which claimed the lives of at least 300,000 Armenians, are well described and documented in sources. See: Reverend Edwin Munsell Bliss, *Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities* (Philadelphia, 1896); J. Castell Hopkins, *The Sword of Islam or Suffering Armenia* (Toronto, 1896).

⁴ In April 1909, in Adana and the vicinities and surrounding villages, close to 30,000 Armenians were massacred by Turks with the encouragement of the new Young Turk authorities. Christopher Walker, *Armenia—the Survival of a Nation* (New York, 1984), 182–188.

⁵ The Greek kingdom was reestablished after the Treaty of Adrianople which ended the Russo-Turkish war in 1829. Turkey then recognized the independence of Greece.

Armenians, therefore, will always comprise, from the points of view of intelligence, economy, and history, the most important element of the country, and it is because of this [assumption] that they hope to have the support and approval of the Allies regarding their autonomy.

Despite the guarantee of the Allies that the Empire would have to be saved as a whole, the deranged and suicidal performance of the Turkish government made its dismemberment inevitable. It is true that we cannot yet know what such a division would entail, but it is possible to assume that the Ottoman Empire, with Konia as its capital, shall keep the entire territory west of autonomous Armenia, extending all the way to the Mediterranean and Archipelago, but excluding Adalia that will be given to Italy, and another section, which might be annexed to Greece; furthermore, Constantinople will go to Russia, Mesopotamia to England, and France will receive, as its legal share, Alexandretta, with part of Cilicia, Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria, where France has demonstrated an undeniable cultural, educational, and linguistic importance throughout centuries.

Besides this forecast, France might fulfill its plans of northern expansion as far as the Taurus Mountains, in other words, the entire Cilicia. If this be the case, then the future autonomous Armenia will be reduced to highlands consisting of six provinces without a free corridor to the Mediterranean. However, if this be the case, Armenians will agree to it and even express their gratitude to France for having saved them from Turkish bondage; and thus an era of justice and equality will follow the arbitrary regime of persecution.

However, we would like to point out that such an autonomous Armenia, deprived of a passageway to the Mediterranean, will not be self-sufficient and will be reduced to six vilayets, consisting mainly of uplands, without fields and seaports. In this case, it will be put under the protection of Russia, and the latter, considering that Cilicia is given to France, sooner or later may well be tempted to overtake Armenia. This situation will create damaging friction between the two Allies, and each one's influence will be limited to its own domain. Thus, the Greater Armenia will be deprived of French economic and educational activities and become a Russian estate. Finally, separated from each other for political and economic reasons—for there will be two Armenias, one Russian and the other French—Armenians will lose the hope of creating an autonomous, united, self-sufficient, and neutral country under the protection of the Allies, which has always been their dream. It is important to mention that such a solution would not only satisfy the Armenians, but it would also be advantageous to the powers; thus eradicating future disputes and fully satisfying France and its Allies, with a guaranteed corridor from the Caucasus and Baghdad to the sea, through a neutral country under their protection.

Such an Armenia would create greater harmony and activity and, thereby, the moral and economic presence of France will be beneficial to

Armenia; Armenians, who have been close to French culture, will profit from this arrangement more and more—especially because of the educational facilities, which will, under an autonomous regime, flourish freely. At the present moment, the absolute majority of students in the missionary schools in the six provinces are Armenians.

Naturally, the economic outcome will also be considerable. As soon as autonomy is established, Armenians, first of all, will start improving the country in many ways, e.g., constructions and businesses, which can only be realized with French capital. France has already made arrangements for a railway system to be built in Armenia. There will also be other undertakings within the sector of “Public Benefit Constructions” to be realized in the near future.

Therefore, France, because of circumstances, will be in an advantageous position. Armenians, in order to materialize their patriotic projects and rebuild the nation, should strive hard during the negotiations, so that the future autonomous Armenia does not become an isolated country in Asia Minor, without any access to the sea. To do so, Armenia would not need the annexation of the entire Cilicia. It would be enough for France, according to its traditional role, as the protector of Christians in the East, to agree to leave part of Cilicia to Armenia to enhance its chances of survival and development.

As a result of such a noble gesture, Armenians, who have always been close to the French, because of cultural reasons and help in the past, will express even a deeper gratitude toward France and try to prove their sincere satisfaction. The latter, of course, will not regret having trusted such a gifted, entrepreneurial, and industrious nation which, with its initiatives and ability to adapt, has become one of the most important national elements in Asia. Furthermore, as an influential agent in cultural, economic, and moral areas, Armenia is naturally a link and an indispensable mediator between European civilization and the East, as an Armenian diplomat[‡] stated half a century ago.

Boghos Nubar
National Envoy of His Holiness,
the Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians

[‡] Boghos Pasha had his father, Nubar Pasha, in mind.

50**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Celestin Jonnart**

[Excerpt]

1156–1157 FA

Paris, June 7, 1915

Mr. Jonnart said that the English had always had their ambitions in Alexandretta. Upon his return from Egypt last winter, Mr. Jonnart had gone to see Mr. Poincaré and told him that the French had a depressing impression of the fact that an English destroyer had visited Alexandretta a few times, whereas no French battleship, which could have easily separated from the fleet, had ever appeared. Consequently, he had focused the attention of the president of the Republic and the government on the English ambitions in Syria, and on the subsequent danger, if the English decided to send troops to Alexandretta without the participation of France. It was upon his (Mr. Jonnart's) request that a French destroyer was sent to Syrian waters.

As it is understood from his request, Mr. Jonnart would definitely like to see Alexandretta annexed to Syria.

51

Dr. Zavriev to Mr. Asribekov

[Coded telegram]*

1160–1161 FA

Paris, June 8, 1915

Asribekov
24 Kirotnaya
Petrograd

WORKING HARMONIOUSLY WITH PAUL. DESPITE SERIOUS BUT NOT QUITE STRONG SEPARATIST MOVEMENT, NUMEROUS INFLUENTIAL AND WELL-INFORMED FRIENDS ASSURE TO OBTAIN CONTENTMENT FOR UNION BANK. CALICAS WITH YOURS IF DIRECTOR EVEN DURING PRIVATE MEETING DECLARE IN CASE UNION WOULD ACCEPT AUTONOMY UNDER PATRONAGE OF THREE DIRECTORS. CABLE YOUR OPINION HOTEL SPLENDE, AVENUE CARNOT.

ZAVRIEV

* There is no key to decipher this telegram, but the meaning is quite evident, and it is possible to translate it accurately, almost word for word, as follows: "We are working with Boghos (Nubar) harmoniously. Despite the fact that there is a serious but rather weak separatist (to separate Cilicia from Armenia) movement in France, numerous influential and well-informed friends assure us that it would be possible to satisfy (France) regarding the union of Cilicia with autonomous Armenia, if your government (Russia), in fact even (with the ambassador of France) declare that (in case Cilicia is joined to Armenia), it would agree that (Armenia's) autonomy be put under the patronage of the (Allied) nations. Cable your opinion to Hotel Splendide, Avenue Carnot.

Zavriev"

52

Archbishop Kevork Utugian to Boghos Nubar
1158A–1159 AA

Manchester, June 8, 1915

His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha
Paris

Your Excellency:

I had the privilege of receiving Your Excellency's June 5th letter, with a copy of the Supreme Patriarch's encyclical number 761, of April 28th, informing us about the atrocities and destruction perpetrated in Turkish Armenia, as well as about his appeals to different states. The Most Reverend Archbishop Bagrat had already written to us about this, on April 21st.

As Your Excellency had cabled us earlier, His Holiness, in the same encyclical, declares that the members of the [Armenian National] Delegation are the same as before.¹ His Holiness' decision is very wise and to the point, since the former members, under your presidency, had harmoniously collaborated and studied the problem.

His Holiness has sent us two other encyclicals regarding help for the fugitives and the refugees; when you come to London we shall arrange everything accordingly.

I consider it necessary to inform Your Excellency that I received an official letter, dated June 4, from Miss Emily Robinson, the Honorary Secretary of the Armenian Society in London. The letter says that at the annual general assembly of the Armenian Society, held on June 1, under the chairmanship of Right Honorary G. W. E. Russell, following the chairman's proposal and seconded by Viscount Bryce and Sir Edwin Pears, the assembly has decided to send to the Catholicos of All Armenians the Society's condolences for the sufferings inflicted upon the Armenians, along with their best wishes for the future.

Miss E. Robinson requests that, on behalf of the Society, we pass their message on to His Holiness. We have already communicated this information in an official letter dated June 5 and written, [in the meantime], a thank-you note to Miss Robinson.

The Society has important and influential armenophile members, devoted to the Armenian cause. They have established an "Armenian Red Cross and Refugee Fund"² and started sending sizable sums and

¹ The initial members of the delegation were, besides president Boghos Nubar, Rev. Kevork Utugian, Minas Cheraz, Haroutioun Mosditchian, and Yakoub Artin Pasha.

² The Armenian Red Cross and Refugee Fund was most probably organized in January 1915, with Bryce as its driving force, in order to provide medical supplies for

pharmaceutical aid to the Catholicos; once more, recently, they have dispatched 600 English pounds to His Holiness.

the Armenian volunteers fighting on behalf of Russia and to assist the refugees. Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question 1915–1923* (London, 1984), 62–63.

53

H. N. Mosditchian to Boghos Nubar
1162–1165(?) EA

London, June 9, 1915

Dear Pasha:

I have the pleasure of confirming my letter of May 17, and thanking you for yours dated June 4, which I received yesterday. I would also like to thank you for sending me a copy of His Holiness' encyclical of April 22, in which he appoints Your Excellency as his only plenipotentiary and the president of the National Delegation.

Undoubtedly, under the present circumstances, the Supreme Patriarch will focus his attention mainly on the massacres. His Holiness had sent to the United Armenian Association of London, among others, a circular letter dated April 21. The letter described, in detail, the horrors afflicted upon the population of the Armenian provinces in Turkey and confirmed the regional Armenian committees organized all over the world to promote the Armenian cause. Furthermore, in the same letter the Catholicos expressed his agreement regarding the work done by these committees and insisted that it was necessary to petition to all levels in order to stop the massacres. As Lieutenant-Colonel Gregory explained to Your Excellency in his letter of May 15, the Armenian Committee in London is a subcommittee of the United Armenian Association of London; it did its best so that the Foreign Office would exercise the necessary influence through their British ambassadors of the neutral countries, and on May 9, I personally met Viscount Bryce and Mr. Aneurin Williams in the corridors of the House of Lords and emphasized the importance of petitioning to the Foreign Office. Undoubtedly, as a result of His Holiness' and Your Excellency's efforts, on May 24 (as you must have received the clipping I sent you—*The Times*, May 24), the English press published that the Allies had warned Turkey with regard to the Armenian massacres. I do not know what else can be done about this situation. Some of us thought of applying to the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Greek ambassadors in London; we were, however, reminded that because of these countries' actual relationship with Turkey, our appeal would serve no purpose.

I am not surprised that Your Excellency's visit to London had to be postponed for some time. Your work in Paris is undoubtedly of great value and it has to be done before Your Excellency's mission in London. On the other hand, considering that the British Armenia Committee may be of some considerable help to us in our present efforts, I thought it would be desirable to manifest to them our national demands and aspirations. I had requested Your Excellency to consider our resolution enclosed in my last letter of May 17, and let me know if it would be suitable to communicate it, through the Armenian Committee of London to the British Armenia Committee, as an

informal document describing the Armenian desires in general.

54

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Stephen Pichon

[Excerpt]

1169 FA

He stated that he personally did not believe that France should invade Cilicia.

But anyway, he thinks that this question is premature, since it has not yet been negotiated, and since they don't even know what to do with Asia Minor. According to him, the course of events will unfold everything.

55**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Caillaux**

[Excerpt]

1170–1171 FA

Paris, June 9, 1915

Mr. Caillaux repeated that the solution I had proposed was quite attractive, but the question of condominium could raise doubts. Similar efforts in the past, as in the case of Egypt, had failed.

I told him that England was one of the suzerains in Egypt, and it had a big stake in that country and had to come out as the victor at the end. As for Armenia, it was not going to be the same, since Russia was going to be satisfied with its economic advantages and the free trade route.

“It’s true,” replied Mr. Caillaux.

Just before leaving, Mr. Caillaux repeated that France, in general, had no need to take the entirety of Cilicia and Syria. (He did not even know where Cilicia was; I showed it to him on the map.) Consequently, my attractive proposal could well meet France’s approval.

Mr. Caillaux also thinks that France should not expand all the way to Mosul, as Mr. Leygues had demanded in his address given in Foyer. According to Caillaux, it would be sufficient for France to advance to the Euphrates.

56

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Jean Herbert

[Excerpt]

1172–1173 FA

Paris, June 9, 1915

I went to visit Mr. Herbert* with Zavriev, whom I presented to him.

I explained the problem in detail, and when I was finished, Mr. Herbert said that he had not been able to form an opinion about it yet, but he had always thought that Syria should go to France. He believes that, although Cilicia is not part of Syria, it should be united to the latter. Furthermore, he added that it would be like a piece of bone with no meat, which exists in the Cilician prairies.

I told him that there would be a lot of meat on the bone, since Syria was not that poor of a country after all.

Dr. Zavriev and I had the impression that, as *Echo de Paris* was an organ of the Catholic Party, the Syrian clergy had probably exercised their influence to unite Cilicia to Syria. Presently, it is premature to try to change their opinion on this matter, but regardless of developments, I hope that it will be possible to come to an agreement in the future. The important step, as Mr. Caillaux mentioned this morning, is to convince Mr. Delcassé.

* Mr. Jean Herbert later on became the political editor of *Temps*, and then of *Information*, and finally he was appointed as ambassador of France to Moscow.

57

Rev. Father Vramshabouh Kibarian to Victor Emmanuel III
1174–1176 FA

Paris, June 10, 1915

His Most Excellent Majesty
Victor Emmanuel III
King of Italy
Rome

Your Majesty:

We convey to Your Majesty the heartfelt and ardent wishes of the Armenian community of Paris for the glorious struggle that the Italian nation has been engaged in, under your heroic leadership, to save his children suffering under the yoke of barbarians.

We consider it a duty, on such a solemn occasion, to express our gratitude and admiration toward the noble Italian nation that has treated our people and their cause with magnanimous sympathy.

From the times of our Cilician Kingdom, Rome, Venice, and Genoa have nurtured friendly ties with the leading, free principal-cities of Lesser Armenia. The Mekhitarist Congregation in Venice has been developed because of the generous Italian hospitality and beautiful Italian environment.¹ That splendid national and literary center, by imparting the wonderful life-giving fire of Italian culture and the ardent spirit of patriotism, has strongly contributed toward the intellectual and moral rebirth of our nation. If, after the despicable slavery imposed upon us by Turkish barbarians, we have been able to rise again, to cultivate literature, to produce artists, poets, and activist patriots, we owe all these achievements not only to the lessons learned from our past but also to Italy, as well as to its noble sister France. We shall always remember, with gratitude, the wonderful role played by Mr. Enrico Vitto, the Italian consul in Aleppo, during the heroic episode of Zeitun's self-defense of 1896. And that superb book that he wrote about the dauntless Armenian principal-city of Taurus is one of the most valuable and generous homages ever paid to our nation.

We feel so much pride to see that in this enormous struggle against barbarity, our nation, despite being worn out and decimated as a result of strife

¹ The Mekhitarist Congregation was established in Constantinople September 8, 1701, as the Andonian Congregation, in order to enlighten the Armenians. It gained papal recognition in 1712, and its leader, Mekhitar Sebastatsi, was acknowledged as Abbot. In 1717, the congregation moved to the island of St. Lazaro near Venice where it continues to exist. The congregation played an instrumental role in reviving the Armenian culture.

and suffering through many centuries, is fighting once again for the cause of liberty alongside the nations of Dante, Victor Hugo, Shakespeare, and Tolstoy.

We beseech Your Majesty to accept* the expression of our deepest gratitude and fervent admiration toward resplendent Italy, together with, in this sacred struggle of liberation, our wholehearted wishes.

* The National Delegation, after reviewing the text of this appeal, has deleted the following line: "This humble present sent to the Italian Red Cross, on behalf of the Armenian community of Paris, and"

58

Bishop Ghevont Tourian to Boghos Nubar
1179–1182 AA

Philippopolis, June 11, 1915 (old style)

His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Paris

Your Excellency:

Following the news from Constantinople, through secret and reliable channels, about the painful sufferings and the destruction of our people in Constantinople and the Armenian provinces, because of the Turkish Government's sinister policy aimed at the annihilation of the Armenian nation, I have been asked to transmit to Your Excellency the details of our information and request help to prevent this enormous danger that is threatening our existence.¹

"Armenians of Turkey are going through a terrifying crisis, unheard of for centuries; this situation makes the [Sultan] Hamid era seem benign. Imprisonment, robberies, devastation of villages, murders, and large-scale deportations are taking place in all the Armenian provinces.

"At the beginning of April, the incident of Van happened;² this provided the government with the pretext to bombard the Armenian districts,

¹ The source was the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople.

² It is difficult to say what incident is referred to since there were many—all results of provocations by Javdat, the governor. It is known that on April 1, 1915, an armed clash took place between Turk gendarmes and the Armenians of the Shadakh quarter in Van. After the incident, which was an act of self-defense, Jevdet organized the killing of Vramian and Ishkhan, members of the Turkish Parliament. Soon after, the Armenians in Van organized the Military Committee of Self-Defense for Van on April 4/17. On April 7/20, while Armenian women were on their way to the city of Van from Shoushants, Turkish soldiers forced them to their trenches. Armenian guards fired on the soldiers to rescue the women. That was the spark which instigated a fighting that lasted until May 10. The French government received a telegram from Salonika that the Armenians first captured Van, and destroyed the city. Then the Turks recaptured it and implemented massacres (Benckendorff to Sazonov on May 12, 1915). Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdane Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatghteroum 1828–1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828–1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 370. In his reply to Benckendorff on May 15, 1915, Sazonov stated: "There is no doubt that the revolt of Armenians in Van was provoked by the massacre, not the other way around." Ibid., 375. The same was apparently stated by Pallavicini, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Constantinople. Ibid.

reducing to ruins some 300 homes and killing 5,000 to 6,000 Armenians. Some time later the city was occupied by the Russians and some of the Moslems of the area were massacred by the Armenians. We are not aware of the details of these incidents; however, the minister told me that the reason for the change in the government's policy toward the Armenians after April 10, and the harsh treatment that they were subjected to in Van, was because of the aggressive attitude of the latter. On that day [April 11/24], following an order from the government, Armenian homes all over Turkey were searched, even the dioceses, the churches and the schools. Thousands were arrested for possession of weapons, dangerous books and pictures, etc. Moreover, without being charged with any wrongdoing, thousands of notable Armenians, clergymen, intellectuals, affluent individuals, party members, and others connected to them from almost every city and village, were banished to Moslem areas. From Constantinople, more than 250 Armenians were exiled to Changeri (Province of Kastamonou) and Ayash (Kaghadia), but those deported from the provinces constitute a larger number compared with those of Constantinople. All this is being carried out according to a special plan: to disarm the Armenians, exile and murder their leaders, and annihilate the whole nation. Those between twenty to forty-five years of age are already conscripted. After getting rid of these unfortunate ones, they will subject the women and children to a tragic eventuality.

"The fiendish plan of this tragedy is the following: in order to bring to an end the Armenian Question, they plan to deport the great majority of the Armenian population of the six Armenian provinces to the south, to that part of Mesopotamia which is between Aleppo and Mosul and inhabited by Arab and Kurdish tribes. The committee overseeing the execution of this plan is already active. We believe that within a few days they will begin to deport the population, if it has not already began. I think the Armenians of those areas of Van, who are not under Russian occupation, and those, who are from Bitlis, are already driven out of their homes. Imagine their situation in the days to come, since not only have they left behind their lands, but also their crops and belongings. Most certainly, within a few months they will succumb to hunger and adverse climatic conditions. We already have one example of this situation before us. I am sure you have heard that the Armenians of Zeitun and the surrounding areas have been deported, some of them to the province of [Der] Zor beyond Aleppo and the rest (about 1,000 families) to the town of Sultanieh in Konia, where they are left hungry, without clothes or shelter. Because of the marshes in that area, many are succumbing to epidemics. Our appeals to bring help to these unfortunate people are so far unanswered, while their villages and belongings have been passed on to Moslems by a special committee."

Your Excellency, this is the most significant part of the report that has reached us. I would beseech you to imagine the extreme seriousness of the policy aimed at the destruction of the Armenian nation, endangering our very

existence. Your Excellency's efforts are well-known to us and we always remember you with our blessings. We are well aware that with laborious efforts and devotion you are making urgent requests from every possible channel to save our nation from annihilation. The means at the disposal of the Patriarchate of Constantinople have been exhausted; their appeals are not heard. Only the American and Bulgarian ambassadors of the capital city are actively helping the Armenians, but their efforts are not sufficient to overcome the danger, since no pressure is being applied upon the leaders of the Turkish government.

I would like to bring to Your Excellency's attention that this information, coming from a reliable source, has been transmitted by today's mail to His Holiness the Catholicos.

59

Puzant Masraf to Boghos Nubar
1186–1187 FA

Giza, June 12, 1915

Your Excellency:

I am pleased to let you know that I received your telegram of June 11: “cable to Catholicos 10,000 rubles from the National Fund for volunteers.”

I sent the money at once to Etchmiadzin and informed both the Catholicos and Your Excellency about it.

I hope your work is progressing to your satisfaction and that we should be able to obtain the necessary support for our national demands. Italy’s decision to get into the war, as an ally of the Triple Entente, is greeted with enthusiasm by the entire world, and especially by Armenians.

I wrote about our national plans to a few friends in Italy. I also addressed a letter to a close friend of mine who was in my class at the university and presently has an important post with the Ministry of War in Rome.

I am enclosing a copy of that letter¹ to give you an idea about the campaign, which I am planning to launch within the Italian circles. As I mentioned in my letter, if Your Excellency agrees, I may go to Italy to sensitize the Italian public opinion in favor of our national cause.

I am enclosing an article* that I read in *Le Progrès Egyptien* yesterday. I would like to draw your attention to the paragraph in which the writer refers to the six provinces without any mention of Cilicia. It is always the same problem. I think, once and for all, we should forget about the proposal made in the past and draw new borders according to our actual demands and include Cilicia in there. I presume Your Excellency is also of the same opinion regarding this crucial issue.

¹ No enclosure was found.

* There was no attached letter or article.

60**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Robert de Caix**

[Excerpt]
1177–1178 FA

Paris, June 12, 1915

I told him that Mr. Jonnart had read to me the intention of Asie Française,¹ demanding for France an extended Syria, with Alexandretta and Cilicia.

Mr. de Caix replied that, indeed, that was the wish of Asie Française, as he had stated to me during our first meeting. The committee insisted on their ambition and would do its best to convince the government to realize it, as the former would never consent that, in case of dismemberment [of Turkey], Syria or Cilicia be given to another nation, and it would make no difference whatsoever whether that nation was Russia, England, or Italy.

(Mr. de Caix promises to work personally to ensure that after France receives Cilicia, part of it be given to Armenia to secure a free access to the sea.)

Mr. de Caix promised to see Mr. Jonnart, who is the president of Asie Française (de Caix is the general secretary), and talk to him.

¹ Comité de l'Asie Française was a colonialist pressure group. In February 1915, it had abandoned its traditional policy of seeking French predominance in a unified Ottoman Empire in favor of demanding French control of Cilicia and integral Syria. David Stevenson, *The First World War and International Politics* (Oxford University Press, 1988), 128.

61

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Georges Leygues

[Excerpt]
1180–1183 FA

Paris, June 12, 1915

(During the meeting the pasha is accompanied by Mihran Eram Bey, who has always enjoyed Mr. Leygues' confidence. Eram Bey has interceded with him generally for appeals and undertakings regarding the Armenian Question, up to the Lausanne Conference).¹

(Mr. Leygues ardently supports the idea that along with Syria, France must also receive Cilicia, which he considers to be an integral part of Syria. His most recent resounding speech on this subject, in the Foyer, has caused grave disappointment to Armenians, and they have even suggested to the pasha that he should counter those declarations with a similar speech. But the pasha has not heeded their demand knowing that his attitude will be adversely viewed in French circles.)

(The pasha elaborates all his arguments in favor of ceding part of Cilicia to Armenia, including Adana and part of Mersin, so that through this corridor to the Mediterranean, Armenia can become a vibrant, self-sufficient country.)

In turn, he expressed his ideas concerning the rights that France would have, once the war was over, in the form of retribution for its sacrifices and the important role it had played for securing the final victory. He said that Russia would get Constantinople together with the Black Sea, which would thus become a Russian lake. He also pointed out everything that England was going to obtain in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Arabia. Against all these, France's share would be minimal, if it were to be confined to Syria alone. Even with Cilicia, its share would still be small compared to the areas that would be acquired by the Allies. Thus, he concluded that all of Cilicia should go to France.

I told him that I agreed with him, in that even with Cilicia France's share would not correspond to its rightful claims. But I continued that Armenians were not to be blamed for that, and it was only because of the geographic

¹ The Lausanne Conference was called by the Allies to bring about peace in the Near East (from November 20, 1922–February 4, 1923, and from April 23–July 24, 1924). The conference reconsidered the Treaty of Sèvres signed on August 10, 1920, freed Turkey from all foreign control over its army and navy, and abolished foreign rights in return for the promise of judicial reforms. Turkey accepted an obligation to protect the few minorities which remained on Turkish soil. In Armenian historiography the Treaty of Lausanne is known as the tombstone of the Armenian Question.

circumstances that France could not find more possibilities in Syria to enhance the importance of its share. I reiterated that our request for a free passage to the sea concerned only Adana and part of Mersin, and we would leave to France the Bay of Alexandretta and the harbor. This did not make a great difference to France. On the contrary it had the advantage of making Armenia a vibrant country, where France would have vast possibilities to exercise its influence.

After examining the map, Mr. Leygues said that possibly it was a theory worthy of consideration, but in order to achieve that France should first claim all of Cilicia and later negotiate with the Armenians the question of a free access.

I interrupted him, saying that his words filled me with joy, because they represented the same situation that I had proposed in the memorandum submitted to the Quai d'Orsay just three days ago.

Mr. Leygues indicated that he would assume no commitment. He reiterated that my proposed plan could be considered, but he would not engage to defend it; he would just study it.

Mr. Leygues demanded that we should not try to achieve our goals regarding Cilicia according to my proposal; we should accept the fact that France had to receive all of Syria, including Cilicia, and later it should consider giving us our free passage. I told him that the Armenians could not accept Cilicia as being Syrian territory, because it never was; but still, I said, it would not change anything in the final outcome that I would be willing to declare, as I had done in my memorandum submitted to the minister. If France wanted to take all of Cilicia, the Armenians would still be grateful to them for having delivered them from Turkish bondage, and furthermore, we would be very happy if France took over Syria together with Cilicia and subsequently gave us the territory to allow a free passage to the sea.

Mr. Leygues said that only one person in France was opposed to the annexation of Syria and that was Victor Bérard. But he added that it was of no consequence.

As I was leaving, I informed him that I was going to England. He recommended that I should announce it loudly that France had decided to demand all of Syria together with Cilicia and that he had asked the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly to vote on this twice and France would never give in.

He asked me to see him again upon my return from London.

62**Boghos Nubar to Yakoub Artin Pasha
1188 FA**

Paris, June 14, 1915

During dinner,* Mr. Jonnart explained to me that Mr. Delcassé had told him the following:

“I read Nubar Pasha’s memorandum with a lot of attention, pleasure, interest, and benefit, and noted it. Naturally, it is not possible to follow it up at the present, but I put it aside, all by itself in a special file. The memorandum is short but clear and convincing, and I enjoyed a great deal reading it.”

Mr. Jonnart added that I could communicate his remarks to you.

* At the banquet given by the Suez Canal Company.

63

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Izvolski
1189–1193 FA

Paris, June 15, 1915

I explained to him that instead of leaving for London, as I had notified him earlier, I had to stay in Paris to discuss the problem of annexation of Cilicia to Syria with various government officials, and hand, in the meantime, my revised memorandum to Mr. Delcassé.

I informed him about Mr. Jonnart's mediation, and pointed out that he was interested and had agreed to our plans, and suggested that I prepare a memorandum for Mr. Delcassé. I also described the banquet he had given me. [I further mentioned] the minister he had invited to talk to him about my plans giving me the opportunity to do the same. Following this banquet, and upon Mr. Delcassé's request, I prepared a detailed memorandum, explaining the actual state of the Armenian Question, with all the arguments in favor of the partial annexation of Cilicia, with Adana and Mersin, to Armenia, to make it self-sufficient with its access to the sea.

I also mentioned to Mr. Izvolski that I handed in my memorandum to Quai d'Orsay three days ago, and I repeated to him in detail all the arguments that I had included in it.

1. All the disputes that would arise sooner or later with Russia, if France invaded all of Cilicia and blocked the free access to the sea.

2. The complete loss of French cultural, educational, moral, and economic influence in Greater Armenia if France annexed Cilicia.

3. The question of the Baghdad railway terminal.

4. It would be possible to avoid such difficulties by creating a self-sufficient, united and neutral Armenia under the collective protection of the Allies.

I emphasized my first and fourth arguments, which necessitated the idea of collective patronage; Mr. Izvolski agreed with it.

He asked me about the minister's impressions. I told him that I could not say much at the moment, and that Mr. Jonnart had promised to see him and let me know then.

He also asked me if I could persuade any of the political figures. I mentioned Dormait, Clemenceau, Pichon, Noulens, Couyba, Robert de Caix of *Asie Française*, and Rohelse of *Temps*, who had promised to support our plans. Mr. Izvolski seemed pleased with these results. Then I disclosed that Mr. Albin Rozet had not concealed his opposition from me, and consequently, I had not deemed it necessary to meet him again; besides, I was assured that he was not an influential person. Furthermore, I told him that I had been able to change Mr. Leygues' initial opinion, which he had voiced quite loudly at a symposium he himself chaired at the Foyer. I explained that when I

had met him a week later, regardless of his very firm stand, he had, at last, stated that there were many good points in my proposed solution. Considering his earlier reactions, such flexibility, even if it is not much, is already an improvement; I personally have high hopes that he might agree to my proposed solution to give part of Cilicia to Armenia and hence secure an access to the sea. However, I was assured that we did not have to be concerned much about Mr. Leygues' influence, as long as Mr. Delcassé would hopefully be in favor of our proposal.

Mr. Izvolski followed my explanations on a map published by Hachette, which I had provided. He wanted to know the location of Kurdistan; most probably Dr. Zavriev had talked to him about it during his last visit. I indicated the southern region of Van and Bitlis which belongs to Kurds in reality, and that he had marked already.¹

He asked my opinion about the type of government that the Kurds should have. I told him that it would not be realistic to give them the same autonomy as the Armenians' and that it was possible to create a special regime controlled by the Allies.

Mr. Izvolski followed my arguments carefully and agreed with me. Before leaving I told him that I had at last decided to leave for London.

¹ Kurds were established in the southern region of Armenia in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Turkish authorities had devised an annihilation program similar to the Armenian program for the Kurds, in order to prevent them from becoming a majority in Eastern Anatolia on provinces emptied of Armenians. It is worthy of mention that on November 20, 1919, Boghos Nubar, together with H. Ohandjanian, vice president of the Republican Delegation of Armenia, and Sherif Pasha, president of the Kurdish National Delegation, petitioned the Paris Peace Conference for the creation of an independent Kurdistan, regardless of the fact that there were territories subject to argument among Armenians and Kurds. Garo Sasouni, *Kurd Azkayin Sharjournere yev Hay-krdagan Haraperoutiounnere* (The Kurdish National Movements and the Armeno-Kurdish Relations) (Beirut, 1969), 235.

64**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Jonnart**

[Excerpt]

1195–1196 FA

Paris, June 15, 1915

I told him that I had come to express my thanks for having communicated to me, through Artin Pasha, Mr. Delcassé's impressions regarding my memorandum. He explained that he had seen Mr. Delcassé on Saturday evening and asked him what he had thought. The minister had answered exactly the same way as Mr. Jonnart had repeated to Artin Pasha at the banquet given by the Suez Company.

I am noting the minister's reply as Artin Pasha had written it down right after dinner:

"I read Nubar Pasha's memorandum with a lot of attention, pleasure, interest, and benefit, and noted it. Naturally, it is not possible to follow it up at the present, but I put it aside, all by itself in a special file. The memorandum is short but clear and convincing, and I enjoyed a great deal reading it."

Mr. Jonnart added that at an opportune moment, when the question of Asia Minor becomes the topic of discussion, he, too, will pursue it. We decided that if Mr. Delcassé needed complementary information, Mr. Jonnart would let me know. I thanked him and requested that he should not hesitate to cable me, in case I were not in Paris, and that I would return immediately.

While taking leave, I mentioned that after having been assured of Mr. Delcassé's impression, I would leave for London.

65

Hampartsoum Arakelian to Boghos Nubar

[Telegram]

1197 FA

Tiflis, June 16, 1915

(received June 18)

Nubar Pasha
12 Avenue (place) Trocadero
Paris

The Hunchaks¹ and Ramgavars² of Egypt and the USA announce their harmonious collaboration with you to promote the Armenian cause.³

They propose that *Meshak* should also join them. Please verify it.

Arakelian

¹ The Hunchaks were members of the Social Democrat Hunchakian Party established in Geneva in autumn 1887. The party aimed at liberating Western Armenia from Ottoman rule and establishing a socialist, independent Armenia.

² The Ramgavars were members of the Armenian Constitutional Democrat Party established in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1908. The party was the continuation of the first Armenian political party, the Armenagan Organization (1885). It aimed at securing the right to self-determination for all nationalities of the Ottoman Empire, with equal rights and with protecting the territorial integrity of the Empire.

³ On May 20, 1915, in Alexandria, Egypt, representatives of the Hunchaks and the Ramgavars signed an agreement of cooperation, according to which they stated their aim as securing autonomous Armenia and Cilicia under either collective Allied, or only Russian, protection. They claimed themselves separatists, totally opposing any autonomous Armenia under Turkish rule. They also stated that they would not oppose annexation of Armenia by Russia, in case conflicts between Allies resulted in such an arrangement. Finally, they also considered acceptable an autonomy only for Cilicia, had circumstances imposed such a solution. Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade Hayevroun Haraperutiounnerou Louysin Dag* (Armenia and the Armenian Case in Light of Armeno-Russian Relations) (Cairo, 1957) 198–200.

66**Boghos Nubar to Mr. H. Mosditchian**
1198–1199 FA

Paris, June 17, 1915

Dear Mosditchian:

As I was planning to leave for London tomorrow, I could not reply to your letter of June 9 earlier. However, I received Mrs. Nubar Pasha's telegram, informing me of her departure from Egypt, and I could not resist the temptation of spending two or three days with her before coming to London. Therefore, I will arrive in London sometime next week and will not hesitate to cable you beforehand. I will stay at Claridge Hotel.

As for the voted decision of your three committees, they are in accord with the principles that I have used during my negotiations; I shall negotiate along the same lines as soon as I arrive in London. Since we waited this long, it would be better to present it with you to the committee* after my arrival; this way we shall be able to give them personally all the necessary explanations to prepare the committee and try to create the right spirit before they present it to the government.

I am leaving Paris quite satisfied, as I have accomplished many good results.

* British Armenia [Committee].

67**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V**

? AA

Paris, June 17, 1915

Your Holiness:

As soon as I arrived in Paris on May 9, I had the privilege of wiring to Your Holiness to inform Your Holiness that I could not find the letter Your Holiness had mailed to me and advised me of by a telegram dated April 17,* before I left Cairo.

I just received Your Holiness' blessed encyclical by which Your Holiness confirms the first cabled message, appointing me as plenipotentiary representative and the president of the National Delegation.

I hurried to cable Your Holiness to extend my deepest gratitude for the expression of confidence in me. I informed my colleagues of the Delegation about the content of Your Holiness' encyclical. I deem it useful to transcribe my message dated 6 of this month, in case there might have been errors during transmission.

A few days later, I received two telegrams from Messrs. Varandian and Khounounts. The first one announced the capture of Van and stressed the need for urgent aid; the second emphasized the necessity of expanding the volunteer troops. Consequently, I sent to Your Holiness from Paris a sum of 15,000 rubles to be used for the needs of Van and Bitlis; and by way of Cairo, through the National Bureau of Tiflis, I dispatched 10,000 rubles to be given to the volunteers. I also consider it appropriate to issue, once again, the two telegrams I have sent on this occasion. The first is dated June 8, and the second June 10.¹

I regret sincerely that I could not send you more substantial sums, because the fund-raising campaign for the National Fund, which I undertook under your auspices, was unfortunately not crowned with the anticipated success. The reason for it is that some members of the Dashnak Party have been engaged in a negative campaign in Cairo, Sofia, Boston, and Fresno. I am dismayed about this discord that undermines the spirit of cooperation. At this critical stage, we need cooperation more than ever, to work together to achieve our national goals.

With regard to [preventing] the massacres, which grieved us very much, I did everything, using all the means at my disposal. Unfortunately, the

* The exact date must be 11 April. The telegram was received on 17 April.

¹ Neither the message of 6 June, nor the telegrams of 8 and 10 June, were attached to this letter.

Allies and Italy, too, now that it has entered the war, cannot influence the Sublime Porte, which is committing the most horrible acts of vandalism in fits of frenzy.

At least the appeals by Your Holiness, which I find very significant, were fruitful. They initiated the declaration submitted by the three Allied powers to the Sublime Porte, holding the Turkish government officials and their agents personally responsible for the massacres perpetrated against the Armenians. In the present situation I do not think there is more to be done to put an end to their criminal actions.

Needless to say, as soon as I returned to Paris I set to work. I had already arranged a meeting with Dr. Zavriev. He gave me the plan to which Your Holiness has given his consent;² it will serve me as a guide during my future negotiations. Subsequently, I met the Russian ambassador and the French foreign minister, Mr. Delcassé, as well as many influential political figures, senators, and members of parliament. From the very first meeting, I encountered serious difficulties regarding Cilicia. I am sure Your Holiness is well aware from the press and special publications that in case of the dismemberment of Asiatic Turkey, the French are demanding to have Syria, together with Cilicia to the Taurus. They argue that since Constantinople, together with the Dardanelles, whose political and economic importance is beyond doubt, is allotted to Russia, and England has already conquered Mesopotamia, France cannot be satisfied with Syria alone, as the latter is not a rich country; therefore, they want to have Cilicia, too. I would like to bring to Your Holiness' attention that, given the actual precarious situation in which the Armenians are, I exerted maximum efforts to convince the proponents of that viewpoint, that France should not use the size of the territories it wishes to annex as a criterion for its demands. It would be in France's interest to take over only part of Cilicia, that would include Iskenderun and the entire coast, leaving the rest to the Armenians, so that the future autonomous Armenia would not be dismembered and could enjoy a lasting prosperity. I reiterated that an autonomous Armenia consisting only of the six provinces, without Cilicia, could not be viable. It needs to have an outlet to the sea through the plains of Cilicia, with Mersin as the port city. I supported my arguments with a number of facts, which I cannot describe within the content of this letter. Your Holiness will find all this information in a detailed memorandum that I submitted to the minister of foreign affairs, a copy of which Dr. Zavriev will deliver to you on his return to Russia. Permit me to mention that my arguments seemed to be effective and they were seriously considered by influential political figures. They promised to offer me their help. The report that I prepared for Mr. Delcassé, upon his request, was well received by him. The report analyzes all the facets of the Armenian Question.

Besides, I was able to secure the support of many important newspapers.

² See document 8.

Their editors conceded that it was in France's interest to give satisfaction to the just demands of the Armenians. Furthermore, they admitted that by giving up a territory of limited area, with their influence on the future autonomous Armenia, they would secure large economic gains.

I believe that after having accomplished this preliminary work, we have to wait and see how future events shape up. After the final victory of the Allies, when they will start negotiating the fate of Asiatic Turkey, I shall go to England to champion our cause, just as I did here. I hope to leave some time next week, and I will keep Your Holiness informed about the developments.

Before closing my letter, I would like to focus Your Holiness' attention upon some unfortunate circumstances, caused by certain compatriots, who have been carrying out negotiations in other places. Such actions seem to undermine the ones that I have undertaken on behalf of Your Holiness.

It so happens that our compatriots, even though guided by good will and intentions, appeal in such a way that brings harm to our cause; they are not familiar with the aspects and circumstances which I am aware of, but I am obliged to keep them secret.

Therefore, I think it would be most useful if Your Holiness agrees to send an encyclical to the Primates of different Armenian communities to be diffused in the Diaspora. On the one hand, it would endorse my confirmation as your official envoy and, on the other, it would call on our compatriots to resign from political appeals, since I am the only one entitled to engage in such activity. Needless to say, this situation cannot help positively the campaign in support of our cause, to which every true Armenian must contribute his share; I would always gladly accept the help that my compatriots might like to extend, provided they act under my supervision and, in this way, we assure the necessary unity of action and achieve our cause successfully.

68**Boghos Nubar to Mr. Frederic Macler
1200–1201 FA**

Paris, June 18, 1915

Mr. Frederic Macler
Paris

Sir:

I saw your article, “The Armenian Effort,” in *Revue hebdomadaire* only today; I read it with great pleasure. As the national representative of His Holiness, I consider it my duty to thank you, on behalf of my compatriots and myself, for the explanations that you have given about the Armenians and your readiness to gear your efforts toward the fulfillment of their lawful aspirations.

I would also like to thank you for your kind words about the Armenian General Benevolent Union, and I hope that, in the future, this organization, which has so far accomplished everything expected from it, will be able to help our compatriots living in Asia Minor even more.

69

Dr. Zavriev to Boghos Nubar*
1202 FA

(Paris), June 21, 1915

Your Excellency:

We asked our friends [the Dashnaks], in writing, to stop their disputes, and we are convinced that we shall succeed.

It is absolutely necessary that you do the same, so that they [the Hunchaks and the Ramgavars] resign from attacking the [Dashnak] party. If these people resume their attacks against our friends, the latter will be forced to reciprocate, and, consequently, the disputes will multiply.

Therefore, I request you to take the necessary measures.

* Zavriev wrote this letter in Russian, and his sister, Miss Anna, sent the French translation to the pasha on 21 June.

70**Frederic Macler to Boghos Nubar
1203–1204 FA**

Paris, June 22, 1915

I was honored immensely by Your Excellency's thank-you note; I received it today, upon my return from the country.

I had done simply my duty by writing that modest article on the "Armenian Effort." I cannot deny, indeed, that for me, as it is for France, an armenologist is synonymous for an armenophile.* It is not possible to deal with Armenians and not to love them.

I have undertaken research on Cilicia, and since Your Excellency has clear plans for that part of Armenia, I would appreciate it very much if I could meet you briefly.

I am sure the aftermath of the war will prove to be beneficial to the Allies, and especially to Armenians, who are already seeing the dawn of their salvation.

With all my best wishes for the future and the fruition of Armenia, I beg you, Your Excellency, to accept my profound respects.

* In the French original the words "Hayaked" (Armenologist) and "Hayaser" (Armenophile) are written in Armenian.

71

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Hampartsoum Arakelian

[Telegram]

1205 FA

Paris, June 25, 1915

Meshak Newspaper

Tiflis

Upon returning from my trip, I received your cable regarding [the Hunchaks and the Ramgavars] of Egypt and America, which ask you to collaborate with me. To answer you, I say that I will always accept the collaboration of my compatriots and parties that lend their support to me at this decisive stage, ready for the success of our cause, and the necessity of bringing unity.

72

Yakoub Artin Pasha to Boghos Nubar

? FA

Cairo, June 27, 1915

Dear Pasha:

I am sorry that I couldn't see Mrs. Marie* in Marseilles. She arrived on the 20th, and we were obliged to leave at eight o'clock in the morning. It was postponed to ten o'clock and finally we left at five in the afternoon. It was a pleasant voyage of four days and five hours. We arrived in Cairo on the 25th. My wife has recovered from her heart problem, something that was worrying me during my stay in Paris. Thank God, she feels all right now.

Last night I met the Reverend,[†] who is staying here on the instruction of the Ministry of War. He hopes that the Dardanelles will be taken by August. He speaks confidently of a planned military campaign in Cilicia; he will join the expeditionary force. According to him, the news coming from Zeitun was positive until a week ago. The Turks were repulsed twice and they have stopped their attacks. In fact, the attacking forces have almost completely been annihilated.¹

He says that, while the British will head for Cilicia, the French will enter Syria and, perhaps, the Italians will occupy Adalia.

His latest information from Kharput dates back to May 25. Until that day everything was going well in that region. He assured me that friendly relations between Kurds and Armenians still prevail, while the government continues its policy of raiding and plundering. No murders or large-scale massacres are reported.² The Reverend hopes to go to Diyarbakir during September.

His optimism is truly curious.

He sent you a declaration by express postal courier. I am sure you have received it. He says that, although your mission is difficult, it is hoped that it will bear fruit in England. He believes that, because of Cilicia, the fulfillment

* Mrs. Nubar Pasha.

[†] Reverend Thomas Megerdichian of the Protestant denomination, who served in the British military forces.

¹ Although deportations from Zeitun had begun in March 1915, the armed resistance continued there until mid-June, when the town was surrendered to 12,000 Turkish soldiers. Dzadour Aghayan, *Hay Zhoghoverti Azadakragan Baykari Badmoutiounits* (From the History of the Struggle for Liberation of the Armenian People) (Yerevan, 1976), 424.

² Deportations in Kharput began in late June 1915. Christopher Walker, *Armenia—the Survival of a Nation* (New York, 1984), 218.

of our dreams will come from England. He also believes that Smyrna is lost for the Greeks and it will fall under Italian rule.

I heard that the Decoration of the Nile was bestowed upon you. My congratulations.

73**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Izvolski
? FA**

Paris, June 28, 1915

I told him that it was my farewell visit, as I was leaving for London. I had postponed my trip because I had first gone to Switzerland to see my wife, and then I wanted to know, before leaving for London, the impression that my memorandum had made on Mr. Delcassé. Now I know, through Mr. Jonnart, who had promised to inquire the minister about it, and the impression has been much better than I had expected. I told him about Mr. Delcassé's answer, exactly the same way Mr. Jonnart had transmitted to me.

Seeing that Mr. Delcassé's statement had pleased Mr. Izvolski, I told him that I thought to give Mr. Sazonov, informally, a copy of the memorandum I submitted to Mr. Delcassé. I further explained that it was only to prove to Sazonov that I had remained, during my negotiations, faithful to the plan drawn with Dr. Zavriev in Petrograd. I had already given a copy of the memorandum to Mr. Izvolski at the beginning of the meeting. To accompany that memorandum, I had prepared an explanatory letter, the copy of which is attached to these notes. Together with the letter there was also a note referring to the Baghdad rail terminal,¹ which I had mentioned very briefly in my memorandum, despite the fact that I had explained it to the minister verbally.

Mr. Izvolski agreed with me, thanked me, and promised to deliver the memorandum and the letter promptly to Mr. Sazonov.

After that he gave me a recommendation letter to be delivered to the Russian ambassador in London, Count Benckendorff.

As usual, Mr. Izvolski spoke very little, but it seemed that he greeted the outcome of my negotiations about Cilicia with pleasure and surprise.

¹ See document 74.

74

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Izvol'ski
1206–1208 FA

Paris, June 27, 1915

Mr. Ambassador:

I have the honor of sending informally to Your Excellency the copy of my memorandum that I submitted to Mr. Delcassé in response to his request.

Your Excellency will realize that this memorandum is especially edited, according to the Petrograd plan, for the government of the French Republic. This is explained in the letter that Dr. Zavriev delivered to His Excellency, the Russian ambassador in London, at the beginning of May; one copy was also sent to you.

Most of all, it was over Cilicia that I had considerable difficulties with French political personalities. They state that in case of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, since Constantinople and the straits, which are of undeniable importance, are promised to Russia, and the fertile plains of Mesopotamia are to be handed to England, France, of course, cannot be satisfied with Syria alone, without Cilicia. Even in the offices of Quai d'Orsay, they confirmed that the [Russian] czar's government has consented to this arrangement.

Therefore, I presented the situation from an Armenian point of view, and I stated all the inconveniences that might arise for France, if it annexed Cilicia, or if the future autonomous Armenia was isolated within the boundaries of the six provinces, without having a free opening on the Mediterranean. I particularly mentioned the economic concerns and the difficulties that a French Cilicia between Armenia and the sea might cause for the Russian foreign trade and the English communication lines by way of the Baghdad railway. I also pointed out the influence that France could extend over an autonomous Armenia under the collective protection of the Allies; whereas, in case it annexes Cilicia, it must give up that claim.

Many of the important political figures, whom I have talked to, and who were advocating the annexation of Syria and Cilicia, grasped the advantages of our proposed plan and promised me their support. I hope many others will follow suit once we assure them that our plan has met the approval of the czar's government.

[Annex]
The Baghdad Railway Terminal
1140–1141 FA

Paris, June 1915

One of the most crucial outcomes of this present war for Asiatic Turkey will be the salvation of the Baghdad railway and the territories it is running through, including Cilicia, from German control. From now on, it will be possible to use the Baghdad railway to the best advantage of the Allies; there is no doubt that there will be an agreement about it among them. The line has a special importance for England; this railway for them, saved from German rule, will remain the fastest route to India. Therefore, England will gain a great deal when the line has a free terminal; this will create for its traffic a permanently open passageway. Certainly, this concern is one of the reasons that the English [political] circles watch with anxiety the developments concerning the annexation of Alexandretta to France.

However, such concerns shall not exist, if, apart from the terminal in Alexandretta, another one is placed in a neutral Mediterranean province and thus offers the English traffic a free trade route. It will undoubtedly be possible to realize this goal, provided the autonomous Armenia will have a free access to the sea, via the port of Mersin or Ayas, which together with Constantinople and Alexandretta, will become one of the western terminals of the Baghdad rail line.

75

Mr. Izvolski to Count Benckendorff
1218 FA

Paris, June 28, 1915

Your Excellency, Count Benckendorff
Russian Ambassador
London

Dear Friend:

I am taking the liberty of recommending Boghos Nubar Pasha to you, for your warm reception. He is leaving for London, as the special envoy of the Catholicos, to pursue the Armenian Question.

76

Sir Austin Lee to Sir Arthur Nicolson
1219 EA

Paris, June 28, 1915

Dear Sir Arthur:

This letter will be handed to you by Boghos Nubar Pasha personally; you must be familiar with his name. He would be pleased to meet you briefly to discuss issues concerning Armenia and the Armenian population, as their prominent representative.

77

Sir Austin Lee to Lord Bryce
1220 EA

Paris, June 28, 1915

Dear Lord Bryce:

This letter will be handed to you by Boghos Nubar Pasha personally; you must be well acquainted with his name as Nubar Pasha's son. Presently, he is the representative of Armenians, and he is going to visit London to pursue the future (possible) arrangements regarding the Armenian Question. He would be grateful if you could grant him a few minutes of your time.

78

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Hampartsoum Arakelian
1221—1222 FA

Paris, June 28, 1915

Dear Arakelian:

I was away in Geneva for a few days, and only yesterday, upon my return, I received your cable of June 16.

“The Hunchaks and Ramgavars of Egypt and America inform us that they have joined you to work in a spirit of solidarity for the Armenian cause. They propose that *Meshak* should also join them. Please confirm the truth of the above.”

As far as I could understand, you let me know that the above-mentioned two parties have agreed to collaborate with me according to the means at their disposal.

There is no need to explain to you that to accomplish my difficult and delicate mission, I acknowledge with satisfaction any useful and unselfish collaboration, without discriminating parties or political movements.

At the same time, in these critical times, when the fate of our nation is going to be decided, all our parties and political movements must coordinate their efforts toward the fulfillment of one and only goal.

Therefore, the service to be rendered by your newspaper, as well as your cooperation, is as valuable to me as the help of any party.

Concerning this I cabled you the following message:

“*Meshak*, Tiflis: Upon returning from my trip, I received your cable regarding the active groups of Egypt and America, which ask you to collaborate with me. To answer your question, I will always accept the collaboration of all my compatriots and parties that lend their support to me at this decisive stage for the success of our cause and the necessity of bringing unity.”

79

From Boghos Nubar to Mr. Puzant Masraf
1223–1224 FA

Paris, June 29, 1915

Dear Masraf:

I received your letter dated June 12, after sending you a letter on the same day.

As I had mentioned to you before, I would appreciate it very much if you could send me, at the end of each month, the journal of accounts of the national fund-raising so that I can keep track of the funds available and use them accordingly.

It is not necessary to send the balance sheet if there has been no change recorded during the month. In this case, just let me know that the balance is the same.

I read with interest the article of *Le Progrès Egyptien*, as well as the letter that you had sent to one of your old university friends. I thank you sincerely for the appeals that you have been making to your Italian friends in support of our cause.

Regarding Cilicia, you do not have to worry about it, because it is one of the major concerns of our plan, and in my official appeals, I have always dealt with the Cilician question in conjunction with our claims about the six provinces. I hope that, in this respect, I will achieve satisfactory results.

I thank you for your proposal of mobilizing the Italian nation to support our cause.

You can continue your activities according to our plan, which, in general terms, aims at securing the autonomy of the six provinces and Cilicia, under the protectorate of the Allies.

I would like you to keep me informed about the public opinion in Italy and the outcome of your activities.

80

Mr. Hampartsoum Arakelian to Boghos Nubar
1225–1231 FA

Tiflis, June 16/29, 1915

His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Paris

Your Excellency:

Today I am leaving for Van and Manazkert, to distribute to the Russian army the presents donated by the Federation of Russian Cities. Before my departure, I feel it is my duty to inform you about the present developments.

I have received your letter of March 20, as well as your telegrams. Two days ago I also received your cable in response to my latest cable.

During that period, I was in Etchmiadzin twice and had long meetings with H. H. the Catholicos. After informing me about the latest events, he said that he would appreciate it if I could pass the following information on to you.

Your Excellency, I am sure it is quite obvious to you that the *Armenian Bureau* of Tiflis, despite its guise of being a “national” organization, is in fact a *Dashnak Bureau*. In order to dupe the Armenian nation, it pretends to operate under the auspices of the Catholicos, but in actual fact, the Catholicos has not granted it his patronage; he has simply acknowledged its existence. The Bureau often presents to him propositions that contradict your activities and those of His Holiness. If His Holiness does not oppose these propositions openly, it is because he does not want to create quarrels.* It is this same Bureau that two years ago, acting *upon the reports of Dr. Zavriev*, one of the Dashnak leaders, resorted to intrigues, trying to influence both the Patriarch of Constantinople and His Holiness the Catholicos, so that you would be relieved of your official function as the representative of His Holiness. The Catholicos showed me a letter from Patriarch Zaven, in which the following statement appears: “From the president of the Tiflis Bureau, Mr. Arutiounov, we received a ridiculous complaint urging that Nubar Pasha be released from his position as representative of Your Holiness in pursuing the Armenian Question.” You must be aware, Your Excellency, that the Catholicos at that time defeated those deceitful stratagems. Now, for the second time, upon the recommendation of Dr. Zavriev, who is striving by all means to become officially your assistant, the Tiflis Bureau has sent a letter to His Holiness, asking him “to consent to nominate Dr. Zavriev and Mr. Ghoukasoff as

* The word used erroneously in the French text is “defaillance.” It was known that Arakelian’s knowledge of French was rather limited.

assistants to Nubar Pasha, to pursue the Armenian Cause.” The Catholicos has categorically refused, saying that Nubar Pasha has not asked for assistants, and besides, he does not need any assistant since the National Delegation consists of [the following] members: Utugian, Mosditchian and Artin Pasha. However, the Bureau has not given up. It has succeeded in convincing Mr. Papadjanoff, member of the Duma, that a grave danger looms if Nubar Pasha remains inactive in Cairo, and that pressure must be exerted upon the Catholicos to appoint the above-mentioned people as assistant representatives. Consequently, Papadjanoff has gone to Etchmiadzin to ask His Holiness to go along with the Bureau’s wish and appoint Zavriev and Ghoukasoff, by a special encyclical, as assistants. His Holiness has refused him categorically by saying that, “naming assistants to Nubar Pasha would mean that I am not satisfied with his work. Whereas I am very happy with him, and if Nubar Pasha has stayed in Egypt, it is because the time has not yet come for action. Now he is already in Paris.” Mr. Babajanov has been very displeased. Finally, he has asked to cable you, at least, the following message. “It seems Zavriev and Ghoukasoff are on their way to see you.”

Do you think, Your Excellency, that the self-appointed “National” Bureau is despaired? No. After receiving a cable from London, sent by Zavriev, that he and Ghoukasoff by all means must be appointed as representatives, the Bureau has named, on its own, these two individuals as its representatives and has relayed these appointments to His Holiness and the Russian ambassador in London. After the specific and categorical refusal of His Holiness, the Catholicos asked me if it was a sign of protest against him and wanted to know what had to be done. I answered that we should write Nubar Pasha to never recognize those two individuals as representatives. After pondering for a few minutes, the Catholicos told me that Nubar Pasha would find the most appropriate way to get rid of them, so long as he had not received any notice from me regarding their nomination.

Your Excellency, I know that you are positively inclined toward Zavriev. However, beware; he is a first-rate intrigant, just like all the Dashnaks, and he is ready to sacrifice the whole Armenian nation for the interests of the Dashnak Party. It is upon his recommendation that *Horizon*, the party’s Tiflis organ, published an editorial, advocating that “Nubar Pasha must be subject to the National Bureau, which is in charge of administering the pursuance of the Armenian cause.” In response to their declaration, I wrote in *Meshak* the following: “The Tiflis Bureau cannot be considered national since it is not elected by the Armenian nation, it is not officially recognized by the Catholicos, and it does not enjoy the patronage of His Holiness as it claims. Therefore, Nubar Pasha cannot recognize the authority of such a bureau and be subjected to its directives.”

As far as Ghoukasoff is concerned, he is a good-natured man. His choice as representative with Zavriev is simply to achieve the acceptance of the latter; as Ghoukasoff is a busy man, he will be a nominal assistant to you.

I would like to mention one incident so that you can have a fair idea about the Bureau. The Bureau always proclaims that it is not partisan; the fact is that it did not want to accept the Hunchak Party volunteers, always raising objections to them. Therefore, the Hunchaks requested the Russian staff to allow them to form a group of volunteers, led by Djanbolatov, an Armenian officer serving in the Russian army. Since the Bureau does not provide any financial assistance to this group, the Russian government and the American Armenians support it; the latter contribute financially through the Catholicos.

By sending 10,000 rubles to this Bureau, despite their campaign against you, you gave them a “moral slap.” The Dashnaks issued statements against your fund-raising campaign for the National Defense Fund, but you sent them money out of that fund.

The Hunchaks declared that they had come to an agreement with you and the Ramgavars of Egypt and America to cooperate in pursuing the Armenian Question. They have instituted a National Defense Committee in America, with the primate acting as chairman.¹ They proposed to me that the followers of *Meshak*, too, join them and publish a declaration, stating that the Hunchaks, the Ramgavars, and the Meshakians are united and are acting in a spirit of solidarity, and that Nubar Pasha is cooperating with them (concerning the National Defense question).

I did not want to give a favorable answer to this proposal without consulting you. I sent you a telegram but your answer did not satisfy me, because I wanted to know if there was an agreement, even only in principle, between the Ramgavars, Hunchaks, and the Armenian General Benevolent Union, and whether you had given your consent. I beg of you to write to me in a more specific and confidential way.

Even though the Council of Ministers had decided last year to allow for new chapters of the Armenian General Benevolent Union to be instituted, their decision was given before Turkey's entry into war. Therefore, I hope that the Council allows for these chapters to be opened now. Upon my return from Van, I shall appeal to the Council of Ministers once again in this respect. The Benevolent Union has a very important role to play now in Armenia, especially at this crucial stage.

¹ In a meeting on December 14, 1914, the delegates of four Armenian political parties in the United States, together with representatives of the National Assembly, established the National Defense Committee of America, in order to initiate a national fund-raising in support of the Armenian cause, as well as the volunteers and the refugees in the Caucasus. Mihran Damadian, *Im Housheres* (From My Memoirs) (Beirut, 1985), 110–111.

81

Messrs. Mutafoff and Armenag Gamsaragan to Boghos Nubar
[Telegram]
1233–1234 FA

Alexandria, June 30, 1915

Boghos Nubar Pasha
12 Avenue Trocadero
Paris

Desperate situation. Oppression everywhere in Cilicia. Zeitun, Deort-Yol, Hassan-Beyli ruined, their populations deported to Mosul, [Der] Zor, Konia and replaced by Macedonian refugees. Adana, Aintab, Sis, Hadjin under new massacre threats, except for a few groups resisting in isolated situations. Goal pursued is total destruction of Armenian element. Information is obtained from officials who arrived yesterday. They attribute these events to Armenians sympathizing actively with Allies. Endless anxiety. Absolute need for Allied military operations through Armenian volunteer groups. Request to act accordingly. Awaiting your cabled instructions.

82

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Lord Bryce*
1235–1244(?) FA

London, July 2, 1915

I thanked him for having received me and for the interest he has always shown for the Armenians, since the Congress of Berlin when he had established his contacts with my father.¹ In reply, he said that he had always taken interest in the Armenian Question and he would continue to do so.² Concerning my father, he mentioned that he had seen him again in Egypt in 1886 and had an interesting conversation.

As to the problem, which was the reason for my visit, he inquired about the plan outlining our claims; the size of the country (the area) for which we were asking autonomy, the nature of the autonomy, and the state which would assume its protection.

I elaborated the problem in detail. At one point he interrupted me, asking whether Cilicia, comparatively speaking, was as Armenian as the six provinces; in other words, ethnographically and in terms of numbers, was it the continuation of Armenia Major?

Mr. Mosditchian said that Cilicia could not be put on the same level as the six provinces, but that still the Armenians there exercised a preponderant influence both morally and commercially.

I added that the Cilician question must also be seen from a political angle. I mentioned that the great majority of France's politicians wanted to annex it with Syria; I, further, pointed out that it would be appropriate to find out whether more advantages could be secured by uniting Cilicia and the six

* The meeting was attended by Mr. H. Mosdichian, a member of the National Delegation.

¹ The Congress of Berlin (June 13–July 13, 1878) was invited by Austria-Hungary and Britain for the purpose of revising the Treaty of San Stefano. During a session on July 8, the parties formulated Article 61 according to which, "The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds."

² One clear evidence of Bryce's interest in the Armenian Question was the publication of the book *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915–1916* in 1916. The book was a collection of documents arranged by Arnold Toynbee and presented to Edward Grey, secretary of state for Foreign Affairs, with a preface by Bryce. The Armenian National Delegation helped both Bryce and Toynbee in their project. Prior to that, Bryce had published the fourth edition (1896) of his book called *Transcaucasia and Ararat* in which he gave an account of his tour in the region in 1876, with a supplementary chapter on the twenty years of the Armenian Question.

provinces and thus creating a one, and only, vibrant, autonomous Armenia. I explained that if autonomy would only be granted to the six provinces, then Russia alone would assume its protection; whereas, if Cilicia was added to the six provinces, Russia would not object to a collective protectorate.

I expounded the arguments that I had presented to the French political figures in France, assuring them it was in their own interest to allow Armenia free access to the Mediterranean.

Those arguments are as follows:

(1) By occupying Cilicia, France will one day become an obstacle for Russia's advance to the Mediterranean.

(2) Two Armenias will be created, one French and the other Russian. In that case, it will not be possible for France to exercise any moral, educational, and economic influence in the six provinces.

(3) The terminal of the Baghdad railway, which will be included in Alexandretta to be given to France, will become an area of contention between France and England. The Baghdad line, even after being delivered from German control and having attained international importance, is of more importance to England, since it provides the shortest trade route with India. Naturally, I also presented the opposite argument; that is to say, the advantages to be had if Cilicia was united with Armenia.

Lord Bryce appreciated the importance of my arguments and asked if they were received the same way in France. I answered that the government had some diplomatic reservation, even though I was assured that my arguments were interesting. The great majority of the well-known members of the National Assembly, on the other hand, had seemed to be convinced by my arguments and had promised their support. I mentioned Clemenceau, Caillaux, Pichon, Dormait, Couyba, and Jonnart.

Lord Bryce pointed out that the question of the Baghdad rail terminal was of utmost importance for England and asked me to explain once again the situation that I had proposed—to build a new rail terminal on a neutral ground in Mersin. I acceded to his request with ample details, bringing forth my point of view and the advantages that England would enjoy if a united Armenia was created, including Cilicia as a neutral state under the protectorate of the Allies.

Lord Bryce asked if Russia accepted the concept of collective protectorate, and if it did, then was it possible that it could change its mind following the successful outcome of the war?

I told him that by virtue of the loyalty of the Armenians of Caucasia and the support they lent to the army, and also considering the service that the Armenian volunteers rendered toward achieving victory, we were convinced that today Russia would agree with the idea of a collective protectorate for a united Armenia including Cilicia; however, it was always possible that it could change its mind after accomplishing major victories. I told him that possibility worried me, and I wanted to take advantage of the present

opportunity to forge an agreement between Russia and its allies, England and France. If England reacted favorably to my arguments, I said, France would most assuredly follow suit. Therefore, I reiterated that it was the ideal time to appeal to the British government, and that for that very reason I had come to London.

Lord Bryce gave total consent to my discussion and advised me to meet Sir Arthur Nicolson, since Sir Edward Grey was away on vacation. He promised that he would see Lord Lansdowne and Lord Crewe, to present my case to them. He added that he was thinking of preparing a memorandum about the Armenian Question, but he had to wait for the right moment to do so. Having listened to my explanations, he assured me that he would immediately set out to accomplish that task.

Lord Bryce asserted that it would be impossible to save the territorial integrity of Turkey, and that the latter had to be confined to Konia and Ankara. As for Mesopotamia, he said that it was not certain if England was going to annex it, because England did not wish to assume additional responsibilities. When I mentioned that eventually England might be faced with taking over that territory, he answered that perhaps, in that case, a separate sultanate could be created, as it would be done for other regions.

He asked if France insisted on annexing Palestine along with Syria. I told him that I did not think so, and that the great majority of the politicians I had met agreed that an international governing body must be created for the Holy Places.

He was delighted to hear this.

He inquired about the kind of government that I would ask for Armenia. I told him that, more than a government, there had to be a solid administration, led by a European with some vast jurisdiction, together with other Europeans in charge of three to four public services, such as finance, public construction, education, gendarmerie, and police departments. Working with each of these units there should be councils formed by native elements, mostly Armenians.

Lord Bryce gave his total consent to this proposal, particularly when I told him that what we needed was not a government but an administration.

Mr. Mosditchian said that the preliminary plan[†] that was presented to the Allies during the negotiations for the reforms and accepted by them could be taken as the basis.

Lord Bryce said that the plan agreed upon by the Sublime Porte could not be taken into consideration since many essential points had been left out.

Of course, Mr. Mosditchian and myself accepted his argument.

Referring to Armenians, Lord Bryce said that he was convinced our nation would be revitalized quickly thanks to autonomy, as the Armenian race possesses the innate traits of vivacity and vigor to rebuild.

[†] Formulated by Russia in 1913.

He talked about the future of different countries after the war. He said that the economic and political conditions of France would change. There would be less tendency to get involved in world affairs; they would be more concerned with their internal economic and social changes. Socialism would have a profound effect and, consequently, the stipulation of ownership would be modified. Therefore, in dealing with solutions of problems that would arise after the war, such as the Armenian Question, the present should always be taken into consideration. Solutions to these problems must be sought within the context of actual conditions, letting modifications take shape in due time.

Lord Bryce reassured me once again about his interest in the Armenian cause and promised his support, according to the means at his disposal, since he was no longer in the government.³ I told him that his support was most valuable to us and the influence of his opinions on the government was a guarantee that our modest wishes would be crowned with success.

Upon leaving, he reminisced once again about my father and said that the mission he had accomplished in Egypt had given him the authority to deal with the Armenian Question.

Mr. Mosditchian and myself took leave after a two-hour meeting.

P. S. Regarding the refusal of the English press to publish articles about Armenia, Lord Bryce said that he did not think the press was following a prescribed policy; it was mostly due to the abundance of material and the fact that public attention was still greatly focused on the war.

³ At the end of his career as ambassador to the United States (1907–1913), Bryce was elevated to the peerage, after which he devoted his remaining years to his writings.

83**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Lord Cromer**

[Excerpt]

1245–1246 FA

London, July 3, 1915

He advised me to use before the English, as much as possible, the argument of nationality. Nowadays, he said, there is a tendency in England toward exploiting the principle of nationality, and therefore, this argument, which is certainly suitable for the Armenians, will be well received.

I am noting the following objections that he made during our meeting:

He said that it was Winston Churchill who motivated the invasion of Mesopotamia, and he had done it because of its oil reserves. He thinks it is not certain yet that England will have its claim on Mesopotamia; Cromer prefers not to annex it, as he does not want to keep Egypt. However, he agrees that in case of dismemberment of Turkey, England will, sooner or later, be obliged to take Mesopotamia.

He also accepts that France should get Syria, but according to him this will be a white big elephant; he considers that annexing Syria will be a colossal mistake, an act of madness.

If he were French, he would not wish to have Syria; he compares it to the Italian invasion of Massawa.¹ He was at that time in Egypt, and he had told the Italian representative De Martino, who was leading the Massawa negotiations, "If I were Italian, I wouldn't have wanted it, but as an Englishman, I won't oppose it; you may take Massawa if you wish."

He still agrees that Russia should take Constantinople; however, considering its Islamic politics in India, he believes that this will be a great sacrifice for England. For more than a generation England has been known as the protector of Moslems in India, and Russia as their opponent and enemy. Now, it would be difficult for England to justify its approval for Russia to occupy the city where the caliphate is located. In the meantime, the problem of the caliphate will also be solved by moving it to the sherif of Mecca. According to him, an Egyptian caliphate will be faced with difficulties.

¹ Italy invaded Massawa on February 6, 1885, and later advanced inland to establish the colony of Eritria. This Ethiopian seaport was then turned into the Italians' major access to the sea in Africa. Massawa is described as one of the hottest spots in the world.

84

From H. Mutafoff to Boghos Nubar
1249–1252 FA

Alexandria, July 5, 1915

His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Paris

Your Excellency:

I have the privilege of sending you the copy of the telegram that Mr. Gamsaragan and myself had addressed to you on June 30, together with copies of a note and an attached memorandum¹ on the disturbing situation in Cilicia that we had submitted to General Maxwell.

Indeed, events are following one another in that unfortunate country. Zeitun has fallen and the whole country is in ruins; people are under the danger of imminent massacres, and if this disastrous tragedy does not stop, the entire Armenian population of Cilicia may disappear. In the given reports you will find details about this situation. You can imagine the painful effect of these events on the Armenians of Egypt. Naturally, it must be the same everywhere. Since Your Excellency is so concerned about the well-being and the future of Cilicia, you must be the first to mourn these happenings. Needless to say, our information is absolutely true.

Our first thought was to send you the above-mentioned telegram. However, the situation was so serious that we considered it our duty to apply to General Maxwell, only as a sequel to Your Excellency's efforts toward the same purpose when you were here.² We are convinced that there won't be any conflicts between our appeal and the measures that you must have taken

¹ For a copy of the telegram see document 81. Copies of the note and the memorandum were not attached to the letter we had in hand. The memorandum submitted to Lieutenant-General Sir John Maxwell was dated July 3, 1915. In the memorandum, the Armenians wrote "about their strong feelings that the time had come to rush to the help of their brothers in danger and that it would be simply criminal on their part to wait any longer and to procrastinate. Volunteers in Egypt would be joined by volunteers from the Armenian communities in America, Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece. But they asked for the active support of the British government. A landing in Cilicia, they stressed, could also help the Allied war effort. It could completely isolate Syria, Mesopotamia, and Arabia, and could deprive the Turkish government of its important reservoirs of military forces." Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question 1915–1923* (London, 1984), 91. As for the note, it is most probably document 119 in James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915–16* (Beirut, 1979), 468–471.

² See document 1.

after receiving our telegram; in fact, our move shall underline the exigency of your efforts, provided, of course, as we hope, General Maxwell has expressed himself favorably before the government of the British Empire.

Besides, a week ago, as a result of these events, we felt compelled to appeal; we thought it was necessary to request the general to allow us to send three trustworthy Armenians to Cilicia, to furnish us with all the information about the actual situation in that district. His Excellency had not only agreed to our request but had made us believe that it could even interest the British government; he was, in fact, even willing to send to our compatriots living in Cilicia the necessary aid, most probably after investigating and establishing their need.

As we were ready to communicate to His Excellency the names of these representatives, we were informed, in great detail, about the very serious situation in Cilicia that needed some substantial measures. Therefore, considering that it would be useless to send these secret representatives, profiting from the occasion, we applied to the General.

Whatever the result of our appeals might be, we shall always owe it to Your Excellency's initiative, and needless to say, we shall not undertake anything without obtaining your most precious consent.

In order to give you an idea about the progressive mentality of the Turks, according to the information we have received, they consider everywhere the members of the Armenian General Benevolent Union as members of political parties. Among others, in Aleppo, Dr. Shemavon, the president of the local chapter, has been arrested.³

³ The name should be Dr. Samuel Shemavonian. This person passed away after his release from prison, apparently because of the emotional shock he received there. *Vosgemadian Haygagan Parekordzagan Enthanour Mioutian* (Golden-Album of the Armenian General Benevolent Union), Silver Jubilee, 1906–1931, vol. I (Paris, 1935), 152–153.

85

Arakel Bey Nubar to Boghos Nubar
1259–1260 FA

Alexandria, July 5, 1915

My dear father:

In my last letter I mentioned the proposal, which I had received from Mutafoff and Gamsaragan, regarding those three Armenians to be sent to Cilicia in order to bring us news about the situation there.

As these gentlemen have already received news from Cilicia, there is no need, at the moment, to realize their plan. They have prepared a report for Maxwell, exposing the most recent situation; I have been told that they have also sent you one, but I personally did not want to give it to Maxwell as it seems to have political undertones.

Yesterday, I received a letter from Artin Pasha; he announces that he has met with Maxwell and the latter has wished to know the names of the Armenians who were supposed to go. As indicated in the enclosed copy,¹ I replied to him that he should explain to you everything that is presently taking place.

I am sure you will receive the Mutafoff-Gamsaragan report and thus have an idea about the news they have received from Cilicia.

¹ The copy doesn't exist. See document 86.

86**Yakoub Artin Pasha to Boghos Nubar
1264–1265 FA**

Cairo, July 5, 1915

Dear Pasha:

I met with Sir G. Maxwell yesterday. He had seen Arakel Bey in Alexandria; the latter had explained to him the unsettled situation that still exists for the people of Zeitun and had promised to find two or three Armenians who would go to Cilicia to provide him with reliable news regarding the happenings there. It seems to me that (Sir Maxwell) is quite eager to be informed about the situation in Cilicia, as he recommended that I write to Arakel Bey to expedite the fulfillment of his promise and find these people. I did as he requested. I think this coincides with the Reverend's statement that I had written to you about in my previous note.¹

Here there is nothing new. I met Masraf, who told me that we² still have about 1,500 [pounds].

As I understand, they want to organize landing troops, but they can find neither the volunteers nor the funds for their subsistence during the period of training. The revolutionaries continue to raise money, but it seems that there is not much enthusiasm. I am not surprised, considering the hot weather and the actual unemployment everywhere.

¹ See document 72.

² The National Defense Fund.

87

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Jean Mutafoff

[Telegram]

1258 FA

Paris, July 5, 1915

Jean Mutafoff

Alexandria

Despite my unsuccessful efforts in the past, as soon as I received your telegram, I reappealed officially, but unfortunately, without much more success. The project seems to be impossible. My letter will follow.

88**Boghos Nubar to Messrs. Gamsaragan and Mutafoff
1261–1263 FA**

London, July 5, 1915

Messrs. Armenag Gamsaragan
and Jean Mutafoff
Alexandria

My dear friends:

Your letter of June 30 was transmitted to me from Paris.

I am deeply saddened because of the conditions that the Turkish authorities have inflicted upon our compatriots in Cilicia. I agree with you that this is the outcome of a premeditated plan aiming to weaken and reduce the Armenian element to an insignificant minority.

However, I deeply regret to admit that there is not much I can do to improve this situation.

Meguerditchian, upon his arrival in Paris, had already told me what he thought about assisting our compatriots. You requested that I appeal to the Allies so that they would send troops to Cilicia; this is at the moment the only way of stopping the persecutions perpetrated against our unfortunate people.

I don't have to remind you that I had made contacts regarding this matter as early as last November; the question of landing forces would have been decided if the problem of the Dardanelles had not developed.

Ever since then the situation has changed completely; regardless of my unsuccessful attempts in France in the past, after receiving your telegram, I decided to renew my appeals. Unfortunately, the answer I got from the Foreign Office is not very hopeful; for the time being, they consider this project impossible.

Depending on how clear your perceptions are, I am not going to go into details; I am sure you will easily understand that despite the Allies' positive disposition vis-à-vis the Armenians, under the present circumstances, they have other priorities which are of vital importance to them.

I thought it necessary to add that, if you were in Europe at this very moment, you would be the first person to affirm that in these actual circumstances, the idea of landing forces would not be well received.

Because of this reason I cabled you the following message: "Despite my unsuccessful efforts in the past, as soon as I received your telegram, I re-appealed officially, but unfortunately, without much more success. My letter will follow."

There is nothing more that we can do for the time being; we only wish that the military operations of the Allies in the Dardanelles will soon end successfully, and that, in the meantime, may God protect our people from the dangerous conditions afflicted upon them.

In closing, I feel it necessary to remind you that, presently, in Europe, there is a great deal of sympathy toward the Armenian Question. As for myself, I am satisfied with the results I obtained during the course of my contacts.

89

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace

[Excerpt]

1266 FA

London, July 5, 1915

(Nothing important during the meeting. The pasha knows Sir Donald from Egypt; the latter tells him that it is premature to follow the Armenian Question at the moment. The pasha has added to his minutes the following noteworthy postscript.)

Speaking of English diplomacy, Sir Donald said, "It is typical of them to proceed on a day-to-day basis. This is exactly contrary to French diplomacy, where they examine the future, prepare plans, and try to foresee everything."

Sir Donald added that he was writing the history of English diplomacy, starting from the sixteenth century;¹ his research had made him think that way, and it was also confirmed by current historical events, such as the invasion and protectorate of Egypt,² and by many other similar examples.

¹ Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace (1841–1919) was a British journalist who acted as foreign correspondent to *The Times*, and private secretary of two viceroys of India. He was author of two volumes on Russia and a book on Egypt and the Egyptian question.

² Britain invaded Egypt on September 14, 1882, and took over Cairo the following day. This was the beginning of a British domination that was to last until 1952. However, Egypt was officially declared a protectorate in December 1914, after Britain declared war against the Ottoman Empire in November 1914.

90**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Sir Arthur Nicolson***
1267–1274 FA

London, July 6, 1915

I was received very courteously. He fondly remembered my father with whom he had excellent relations. I thanked him warmly for his comments.

Referring to the Armenian Question, he asked about the latest developments.

I told him that I had just received a most disturbing telegram informing about new persecutions in Cilicia, confiscation of the personal belongings of Armenians to be given to the [Moslem] immigrants of Macedonia, arrests and massacres; if the Allies, with the help of the Armenian volunteers, did not come to the aid of the Armenian population by landing troops in Alexandretta, the massacres would become widespread.

Sir Arthur said that it is impossible to land troops in Cilicia. "We are already overburdened," he said. "How can we assume a new undertaking? The Dardanelles campaign at the present is taking all the forces that the Allies can make available for such an expedition."

Unfortunately, I was forced to accept this reality. I had brought up the matter to satisfy my conscience.

He asked about the purpose of my visit. I explained to him in detail, starting from the reforms, giving him a short historical review.

When I mentioned that the Armenians should not be subjected to Turkish yoke anymore, as they had suffered it up to the present, and it had surpassed the limits of their patience and endurance, Sir Arthur agreed.

Regarding autonomy, he asked whether we would encounter difficulties with the Turkish and Kurdish elements and whether we were not truly a minority. As always, I answered mentioning to him the census figures, which show that we constitute forty percent of the total population, and racially speaking, we are the most populous compared with both the Turks and the sedentary Kurds. I also told him that if people had to be assessed on the basis of classes, in other words, based upon trade, industry, agriculture, number of schools, and workers from different villages, the Armenians constituted more than ninety percent of the total number. As for disputes with Turks and Kurds, they would not arise anymore, since the officials instigating such conflicts would not be around. Regarding the Kurds, I pointed out that a considerable number of them had Armenian origin and had accepted Islam under pressure and that they would return to their initial faith. Besides, on the southern border of Armenia, there was a Kurdistan, where a

* The meeting was held at the Foreign Office.

government could be formed for them, and the majority of Kurds residing in Armenia would immigrate there.

I insisted on the energetic nature of the Armenian nation, stressing that it had endured centuries of persecution. I emphasized that autonomy be granted to the Armenians based upon the principle of distinct nationalities.

Sir Arthur asked who was going to be the leader of autonomous Armenia. When I told him that it would be a European, he said, "Yes, a governor general or a European head, with broad governing powers."

Sir Arthur thought that the question of autonomous Armenia involved only the six provinces. When I told him that we needed Cilicia, too, to become a vibrant and neutral country, under the collective protection of the Allies, he asked for explanations. I expounded with pertinent evidences: Russian or collective protectorate, free access to the Mediterranean for Russian trade, economic and educational influence of France over Armenia, the question of the Baghdad rail terminal, etc., matters that I had already discussed in France and which I find superfluous to repeat for this record.

He listened carefully and seemed especially interested when I told him about the general impression I had from the French members of the assembly and other political figures concerning Cilicia.

At the end of my statement, he said that it would be best if he had a memorandum at hand, explaining the Armenian case, just as I had done. He pointed out that it was still premature to deal with the question and all the other questions that would be settled at the end of the war and that he would give thorough consideration to my memorandum at the opportune moment.

I told him that I should prepare it at once according to his request, which was proof enough that he would study it in due time. I thanked him for that and added that before coming to the meeting, I, too, was not convinced that decisions could be taken regarding the case I was delegated to defend. I told him that my role today was to outline the case, as well as the wishes of the Armenian nation; that is, prepare the preliminary groundwork and look forward to the time—once the war was over with the victory of the Allies—when the Armenian case, together with all the questions related to Asia Minor, would be solved.

He said that under the present circumstances he agreed with me. I promised to deliver him my memorandum within three or four days.

I asked him if it was appropriate to meet Lord Crewe, since Sir Edward Grey was on vacation. He said that it would be pointless, as I had explained to him everything, and moreover, I should submit a memorandum.

I mentioned with praise the conduct of the Russians on the eastern front while confronting the Germans and Austrians alone, and even during their retreat, to which they had to resort because of lack of armaments. Sir Arthur agreed with me, saying that they were, indeed, worthy of admiration.

Then we talked about Egypt and the sultan. I quote Sir Arthur verbatim: "The sultan [of Egypt] is a very correct and honest person, benevolent to his

country. Sir Henry McMahon is very happy for having been appointed to work with him.”

He added that he was aware of the sultan’s friendly feelings toward me. I said that His Highness was always favorably inclined toward me and, at the time when he was still Prince Hussein, he had given me the honor to become his associate in a number of enterprises for the welfare of the country, among them the Company of Agriculture.

“Yes, I know that he has friendly feelings toward you,” answered Sir Arthur.

He asked if he was popular. I assured him that he was, undeniably, and that at all levels of the population his qualities were appreciated, especially among the *fellahs* [peasants], who call him the father of *fellahs*. I also pointed out that a small number of young Egyptians were the exception and that they held him responsible for the declaration of the protectorate.

Sir Arthur said that those opponents were indeed small in number.

I added that I wished His Highness had acceded to the throne a few years before, because by now he would have accomplished a great deal for Egypt.

Sir Arthur replied with enthusiasm and conviction, “Oh, yes, I am convinced about that.”

91

H. S. Ayvazian to Boghos Nubar¹
1337–1344 EA

Athens, July 8, 1915

His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Cairo

Your Excellency:

Considering the reduced number of travelers and the actual conditions perturbing the mail, we think that you might not have any direct or reliable news about the events that are taking place in Turkey. Since I have been informed about them [recently], I feel that it is my duty, as an Armenian, to pass the information on to Your Excellency.

Missionary Mr. Paul E. Nielsen, who has been with the Saint-Paul's College in Darson for the last four years, is a personal friend, and I have every reason to believe him fully. He arrived here from Mersin yesterday, with Miss Christie, the daughter of the president of the same American college; I also know her quite well.

First of all they confirmed that the conditions for the Armenians in Cilicia are appalling. They have evacuated the town of Deort-Yol of its Armenian population and have replaced them, almost as a normal consequence, by Turkish families, not military authorities. All Armenians are kicked out of their homes and deported; naturally they have nothing to eat. Their critical and dangerous predicament is beyond description. Before their deportation, nine prominent businessmen were sent to the gallows under the pretext that they were in touch with the British fleet and spying for the Allies.

The situation in Zeitun is also the same. There is not a single Armenian left there; the Turks have confiscated all the houses. My friends did not know what had happened to the inhabitants, but they had been informed that certain precautions were taken to prevent them from living together in large groups; there have been attempts to convert them to Islam, and furthermore, they have tried to disseminate them in groups of one, two, or three families in the villages of Marash.

They have tried the same in Hadjin, but for one reason or another, only half of the population is deported; it is needless to say that their homes are confiscated by Turks.

The Turks of Darson and Adana are showing the very same attitude they had before the 1909 massacre.

¹ Extracts from this letter see in James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915–16* (Beirut, 1979), 17–19.

Missionaries from Beirut say that the Christian Syrians are also subjected to the same type of persecution and that the situation for the Jews in Palestine is simply horrible.

Dr. McNaughton, who has been a missionary in Smyrna for a number of years and recently in Bardizag, is of Canadian origin and has been exiled to Ankara. He says that with him there were also thirty Armenians who were deported from Bardizag for the simple reason that they were members of the Hunchak Party or they had Hunchak friends. Pickpocketing, robbery, and gross insults are of common occurrence, and the actual situation is worse than any period during the reign of Abdul Hamid. Dr. McNaughton has lived in Turkey for the last twenty-five years and he knows Turkish.

Following the declaration of the Allies that the Turkish authorities would be held responsible for the Armenian massacres, eight Armenians in Kayseri and twenty-six in Constantinople were sent to the gallows almost simultaneously. Imprisonment and exiles are of common occurrence, and the venerable missionary does not conceal his approval for having been exiled.

Dr. McNaughton had just arrived from Constantinople, and the information he passed on to me he had gathered from the American Embassy and missionaries. According to his information, massacres have been going on for some time in the surrounding regions of Bitlis; the missionaries in Bitlis have received news that the populations in all villages are accepting Islam in order to avoid torture and hardship; people are not killed only as a result of massacres but of tortures. A missionary in Mardin has announced, by means of a coded telegram to another missionary who has recently arrived in Constantinople, that presently the conditions in Mardin are similar to those in 1895.

The American ambassador in Constantinople, after demanding that the Turkish government stop the massacres, has gone to see the German ambassador, but Mr. Wangenheim has told him that he would categorically refuse to intervene with the internal policies of Turkey.²

These missionaries, as a result of their convictions, and judging from the events they have witnessed personally, do not hide that the whole movement to transfer Turkey into a Pan-Islamic country is instigated by the German politics.

² Henry Morgenthau (1856–1946) was the American Ambassador to Constantinople (1913–1916). He published his memoirs in 1918, as *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*. The book contains valuable information on the Turkish reasoning regarding of the Armenian genocide and the German responsibility in it. Morgenthau, upon an instruction from his government, had many meetings and contacts with Wangenheim, the German ambassador to Constantinople, in order to secure his intervention at the Sublime Porte with regard to the massacres and deportation of Armenians. At the beginning, Wangenheim insisted that the Armenians are enemies and that he would do nothing for them.

I would like to convey to Your Excellency some other information of the same nature. In May 1914, I was traveling with Dr. Nazim Bey, who is the spirit of the *Ittihat ve Terakki* [the Committee of Union and Progress].³ Then, the sole purpose of his trip was to create a movement to boycott the Greeks. However, we were eventually informed that he was, at the same time, trying to launch a similar movement against Armenians. The doctor told me that the government was faced with a very complicated task, and he blamed the famous ancestors of the modern Turkish generation for that. According to him, they had always been victorious and, as they had vanquished the whole of Europe, they could have also conquered the entire universe, but they were not farsighted enough, or they had become the victims of their generosity, and consequently, instead of uprooting the entire Christian element, they had let them live. Had that cleansing been properly done, he added, nobody would have been able to protest, and today the government would have an easier time.

The Russian retreat has intoxicated the Turks. Influenced and encouraged by their powerful German allies, they now believe that it is possible and simple for them to do their house cleaning. The declaration of the Allies is not sufficient enough to stop them, even if the Turkish leaders might doubt their eventual victory. They think that if they are defeated, Turkey will not be a secure refuge for them, and these leaders, with the money they are hoarding, may go to a country where they can live incognito, or stay intact, even if their identities are unveiled; a few courageous ones, such as Talaat and Enver, state openly that if they are defeated, they don't expect to stay alive, even if the Allies did not hold them responsible and ask them to account for their acts.

The Armenians of Turkey could not hide their feelings, and at the time when I was in Constantinople, despite my prudence, I could not succeed in hiding my own feelings or speak in such a way that the Turks would not detect anything. Last September, the Turkish satirical paper, *Karagoz*, declared that when Armenians are happy, it indicates that the Allies are winning and, if they are sad, it means exactly the opposite. However, even if the Armenians were capable of concealing their feelings, there is no doubt that the Young Turks [the Committee of Union and Progress] would definitely annihilate the Christians if they had the opportunity. At least, we should be satisfied that we could hurt them by expressing our feelings and sentiments.

³ During the late 1890s, small groups of officers and students banded together secretly, and in 1908, led a revolt against Abdul Hamid forcing him to restore constitutional government. Mustafa Kemal (later known as Atatürk) was one of the young officers whose group merged with others and formed the Committee of Union and Progress, which ruled the empire as of 1909 and planned for the total annihilation of Armenians. The Committee of Union and Progress was also known as the party of Young Turks.

I think that the Germans do not want the annihilation of the Armenians, at least in the regions where they do not think it is necessary to succeed militarily. The Armenians have become undesirable to them only in this respect. It is only in the areas of military importance that the Germans in Germany and Turkey encourage the Turkish efforts of extermination and the massacres keep taking place. Deort-Yol and Zeitun would be able to help the Allies tremendously if the latter had landed troops on the shores of Payas. Bitlis is very close to Van, and the Russian army will soon reach Bitlis; the Armenians there would have been of great assistance to it, just like the Armenians of Van. I forgot to mention that in Erzerum, which is a border city, not only were individuals sent to the gallows, but there were also mass slaughters. Whereas in Ankara, Brusa, Konia, Constantinople, and in the remaining parts of Turkey, despite the ongoing oppression, there has been no deportation or massacre.

Now that our mask is down and we are placed on the operating table, it would have been better, perhaps, if we had defended ourselves more openly by helping the Allies and enjoying their assistance in return. I would just like to bring this situation to Your Excellency's attention, and I think that, provided I am correct in my reasoning, we have earned the right to demand from the Allies to extend their help to us in order to organize our volunteer groups in the vicinities of Adana. I say of Adana, because according to the latest information, it is the weakest spot; of Adana, because it is there that we may get the largest contribution from the native element who have been thrown out of their homes; finally of Adana, because Cilicia is the only region that we may try to claim for safeguarding our nationality by making sacrifices on the spot for the region.

92

Bishop Ghevont Tourian to Boghos Nubar
1345 AA

Philippopolis, July 9, 1915 (old style)

His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Paris

Most Excellent Pasha:

I confirm my letter of the 11th and number 235 script sent to you last month. Once again, I received horrifying news regarding the unprecedented sufferings of our compatriots in the provinces and about the hellish undertakings of the Turkish government. I deemed it necessary to send Your Excellency the exact copy of the letter received.

I would appreciate it if you would acknowledge receipt of this and previous letters.

I remain devoted to Your Excellency and to our tormented nation.

Bishop Ghevont Tourian

[Annex]

A secret report from Patriarch Zaven to Bishop Tourian*
1346–1350 AAConstantinople, June 13, 1915¹Most Reverend Bishop
Ghevont Tourian
Philippopolis

Since the 25th of May events are precipitating one after the other and the state of the nation is at its worse. Last time we were aware only of the

* This copy is submitted to the National Delegation by Bishop Tourian, together with his letter of July 9, 1915.

¹ We think that this report was written on May 30/June 13, 1915. The source material of the National Delegation's archive carried June 30/July 13, 1915 as a date, most probably as a result of a mistake by the person who copied it from the Patriarch's original letter for distribution. The report was published by James Bryce as written on July 13/26th, James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915–16* (Beirut, 1979), 9–11. Another mistake due to a confusion in old and new style dating systems.

deportations, which were imposed upon those people living in certain cities and villages in Cilicia, and as for Erzerum only rumors have reached us; now we are quite assured that the entire [Armenian] population of Cilicia is deported to the southern deserts of Aleppo. The people of Karin, since the 1st of May, then of the whole province, and gradually of Samsun, Kayseri up to Dikranagerd [Diyarbakir] and Urfa, including the entire Armenian population of Trebizond, Sivas, Kharput, Bitlis, Van, and Dikranagerd [Amit], young and old, without sparing anybody, are forced to go to the Mesopotamian desert, through the southern regions of Aleppo all the way to Mosul and Baghdad. The plan of the Ottoman government is "Armenia without Armenians." Moslems are already living on Armenian lands and in Armenian houses. Needless to say, the deportees have left almost everything behind; the government has not allowed them to take much, and besides, the means of transport in these provinces has been confiscated by the military. These Armenian refugees have to walk at least for a month or two in order to reach the desert which is meant to become their graveyard. According to the news we receive, the corpses of those miserable deportees are scattered all over the road and in the Euphrates, and the rest of the people are condemned to die gradually in the desert, as they have neither shelter nor work nor any other means to provide for themselves.

This is a plan to annihilate the Armenians once and for all without creating much noise or calling it a genocide; this is absolutely a hideous carnage. It is important to point out that after drafting those between twenty and forty-five years of age for active duty, others from fifteen to twenty and forty-five to sixty are kept to transport military goods and equipment. Those who have paid their *bedel* [sum paid for exemption from military service] are exiled to various places or imprisoned for different reasons; therefore the deportees, who are traveling, are mainly the old, women, and children. The route they have taken passes through such regions that, even in peace time, it is impossible not to be robbed or killed. The Turkish *chetehs* [brigands] and robbers, and even the gendarmes and government officials, overtly rob them and rape the women. We have also received news from different places that many have been converted to Islam; it seems that there is no other way for them to save their lives.

The military tribunals are busy everywhere; you have heard, of course, from the newspapers, that twenty Hunchak party members were executed in Constantinople. The verdict that was given about them had absolutely nothing to do with the law. On the same day in Kayseri, twelve others were also sent to the gallows, as "they had followed the decisions taken at the secret meeting of the Hunchak and Dashnak parties held in Bucharest." In addition to those executed, thirty-two people are sentenced to ten to fifteen years of imprisonment; the majority of them are modest businessmen. Also in Cilicia, twelve people are hanged. Such sentences are pronounced on a daily basis; a rifle, a book, or a picture is sufficient reason for a few years of imprisonment.

There are many incidents where people are beaten to death, thirteen people in Diyarbakir, six in Kayseri, etc. There are even people who are executed on the road, without any trial by a war tribunal; for instance, thirteen people, who were moving from Shabin Karahisar to Sivas, and those priests with their five friends, originally from the village of Kurk who were going from Su Shehri to Sivas, had their hands tied and were [killed]. I cannot remember if there were other barbaric incidents to be reported, or tortures that they have inflicted while looking for weapons and party members. There is not a single home that is not searched, not a single diocese, church, or school. Hundreds of women, girls, and even children are now wasting away in prisons. Churches and monasteries are robbed, destroyed and desecrated. Not even the primates are spared; the primate of Constantinople, Rev. Barkev Tanielian; the primate of Trebizond, Rev. Kevork Tourian; the primate of Kayseri, Bishop Khosrov Behrigian; the primate of S. K. [Shabin Karahisar], Rev. Vaghinag Torigian; of Charsandjak, Rev. Kevork Nalbandian, etc., have been imprisoned and put before war tribunals. The acting prelate of Diyarbakir, Rev. Megrditch, was beaten to death in prison. We have no news from the other prelates; most probably the majority are put in prison. Presently, the entire Armenian population of Turkey is detained; correspondence and communication have come to a halt.

Massacres and plunders were reported in the surrounding villages of Van and Bitlis. At the beginning of the month, the people of Shabin Karahisar were slaughtered ruthlessly; they say that only some children were spared. Unfortunately, details reach us with a great deal of difficulties and rather late.

As you see, the Armenians of Turkey are living their last few days. We have no way of delaying death. If the Armenians from abroad cannot arouse the compassion of the Allies, within a few months, out of 1.5 million Armenians, only a few will be left. The destruction is inevitable.

93**Boghos Nubar's Meeting with Count Benckendorff
1353–1357 FA**

London, July 12, 1915

Following some remarks about questions of general nature, we began to discuss the Armenian Question.

The count said that the opinions were still mixed; it was not sure if Armenia would extend all the way to the sea or if the southern part of Armenia would remain in Turkey, nor was it certain that it would be possible to divide it in two by occupying Cilicia. Moreover, it was not known what Italy was going to receive or what would be the possible share for Greece. Coming to the Armenian Question, the count did not know the exact claims of the Armenians. They have told him about our aspirations, but apparently he has heard quite a few different versions. He also added that Russia did not wish to annex the vilayets and, as already declared, favored autonomy; however, it had wished to know if that would cause any danger in the future, and if the Armenians of Cilicia would not want to unite with the autonomous Armenia.

I told him that such a danger would not exist, since the Armenians in Caucasia were quite pleased with their conditions, and that they lived in prosperity and kept improving their financial means. As they had declared in the Duma, they wanted to remain Russian; they only wished to rescue their brethren living in Turkey. As for our claims, they were outlined in the memorandum that Dr. Zavriev had given to him in May, and they were in line with the plan agreed upon by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Petrograd. "Autonomy for a complete Armenia, including Cilicia, under the protection of Russia and its two Allies—provided that the Armenians themselves would defend this plan before France and England, and the Russian ambassadors, despite their readiness to help, would not intervene."

The ambassador stated that he was aware of that project, but he had not received any communiqué about it from Petrograd.

I answered that the question of autonomy could not be doubted, because the Catholicos, in a telegram sent from the Caucasus to Egypt had asked me to represent him, informing me that my mission was to demand autonomy.

The ambassador, indeed, agreed with this.

Subsequently, I added that I had worked toward that goal, but I had encountered certain difficulties in France regarding Cilicia, as the French demanded it for themselves.

I informed the ambassador about the discussions I had in France, including the reasoning I had used.

He asked me if that demand wasn't made by the expansionist party alone. He was most interested and, in fact, surprised when I told him that it

was a public, and even a government, demand, and I was assured at the offices of Quai d'Orsay that Russia had left France quite free with regard to Cilicia.

He told me that he did not know anything about it and he even expressed his doubts. He added that I had revealed certain facts about Cilicia that he had not been aware of and he wanted to know what I had done and heard regarding this problem in London.

I explained that I had only seen Sir Arthur Nicolson, who had received me well and showed a great deal of interest in my views. I also mentioned that he had asked me to submit a memorandum so that, when the time would come to discuss the Armenian Question, the Foreign Office would profit from it.

Count Benckendorff thinks that it is a good idea for me to also see Lord Lansdowne; he mentioned that although he could not arrange that meeting for me, it was possible that I could succeed through some other channels.

I replied to him that the question was rather delicate; I had already asked Sir Arthur Nicolson if he would advise me to see other ministers, but the latter had found it unnecessary and promised me that he would explain to them everything I had exposed to him, and besides, he would be passing my memorandum on to them.

However, I showed the ambassador the letter I had received from Lord Bryce, informing me that he had written to Lord Lansdowne and recommended him to see me, if I requested.

The ambassador agrees with me that it is better not to apply personally but to leave it to Lord Bryce to arrange an interview for me.

He asked me if I had written my memorandum and could give him a copy.

I told him that I had completed it, but it was still a draft and it was being translated into English; I also added that I could read to him the most important part where I had stated my reasons for favoring our plan.

Upon his request I read that part, and when I was through with it, he told me that he had found it quite complete and advised me that I should submit the French original [to the Foreign Office], as it might lose its impact due to translation. He also added that I was wrong in assuming that Sir Edward Grey did not know French; although he did not like to speak it, he understood [the language] very well.

The ambassador congratulated me for my editorship and repeated that I should not weaken it by having it translated.

I pointed out to him that I had paid special attention to the fact that it was going to be read by the English and had used English reasoning; however, the Russian interests in our plan, in terms of written expression, were so clear that they did not need any further explanation. Consequently, I asked him if we were in agreement regarding the procedure that I had adopted both in France and here during my interviews.

He replied that we were in full agreement and requested that I see him once again before leaving London.

As I had told him, during the meeting, that in England there was little interest in the Armenian Question, the count reminded me that it had changed and they were more interested now.

94**Boghos Nubar to Lord Bryce**
1374 FA

London, July 12, 1915

Dear Lord Bryce:

I would like to thank you for your letter. By writing to Lord Lansdowne, once again you proved your interest in our cause; I do not know exactly how to express my gratitude for everything you have done and you are doing for us.

I had a very profitable meeting with Sir Arthur Nicolson. He requested a memorandum, which I am preparing presently. Before I complete this memorandum, I would very much like to have a brief meeting with you, if you could grant me the honor of seeing you any time that would be convenient for you.

95

Lord Bryce to Boghos Nubar
1375 EA

London, July 13, 1915

Dear Excellency:

I was quite happy to hear that you had a satisfying meeting with Sir Arthur Nicolson. If your memorandum is ready, I would be glad, as you had requested, to see it on Thursday or Friday morning, at ten o'clock, if it is convenient for you.

96

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Paul Cambon
1358–1367 FA

London, July 13, 1915

I gave him the entire history of my mission, starting from the reform conferences and informing them about my recent negotiations in Paris.

I said that before the war we were satisfied with the reforms, which seemed at the time to be the maximum we could obtain because of the German attitude, or without resorting to war. However, today the war is on and the Turks have proved their wicked nature; Armenians could not agree to stay under Turkish rule, and consequently, those simple reforms could not be the question.

Mr. Cambon agreed.

I also stated that Russia did not wish to annex Armenia, because it already had 18 million Moslems, and they would not like to add to that number the Islamic population and all the other races living in Armenia; instead it would prefer to promote a policy based on the principle of nationalities, granting sovereignty to the Armenians, as they had done for the Polish.

Mr. Cambon grasped my point and wanted to know if I was sure of Russia's willingness to grant autonomy.

To prove my argument, I mentioned the telegram of His Holiness, requesting me to accept the task of negotiating for autonomy.

Mr. Cambon agreed that it was a good proof to eradicate doubts. However, he wished to know the geographical boundaries of our autonomy—whether we wanted to confine it to the six vilayets or also include the Armenian regions within the Russian Caucasus.

I answered that the issue had always been the Turkish vilayets and that it was still the same since the Armenians in the Caucasus were quite happy and since they had already declared at the Duma they wished to remain Russian, but they were fighting only to protect their compatriots in Turkey. I also added that the Russian Armenians were enjoying a good reputation and the government treated them very well ever since the appointment of Prince Vorontsov-Dashkov as viceroy. I reminded him of the latter's memorandum addressed to the czar, in which he had praised the Armenians; it was made public the year after. I also reminded him of Mr. Sazonov's remark that he had made to me, pointing at Prince Lobanov's portrait, "Our policy toward Armenians is not this man's policy anymore."

Mr. Cambon agreed that this was important and worth noting, because he had personally observed Prince Lobanov's policy, as well as the one before that was unfavorable for the Armenians in the Caucasus.¹ At this

¹ Aleksei Borisovich Lobanov-Rostovskii (1824–1896), Russia's ambassador in

point, he added that the Armenian revolutionary parties had also contributed to that situation.

I answered that, fortunately, it was all past history now and the Armenians would never forget the role he had personally played with regard to the Armenian cause when he was the ambassador in Constantinople, and this was indicated in the *Yellow** and *Blue Books*.[†] I added that, depending on his past contribution to our cause, we were now hoping to have his kind assistance, as he would be the most knowledgeable person among all the political figures during the future negotiations to settle the [Armenian] Question.²

Once more he asked about the territorial boundaries of the future autonomous Armenia. I told him that it would include all the Armenian provinces of Turkey, in other words, Armenia Major and Armenia Minor or Cilicia, which had been the cradle of the last Armenian kingdom. I reminded him of the history of the crusaders and outlined the reasons why during the reform negotiations Cilicia had been left out and simply mentioned in a special article only. The explanation was obvious, since Cilicia at that time was under German control.

He also wished to know how Cilicia could be annexed to the six provinces as it was detached from them.

Certainly, he did not have an accurate understanding of their geographical positions. Taking this into consideration, I explained that Cilicia had a common border with the six provinces, and in fact, instead of separating it, it would create an integral Armenia with a passage to the sea. Regarding Cilicia, I told him about the tendencies, which I had observed in France, including my arguments against them, as outlined in my memorandum to Mr. Delcassé—a free passageway for Russian trade as well as for Baghdad, etc.

Constantinople (1878–1879) and later in Berlin, became minister of foreign affairs in 1895. Because of his close ties with the Sublime Porte, he set Abdul Hamid II free to organize the massacres against Armenians. He was convinced that defending the aspirations of people who strive for autonomy was equal to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. He joined forces with Germany to oppose British policies toward the Ottoman Empire. He also opposed the foundation of an Armenian entity on the borders of Russia. Jon Giragosian (ed.), *Hayasdane Mitchazkayin yev Sovedagan Ardakin Kaghakaganoutian Pasdatghteroum 1828–1923* (Armenia in the Documents of International and Soviet Foreign Policy 1828–1923) (Yerevan, 1972), 26.

* The official publications of the French government carry this title.

† The official publications of the British government carry this title.

² Pierre Paul Cambon (1843–1924), ambassador of France in Constantinople (1890–1898), was known to the Armenians as an expert on the Armenian Question for his *Exposé historique de la question arménienne*, where he tied the genesis of the Armenian Question to intentional Ottoman provocations and presented it as an expression of the antagonism between England and Russia. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide* (Providence, 1995), 35.

He stated that France would need Cilicia, since Syria was not prosperous enough, except for its insignificant horse trade and that it was only in Cilicia that they could find fertile soil. He added that he could not comprehend the necessity of a Russian trade route through Cilicia, since Russia would receive Constantinople, although through neutralized straits, but open to the entire commercial traffic of the Black Sea. As business always preferred the cheapest route for its trade, and sea transport was the least expensive, then Russia, having at its disposal all such facilities, would not find it necessary to do business by land.

I replied that although I agreed with it, there still remained the question of expansion toward the Mediterranean, which still had supporters in Russia; however, this [problem] would not exist if a buffer state had to be created—a neutral state, under the protection of the nations. Moreover, there was also the question of the Baghdad railway, which would adequately be solved by establishing a terminal—other than the one in Alexandretta—in a neutral country, which would always be open to all protective Allied powers.

Mr. Cambon followed my argument quite carefully with no objection.

When I was through, he wanted to know what kind of answer I had received from the government in Paris.

I said that I was not expecting any, and besides, I had not requested one, thinking that the time was not ripe yet, and my task simply consisted of preparing the groundwork and introducing our national aspirations along with solutions that could be taken into consideration, except, of course, for the retention of the Turkish rule. I added that Mr. Delcassé had followed my explanations with interest promising to read my memorandum attentively.

I also informed him about the solution I had proposed, depending on France's traditional generosity; that if France decided to annex Cilicia, it should agree to leave its southern region to us, with a free access to the sea, including Mersin.

Mr. Cambon also agreed that it was not the right time to come to a decision and that they would find a solution for the Armenian Question; he promised that he would follow it closely as he had done in the past, and he advised me to pursue my preliminary efforts and meet also with Lord Lansdowne. As for Lord Crewe, he said that undoubtedly, Sir Arthur Nicolson, as usual, had kept a record of our meeting and conveyed it to him.

During our meeting, Mr. Cambon asked me about the type of government we considered for autonomous Armenia. According to him, it is difficult to realize a collective protectorate. He seems to be uneasy about this point; I told him that if we had to choose triarchy as the type of government, we would be faced with difficulties, and we had to avoid them at all cost. However, for us, as it was done for Lebanon,³ the most important thing was

³ Under particularly the pressure of France, the traditional protector of Lebanese Maronites, the Ottoman government, in 1861, promulgated an Organic Regulation for

to have a fundamental ordinance prepared by the Allies and based on the primary Reforms Project of 1913, elaborated completely, without Turkish or any other supremacy. That fundamental decree had to foresee the appointment of a European leader, with a vast authority, chosen and nominated by the Allies. Once such a leader was appointed, the Allies had only to supervise the constant protection of the fundamental ordinance. A government or, in fact, an administration established under such conditions could not create difficulties; as Armenia would not have an army, it was only in case of indifference toward the official decree that the protecting nations would have to interfere.

Mr. Cambon objected, saying that the real difficulty was to find that rare bird who would assume the leadership of Armenia. He is convinced that it will be impossible to find him among the people from smaller states; according to him, an Armenian could easily succeed [in that capacity]. As an example he cited the king of Albania,⁴ who had been a disappointment in every way; Mr. Cambon had suggested the appointment of an Albanian instead of a foreign prince at that time.

"For instance, Prince Fuad," I said.

"Yes, exactly, Prince Fuad," replied Mr. Cambon, interrupting me. "Probably, he would have been the perfect choice, instead of the appointment of that stupid man."

I reminded him that only the Allies could assume the task of appointing a leader, when it was time, and that it would be easy to reach an agreement. Presently, our request was to be rescued from Turkish rule and, according to the principle of nationalities, be granted autonomy under the collective protection of the Allies.

I also talked about the recent letter I had received, describing the ongoing savagery, injustice, and persecution against Armenians, and I asked him if we could do something about it.

Unfortunately, his answer was the one I was expecting, in that there wasn't much that could be done.

Mount Lebanon. Thus Mount Lebanon was integrated as a single autonomous administrative unit under an Ottoman Christian governor, appointed by the sultan with the approval of the European powers. The system lasted until 1915, with the entrance of Turkey into the war.

⁴ William of Wied, a German nobleman appointed as hereditary ruler by major European powers after the First Balkan War. He assumed his post in March 1914.

97

Jean Mutafoff to Boghos Nubar
1368–1373 FA

Alexandria, July 13, 1915

Your Excellency:

Your telegram of July 10 immensely disappointed us.

We are impatiently waiting for your promised letter to find out more about the problem.

In the meantime, we consider it our duty to express, as usual, our gratitude for your numerous appeals to upper [government] circles to provide our ill-fated compatriots of Cilicia with aid; you have done all this in spite of your previous efforts which had been rather abortive.

Furthermore, we consider it our duty to once again assure you that we are positively sure that Your Excellency, in his extreme concern about our compatriots over there, doesn't need any suggestion from us in order to do everything to foster their salvation, in other words, everything humanly possible.

Now excuse us for coming back again to a problem which grieves us tremendously; we wish to focus your attention once more on *the extremely critical and exceptionally serious situation created for the Armenians in Cilicia*. The issue is the survival or annihilation of 250–300,000 Christian Armenians. Every minute wasted causes the disappearance of thousands of compatriots by deportation, execution, and slaughtering. The mass carnage perpetrated with the sole intention of exterminating this unarmed nation has become an imminent and veritable threat, or even an incurable reality. We heard that in Alexandretta they have killed an Armenian by the name of *Manuel Chebrayan* in broad daylight, in the center of town, and then they executed his father; the same way they have eliminated *Kerope Keshishian*, a well-known personality in Deort-Yol.

The city of Hadjin is completely surrounded and isolated by groups of Turkish civilians and *bashibozouks* [irregulars]; no one knows what goes on behind the chain created by those fanatics. It is evident that this second stronghold of Cilicia shall inevitably suffer from the same destiny as Zeitun, and immediately after Hadjin, the survivors in *Marash*, *Sis* and *Adana* will have similar eventualities. Please, rest assured, Your Excellency, that these pessimistic lines are not exaggerated or emotional outbursts. The situation is so horrifying that we cannot find the exact words necessary to depict it along with its entire distressful reality. If there is no immediate military intervention, as Your Excellency has proposed, we shall be faced with an incurable situation, lethal for the nation and disturbing to the world; Cilicia and its Armenian population, which has always been its most energetic and civilized element, shall not exist anymore. We will always suffer from a guilty

conscious, thinking that we did not do everything that we were supposed and obliged to do to stop this calamity. How can the Allies, with all their humanitarian principles, remain inactive and let such a colossal crime against humanity be carried out by our executioners right before their very eyes? Those who are responsible are, in fact, their enemies, and the request to bring this monstrous agony to an end is rather insignificant compared to their endless gigantic efforts put into the other areas of the enemy country.

To tell the truth this indifferent attitude of the Allies, at this very moment, when our national existence in Cilicia is in danger, will always remain incomprehensible, no matter what their military, political, or strategic reasons could be.

And thus, Your Excellency, we do not know how else to request from you, on behalf of our brethren in Cilicia, to direct all your efforts and energy toward an immediate armed intervention by the Allies—an intervention that is necessary to stop the annihilation of an entire nation, whose crime is to be Christian, to cherish civilization, and to nurture a certain sympathy toward France, England, and Russia.

Before such an imminent danger of extermination, the question of future autonomy and other matters lose their importance, and in fact, their significance; our most crucial task at the moment is to save the existence of our unfortunate compatriots.

Please excuse us if we had to give such long explanations in order to make our sublime request from Your Excellency; we were extremely concerned to sustain the appropriate tone.

Please accept, Your Excellency, our appreciation, assuring you, in the meantime, of our devotion and self-sacrifice.

P. S. We still haven't received any reply regarding our appeal addressed to General Maxwell.

98

Miss Anna Zavriev to Boghos Nubar
1377 FA

Paris, July 14, 1915

Dear Sir:

I received a note from my brother, requesting to inform you that he has met the person he was supposed to see in Switzerland and proved to him the merit of his point of view, and the latter has promised to collaborate along the same principle.¹

* It is possible that Zavriev had met with Djemal Pasha who was planning a coup d'état. Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes puissances l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives Françaises 1914–1918* (Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1983), 158.

99**Puzant Masraf to Boghos Nubar
1378–1381 FA**

Giza, July 14, 1915

Your Excellency:

I received your letters of June 12 and 29, and became acquainted with their interesting content. I have the honor of presenting you the up-to-date account of our National Fund.

I heard from His Excellency Yakoub Artin Pasha with pleasure that your official appeals regarding our aspirations are presently going in the right direction. You had kindly confirmed this in your letter, and expressed, in the meantime, your expectation for a satisfactory solution; I would like to congratulate you for it.

I regret that I am not in a position to inform you about the outcome of my correspondence regarding the Armenian Question with Italy; up till now I haven't got any news from my friends to acknowledge receipt of my letters. It seems that mail has slowed down because of Italian censorship.

Profiting from the occasion, I would like to propose to Your Excellency a project which, I think, would be good to put into effect. The question is the preparation of the volunteers in Egypt so that, at an opportune moment, they would be able to contribute to the invasion of Cilicia by the English and French, and even, perhaps, join the Russian forces advancing from Van toward Diyarbakir, etc. Considering that one of these days the authorities may take such a decision, I think we have to be prepared, and with this respect, we have to keep the following points in mind:

1. To assemble 1,000 volunteers in Egypt;
2. To do the same in Greece, Bulgaria, the USA, and elsewhere;
3. To group in Egypt those volunteers who are fighting presently on the French front;
4. To study the means of financing their ammunition and sustenance, etc.;
5. To provide for them arms and ammunition from the Allies.

Needless to say that to materialize this project, we would first require your consent before presenting it to General Maxwell for approval. If the Commander in Chief of His Majesty's forces in Egypt gives his accord, then we should request that a few officers be appointed to train our volunteers, who will, prior to that, become members of an existing athletics or sports club, and in this way, people will never know that they are volunteers. The French government, of course, would readily approve this plan, allowing the volunteers to leave for Egypt.

Perhaps, you would object, thinking that we might not concretize all these with our present means. I would, however, hope for the privilege that

the Allies would grant us by facilitating the achievement of our project; in that case our compatriots shall not hesitate to make new sacrifices and our national fund-raising will reach new peaks and thus expedite success.

In any case, even if the above-mentioned military operation does not take place, it will be possible to benefit from our trained volunteers by creating gendarmerie troops in the Armenian provinces.

Therefore, I am taking the liberty of presenting this project, within a general framework, to your precious consideration, requesting that you should study it carefully.

100**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Lord Bryce
1387–1390 FA**

London, July 15, 1915

I had requested that he would see me again; I wished to know his opinion on my memorandum to be given to the Foreign Office. Lord Bryce read it carefully and he made the following remarks, while reading it.

He advised me to coax Greek susceptibility by putting in a flattering remark in the section where I present Armenians as a civilizing element of Asia Minor; because, he said, the Greeks, who would most definitely get into the war on the side of the Allies and participate in the peace conference, may see my memorandum.

He recommended that I mention the six vilayets by their names and indicate their approximate sizes because people did not know anything about them.

He found my statistics on economy and education most interesting.

According to him, the question of autonomy will meet obstacles since Armenians are not a majority; at the beginning, in order to avoid difficulties from the Islamic element, it would be necessary to establish an international government for more than a period of twenty years, including a head of a neutral state from a civilized western country. He thinks that if one could find an American who has a full grasp of Eastern affairs, it would be an advantage over other neutral countries' subjects, due to his liberal principles and freedom from influence by the Western powers.

He advised me to add a separate paragraph on the massacres.

Regarding the energetic and ardent character of the Armenian nation, he agreed with those English and American travelers who had studied the nationalities in Asia Minor and concluded that Armenians were bestowed with an extraordinary strength to rebuild and were superior compared to the rest. He was also convinced that Armenians in an autonomous Armenia would double their number within twenty years.

Then speaking about Lord Lansdowne, he said that he had written to him to receive me, and he advised me to request a meeting. I promised to do so.

I asked him if he had decided to write that memorandum, which he had mentioned during our last meeting. He told me that it was in his plans to write a memorandum, not only on the Armenian Question, but also on all the issues concerning the East, especially the Balkan states, but he thought it was a bit premature at the moment.

When I reminded him that it would be beneficial for Armenia to profit from the present disposition of Russia, as it could be changed as a result of political turns and developments, he agreed with me and decided to prepare

a memorandum only on the Armenian Question, postponing what he wished to write about the rest of the eastern nationalities.

Lord Bryce agrees with me that we should avoid bringing up this question in Parliament. However, he feels that it is necessary to pursue the matter and prepare the groundwork.

I left after thanking him for his precious collaboration to promote the Armenian case.

101**A Tea Party Given by Mr. Veselitsky**

[Recorded by Boghos Nubar Pasha]

1384–1386 FA

London, July 15, 1915

Those who were present: Lord Vandal (former Philip Stanhope), one of my father's good friends; member of Parliament T. P. O'Connor; Sir Henry and Lady Primrose (Sir Henry has been to Egypt with Sir Rivers Wilson); Lord Aberconway; Lord Courtenay of Penwith; Mr. Steede, political editor of *The Times* (after giving me an appointment for tomorrow, he excused himself and left); Mr. Proters; Baron Heyking; member of Parliament Colonel Tate; Radovich; count of Soissons; Mr. Coudourier de Chassin, correspondent of *Le Figaro* and the *Sunday Times*; Lady Muir Mackenzie; Lady Emmott; Baroness Barnekov; Mrs. Rose; and Miss Skechert, an active armenophile.

A dazzling assembly—all the guests, even women, seemed to be interested in the Armenian Question and wished to have explanations.

I talked mostly with Lord Vaendale and T. P. O'Connor, with whom I shall meet again at the Parliament.

The only person who made a few practical remarks about the accomplishment of autonomy was the member of Parliament, Colonel Tate.

The political editor of *The Times*, Mr. Steede, who had a last-minute difficulty, had to excuse himself and leave; he gave me an appointment for the next day; at that meeting we had a long discussion, and I have recorded it separately.¹

At the party they assured me that during the week 60,000 troops had left for the Dardanelles. The guests seemed to be quite pessimistic about the fights on the French front; especially the women, who even think that the Germans will at last reach Calais.

Mr. Veselitsky showed his exceptional kindness by introducing me to every guest and emphasizing the importance of my mission. He has many important connections and he will be able to help us, because he is interested in Armenians and he supports our plan for autonomy.

I shall see him again.

¹ See document 104.

102**Boghos Nubar to Sir Arthur Nicolson
1382–1383 FA**

London, July 15, 1915

His Excellency
Sir Arthur Nicolson
Advisor to British Foreign Office
London

Dear Mr. Advisor:

I have the privilege of presenting to you my memorandum on the Armenian Question, which you had requested from me.

I tried to make it brief, and outline, as completely as possible, the aspirations of my compatriots in Turkey; furthermore, I summarized the resulting consequences that may affect the Allied nations, as well as the Armenians, who request their protection to stop their suffering.

I am planning to stay in London until the 22nd of this month; if you deem it necessary to have certain clarifications, I would be glad to put myself at your disposal for any complementary explanation.

103

Memorandum
Submitted to the Foreign Office
1391–1411 FA

London, July 16, 1915¹

*The Sublime Porte, by virtue of the negotiations initiated by Russia, and according to the agreement signed by the Allied nations on February 8, 1914, had taken upon itself to bring about reforms in the Armenian provinces.** The *Orange Book* about Armenia, published by the Russian government recently, shows the great difficulties that the states of the Triple Entente were forced to face, especially as a result of German opposition. The Armenians nurtured the hope that the Ottoman government would assume its engagements, and by applying the reforms, would bring an end, once and for all, to the massacres and persecution. They hoped that those unfortunate people [of the Armenian provinces], who asked for nothing but security and justice, would, at last, live in peace.

However, at the outbreak of the war with Germany, even before Turkey entered the war, the Sublime Porte discarded all its engagements and fired the two inspectors general who were nominated by the Allies. Therefore, today there is no question of reforms; the Armenian Question must be given a new solution, at the time, after the Turkish defeat, when the fate of Asiatic Turkey will be decided.¹

Whatever the decisions of the Allies might be, it is not possible to consider a solution that will keep the Armenian population under Turkish yoke; the Armenians will strongly refuse to be subjected to it any longer. They ask, through their supreme [religious] head, His Holiness the Catholicos Kevork V, from the Allied nations fighting for the rights and salvation of persecuted nations, that they create an autonomous and neutral Armenia under their protection.

Armenians *have the necessary qualities* to live as an autonomous nation. They have been able to stay intact throughout the centuries of Turkish subjugation, and to this day, they constitute the most active and hardworking

[NOTE: In this letter, exceptionally, all numbered annotations are part of the original memorandum. The original document was dated July 15. Since it was submitted to the Foreign Office on July 15—as confirmed by documents 102 and 117—the latter should be the correct date.]

* During the translation, to facilitate comparison, we have underlined [italicized] all those segments that are different from the memorandum submitted to Mr. Delcassé, the French minister of foreign affairs, on 6 June, or not included in it.

¹ If they wish to consider the fate of the Kurdish element, too, they can separate the area to the south of Van and Bitlis inhabited by Kurds and unite it to Kurdistan.

element of the population.² With his enterprising spirit and ability to adapt, the Armenian is the most crucial agent to exercise a civilized influence and promote moral and economic advancement in Asia. As one diplomat of the same nationality[†] has said, more than half a century ago, the Armenian is the natural link and the mediator between European civilization and the East.

For the cause of this civilization, and proud that they would be fighting for justice and rights with the Allies, many Armenians joined the French army from the beginning of the war. *They also proposed to His Majesty's British government to form a volunteers' group, in case they would land troops in Asia Minor.* Thousands of other volunteers are fighting in the Russian army in the Caucasus. One third of that army, in fact, is composed of Armenian soldiers who are sacrificing their lives for Russian victory.

Furthermore, our volunteers, with the help of the Armenian insurgents of Van, resisted the Turkish army for more than one month, until the victorious Russian army entered Van.

The self-devotion and loyalty of the Armenians of the Caucasus—who loudly declared in the Duma that they live a happy life and want nothing for themselves, and they are fighting solely for the deliverance of their brethren in Turkey—has created sympathy among the Russian population toward them. Thus, the Armenians are convinced that following the final victory and during the ultimate settlement, the government of His Majesty the Czar, who promised autonomy to Poland and gave ample evidence about its liberal policy, will also apply the principle of nationalities in Turkish Armenia; it will bestow upon it autonomy with the support of the Allies, and extend to it its protection, as well as that of the Allies, which have come to the rescue of this persecuted nation.

* * *

We think that a brief outline within a few lines may be helpful to appreciate the lawful desires of the Armenians.

The most important and largest Armenian population lives in Armenia Major and in the mountains and plains of Cilicia.[‡]

Cilicia became the last cradle of the Armenian Kingdom from the eleventh to the thirteenth century (Roupenian and Lusignan dynasties), *where our ancestors fought to preserve their independence. It is part of the Armenian national heritage—its glorious history, its literature, the memory of an advanced civilization many traces of which last to this day.*

² The Greeks, who are also another civilizing element in Asia, are very few in the Armenian provinces, just 1.6 percent of the entire population. They constitute majority in Aydin, which is their most important center close to Smyrna.

[†] Boghos Pasha refers to his father, the great Nubar Pasha.

[‡] The whole segment following these lines, which exists in the memorandum submitted to France, is omitted here.

In those times, Armenians *helped the crusaders to save the Holy Land, and with their mutual help*, defended their kingdom against attacks from outside, particularly from Turkish tribes. The Armenian kings forged many alliances with the Frankish princes of the crusades. Let us mention the king of Jerusalem, Jean de Brienne, Baudouin de Bouillon, and the Lusignans reigning in Cyprus. Thus, the Armenians enjoyed the protection of France until the fall of the Kingdom of Cilicia, 1392,[§] during the time of Leon VI Lusignan, who died in Paris and was buried at the royal sepulchre at Saint-Denys.

The capital [of the Cilician kingdom], Sis, where the Holy See of the Catholicos of Cilicia is located, has been a famous center of arts and sciences.^{||}

Zeitun, the Montenegro of Cilicia, preserved to date its semi-autonomous status, thanks to the unconquerable spirit of its highlanders. Telegrams just received announce that the inhabitants of Zeitun are fighting, at the present, a strong Turkish army of 20,000 troops.

The six Armenian provinces or vilayets where the reforms agreed upon on February 8, 1913, were to be implemented, are the following: Van, Erzerum, Bitlis, Mamuret el-Aziz or Kharput, Diyarbakir, and Sivas. Their total territory measures about 250,000 square kilometers, or 96,500 square miles.

According to the statistics issued by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1912—a report prepared with the best possible accuracy—there are 1,018,000 Armenians in the six provinces, compared to 666,000 Turks and 242,000 Kurds. In Cilicia, there are 300,000 Armenians, who constitute forty percent of the total population. The Moslems comprise many rival races and sects and do not constitute a homogeneous entity. They have no national sentiments and do not possess any cultural [heritage].

Based on these data, the Turkish element makes up only twenty-four percent of the total population of the six provinces, the sedentary Kurds constitute nine percent, while the Armenians form the thirty-four percent of the total population of 2,615,000. The rest consists of Nestorians, Chaldeans, Greeks (1.6 percent), Yezidis, Zazans, and nomadic Kurds.

However, this numeric representation cannot be taken as indicative without stressing the fact that because of systematic persecution, consecutive massacres, forced conversions, misery, and mass exodus, the number of Armenians decreased. During the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid, 300,000 Armenians were slaughtered, and 30,000 perished in 1909 when the Young Turks were in power. The horrendous Turkish vendetta during the present war, against a peaceful and unarmed people, will certainly decrease their

[§] In the memorandum to France, in which this entire paragraph is given as an explanatory note, the date indicated is 1375 and it may be accurate.

^{||} Payas, which is mentioned in the memorandum submitted to France, is not included in this document.

number even more. But allow us to remind you that there were only 400,000 Greeks left in Greece, when their kingdom was founded.[#] The Turks have kept massacring the Armenians with the intent of annihilating them. But they have not been able to obliterate the Armenian nation that has survived, by virtue of its wondrous vigor, in Asia Minor, where other nations disappeared long ago.

Many of those hundreds of thousands of Armenians that are scattered all over Turkey, and those refugees that have found shelter in Caucasia, America, Europe, and Egypt will certainly settle in an autonomous Armenia, together with those who were forcibly converted and are given the right to go back to their original faith.

At this stage, we need to mention the opinion of Lord Bryce, whose competence and authority are well-known. He told us that he agreed with those English and American travelers who have studied the nationalities of Asia Minor, reiterating that none of those races has as much strength of regeneration as the Armenians. He believes that the day Armenians start living in security and free of persecution, their number will double within twenty years. On the other hand, according to Lord Bryce, the Turkish population will not change numerically because of its customs and polygamy.

Moreover, we must consider that those numbers refer to numeric classification. The proportions devised from these figures would certainly favor the Armenians if these different peoples [nationalities] were counted according to their level of culture and economy. Here we would like to give some information about the province of Sivas; unfortunately, the only area for which certain established economic and trade figures exist. In export and import transactions out of 316 merchants, 263 are Armenians, 36 are Turks, and the remaining 12 are Greeks. Out of 37 bankers and capitalists, 32 are Armenians and 5 are Turks. Out of a total of 9,800 storekeepers and craftsmen, 6,800 are Armenians and 3,000 are Turks. The flour mills and carpet-weaving shops belong exclusively to Armenians and are run by a group of Armenian experts. Out of 17,700 workers employed in these factories, 14,000 are Armenians, 3,500 are Turks, and the remaining 200 are Greeks. We must also consider that Sivas has the least Armenian population compared to the other provinces. Therefore, the proportions in the latter are much higher [in favor of the Armenians.]

We can also give some interesting data for all of Armenia in the field of education. According to a recent census, the number of Armenian schools in Greater Armenia and Lesser Armenia is 785, with 82,000 students, whereas the Turks have 150 schools, with 17,000 students. Therefore, eighty-four percent of all educational institutions belong to Armenians and eighty-three percent of all students are Armenians.

[#] The paragraph dealing with counting the dead with the living, mentioned in the memorandum submitted to France, is missing here.

We believe that these figures are eloquently self-explanatory and bring out the eminence of the Armenian element in all fields of activity. This must be taken into account while considering their national aspirations.

Consequently, the Armenians will always constitute the essential element in that country, from the intellectual, economic, and historical points of view. Based on this, they hope that their demand for autonomy will meet the approval of the Allied nations.

* * *

The dismemberment of Turkey became inevitable from the day the Turkish government took the suicidal step of declaring war, in spite of the assurances given by the Allies that the integrity of the empire would be preserved. It is not possible, at this point, to foresee how that dismemberment will come about. We shall not make any suppositions that might not become reality, since all solutions considered depend on [future] events and the war. But this has nothing to do with the question of Armenian autonomy, which can be accomplished by the Allies according to the principle of nationalities; that is one of the reasons—along with the triumph of justice—why this war is fought. The Armenians firmly believe that, taking into consideration their racial vigor, as well as the historical, ethnographic, and economic factors given above, the Allies will bring fulfillment to their just desires; they will grant them autonomy under their collective protection, based upon the plan of reforms, which was presented to the Sublime Porte by the Russian government in 1913, but deleting from it the clauses referring to Turkish sovereignty, and adding to it modifications and amendments that have become necessary because of political developments. We deem it necessary to remind you that the plan included a basic constitution to be formulated by the Allies, and according to it, its implementation had to be entrusted to a European administrator as decided by the Allies. It would be premature to consider in this memorandum the details of the internal structure of the government and management. We wish to restrict our views to general questions of principle. We also think it would be appropriate to assert that by asking to become a protectorate, we do not perceive the Allies to take active and permanent part in the [mechanism] of internal government. We believe that they will certainly avoid such responsibility because of inherent difficulties that may arise, and they will confine their role to the formulation of a “basic constitution” and to the nomination of a responsible person to enact that “constitution.” After that the Allies will assume the task of overseeing that the rules and regulations are followed to the letter and with integrity. This task of policing will run smoothly, considering that Armenia, having been freed of the fear of attacks, will not have its own army but a simple “militia” or “gendarmierie” for the purpose of internal security; as a result of this situation, it will need mostly an honest administration rather than a political government. Such a regime will guarantee the permanence of peace all over Asia Minor. But in order to achieve this goal, the autonomy of Armenia must be

brought into effect, with the condition that it will assure its existence by enacting the complete national unity of Greater Armenia and Lesser Armenia or Cilicia. An autonomous Armenia, comprising only the mountainous regions of the six provinces, without plains, without an opening to the Mediterranean, would not be self-sufficient.

Allow us to remind you that, in the 1913 plan of reforms, there was a clause concerning Cilicia which was left out of the final agreement because of German opposition. Germany then had its own schemes about that province, where the Baghdad railway ends at the Mediterranean. Fortunately, that obstacle to our national union will be removed after this war. However, we consider it necessary to mention that recently we became aware of the disposition of certain French political circles, demanding to have all of Cilicia, together with Syria, up to the Taurus mountain range. At the same time, this demand is being denied by other French political personalities who perceive many disadvantages with such an eventuality; therefore, they prefer a solution that will not create conflicts of interest in the future. They realize that the Armenian provinces, extending from the borders of Caucasia to the Gulf of Alexandretta, provide the most natural and fastest route for an economic and commercial passage on the Mediterranean. It is imperative for Russia not to have hindrances to his trade route, and, therefore, it will avoid difficulties that might arise should Cilicia fall under foreign rule. Of course, these difficulties will vanish if Cilicia, instead of belonging to a major state, becomes part of an autonomous, neutral Armenia, under the protectorate of the Allies. This way there will be no obstacles blocking the free passage of Russian trade and Russia will amply satisfy its economic needs. These French politicians also realize that if France annexes Cilicia, Russia will impose its right to be the sole protector of an Armenia, consisting of the six provinces, which will remain impervious to the economic and other influences of the Allies. Whereas, in case Cilicia was annexed to Armenia, Russia would consent to a collective protectorate, since because of Cilicia's key position on the Mediterranean, international interests would be at stake. Such a solution would even satisfy those in Russia who agree with Miliukov, the leader of the Party of Cadets in the Duma, who had recently signed an article in the newspaper, *Rech*, saying that he was opposed to the idea of Russian protection over Cilicia, because in such a case Russia would be forced to keep a fleet in the Mediterranean comparable to the English and French fleets.

Similarly, the problem of the Baghdad rail terminal falls within the same context. Without making any predictions about the port of Alexandretta, which is considered to become part of Syria according to French political opinion, we would like to point out the following: an autonomous Armenia, under the protection of the Allies, will provide them the advantage of having an open rail terminal in the neutral and disarmed port of Mersin, thanks to the already built branching rail line that connects the Baghdad line to

Adana. The deliverance of the Baghdad rail line from German influence will undoubtedly be one of the major achievements of the war. This line can be used henceforth, in a most suitable way, for the interests of the Allies, and no doubt they can reach an agreement in that respect. In any case, this communication route with India would become more profitable and the fastest route if it had a permanently open terminal in a neutral state. Naturally, this can be achieved, as we mentioned before, through Mersin and Adana. The traffic to India will thus become secure through an autonomous Armenia. Even, if the need rises, it will be possible to add a transversal line to the Adana-Baghdad branch to avoid going through Syria and travel in a roundabout way.

To summarize the above arguments, without mentioning the advantages that the Armenians would enjoy as a result of their autonomy and revitalize their life, we deem it necessary to point out that the Allies, too, would secure political and economic gains by accomplishing our plan. The political gains will materialize if they provide the autonomous territory under their protection such borders that will make Armenia a buffer state between the future territorial acquisitions of the Allies in Asia Minor. This way a permanent guarantee of security will be established. The economic gains will result from the free passage accorded to the Baghdad railway and communication with Caucasia, as well as from the vast field of harmonious activities that will open for the economic ventures of the Allies in a country that has untapped natural resources.

We are convinced that the British government of His Majesty the king, which is fighting to safeguard civilization, rights, and the principle of nationalities, will extend its magnanimous help so that the natural union of the Armenian nation is restored; a nation, that despite centuries of subjugation, has preserved its identity, its language, and its faith, and has provided undeniable proof of its worthwhile qualities, its vibrant existence, and thus has secured the right to achieve nationhood.

P. S. We had finished editing this memorandum, when through personal telegrams, also confirmed by the press, we were informed about the persecutions victimizing the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and especially in Cilicia. Executions, massacres, and the most horrendous atrocities have started again with greater cruelty. The Armenians are robbed of their belongings which are given to Moslem refugees from Macedonia. They are forcibly deported, without money and food, to distant provinces, where they are dying of hunger and wasting away.

In the most brutal way, women are separated from men, children from their parents, and they are sent to unknown destinations.

So far 40,000 have perished.

The government, more than ever, is putting into effect the plan of burying the Armenian Question by annihilating the Armenians of Turkey. This

policy dates from the time of Sultan Abdul Hamid, and it is alive today and will remain so in the future until the total extermination of Armenians is achieved, if the Allies, after the war, allow Turkey to keep exercising sovereignty over Armenians—something we consider impossible.

104**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Messrs. Steede and Max**

[Excerpt]
1412–1415 FA

London, July 16, 1915

Mr. Steede said that he was already interested in the Armenian Question in 1913, when he was a reporter of *The Times* in Constantinople. He emphasized that his active interest still continued and asked me to specify our demands. I described them in full detail and, as a conclusion, I informed him about my Paris negotiations.

Referring to Mr. Delcassé, Mr. Steede pointed out that [the minister], unfortunately, wanted to take care of every detail himself; he turned up his nose to everyone and did not pay any attention to those who could give him sound advice. Furthermore, he made decisions by himself and later regretted them, which often made communication with him very difficult. However, Mr. Steede added that one could talk to Mr. Delcassé with absolute sincerity, since, because of his intelligence, he could grasp the ideas of his interlocutor at once.

Mr. Steede went on to say that recently he was forced to go to Paris for an important matter and that he had had the good fortune of convincing Mr. Delcassé after talking to him with absolute openness.

I told him that I had found Mr. Delcassé very positively disposed toward the Armenians and explained how he had asked me for a memorandum, which he had later read. I told him that he had made a good impression on me, considering his favorable attitude toward the Armenian Question.

Mr. Steede welcomed my arguments regarding Cilicia and the Baghdad railway. He said he was perfectly convinced that the problem of the Baghdad line would be solved favorably after the war, and that the German influence would cease to exist. He stressed that the latter was the real reason for starting the war not Serbia, which was more like a pretext. He added that he had made statements in that respect, in a paper entitled "England and the War" in May 1915, and gave me a copy.

At this moment, Mr. Leo J. Max, who is the editor of the *National Review* and a famous newspaperman, came in. Mr. Max is actively interested in these problems, particularly the Baghdad rail line.

Mr. Steede presented him my arguments and asked me to explain them further, which I did. When I was finished, both were very impressed. I asked Mr. Steede his opinion in general. He said he found it very reasonable and agreed that there was no reason whatsoever to preserve the Ottoman Empire and that an autonomous Armenia was the appropriate solution.

I also mentioned the present general tendency of France to try to satisfy Russia and not to go against its standpoint. Mr. Steede pointed out that the

same attitude prevailed in England, too, as Russia's role in this war was gratefully appreciated.

Mr. Max particularly stressed this general tendency, saying that the position assumed by Russia in September will never be forgotten; that is, its offensive without being prepared for it, for the purpose of relieving the onslaught on the Anglo-French forces on the western front. "We must know the exact nature of the events," said Mr. Max, "and we know; we admit that Russia assumed a chivalrous attitude then and kept on bearing the brunt of the war."

105

Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar

[Telegram]

? FA

Holy Etchmiadzin, July 18, 1915

His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha

Hotel Claridge, London

A report dated June 11 from Bulgaria (a copy of which is addressed to you) informs us of the Turkish government's plan to exterminate the Armenian nation by deporting them from Armenia and Cilicia to Konia and Mesopotamia. I advise Your Excellency to protest to the Allies and the neutral states, on our behalf, to prevent [the implementation of] this infernal plan. I shall give more details in a letter.

106

Mr. Veselitsky to Boghos Nubar
1417 FA

London, July 18, 1915

Dear Pasha:

Please, allow me to make a suggestion; tomorrow, if you could find a little time between four and six o'clock, it would be advisable that you call on both Lady Emmott, 30 Ennesmore Gardens, and Lady Primrose, 44 Ennesmore Gardens. Their residences almost face each other and they are considered to be political salons. They are usually home on Sundays.

Au revoir until Monday; I shall see you at one-thirty at your home.

107**Boghos Nubar to Count Benckendorff
1418–1419 FA**

London, July 19, 1915

Informal

Your Excellency
Count Benckendorff
Russian ambassador in London

Mr. Ambassador:

As you had requested, I have the pleasure of sending you, informally, the copy of the memorandum on the Armenian Question, which I submitted to the Foreign Office.

Your Excellency will notice that the introduction and the historical, as well as the statistical parts of the memorandum—apart from the elaboration that I thought would be helpful to add—are similar to the one I submitted to Quai d’Orsay, a copy of which I have handed to His Excellency Mr. Izvolski. It is in the last part that I elaborated on the consequences of the proposed solution, from the British point of view, according to the Petrograd plan as formulated in Dr. Zavriev’s letter and given to you last May.

Contrary to my experience in France, I was not faced with any ambition regarding Cilicia to the north of Alexandretta. As a result of this situation, in order to secure support for our plan, I made an effort to show that through annexation of Cilicia [to Armenia], it is essential to allow Armenia a free passage to the Mediterranean. Such a solution is in the interest of England, guaranteeing a free corridor to India, the shortest way, via the Baghdad rail line.

108

Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar

? AA

Holy Etchmiadzin, July 19, 1915

His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha

I received Your Excellency's letter of June 17. I have also received the 15,000 rubles destined for the destitute Armenian refugees of Van and Bitlis and the 10,000 rubles from the funds raised by you for the benefit of Armenian volunteers. I thank you and bless you for your efforts.

To this day, we have transferred to the destitute and sick people of Vaspourakan [Van] around 75,000 rubles through the Executive Committee of Holy Etchmiadzin's Brotherly Aid. Upon the liberation of Bitlis, we are set to allocate 10,000, while (up till now) we have transferred 30,000 rubles to Manazkert.

We have delivered your 10,000 rubles, meant for the volunteers, to the [National] Bureau of Tiflis.

In your letter you mention that Dr. Zavrian [Zavriev] has submitted to you the plan which has "met my approval." I bring to your attention that I have not delivered to him any plan, nor have I approved any plan to date. To clarify this misunderstanding, I have demanded the National Bureau of Tiflis to give explanations. As soon as I receive their report, I shall let you know about the future steps to be taken. I ask Your Excellency that from now on, without prior receipt of our encyclical or the announcements of the pontifical chancery, not to lend my credibility to any declaration made by anyone on our behalf.

I had informed Your Excellency by a telegram dated April 10, and an encyclical number 761 of April 28, that we should advocate the need of autonomy for Turkish Armenia (including the six provinces and Cilicia), to lodge protests before the neutral states against the horrible persecutions perpetrated by the frenzied Turkish government against the peaceful and unarmed Armenian population. At the same time, it is imperative to solicit and secure the approval of influential French and English political figures and representatives of the press in favor of Turkish Armenia's autonomy (together with Cilicia). As to the nature of the autonomy, the question of the protectorate and other details, these can be dealt with in the future, once the terrible war comes to an end, which, unfortunately, still seems to be remote. As you rightly mention in your letter, at the present we have no alternative but to wait for the events to unfold; at an opportune moment, following the final victory of the Allies, negotiations will start to determine the fate of Asiatic Turkey. Our goal today is to create a favorable atmosphere for the (eventual) autonomy of Turkish Armenia.

There is another important issue that I have mentioned in my encyclical, as well as in my telegram of [July] 5/18 in order to lay protests before the neutral states (especially the United States and Bulgaria, whose ambassadors are extending to a certain degree their protection to Armenians), against the barbaric Turkish government as a result of their horrible savage acts and the hellish plan, which they are pursuing, nowadays, in Armenia and Cilicia. Men are being slaughtered indiscriminately, while women and children are sent to faraway lands, many of them succumbing during the death marches.

Undoubtedly, you have received a letter from Bulgaria in this respect. The situation for the Armenians is horrifying beyond any description. The Turkish government has simply decided to annihilate the Armenian nation and thus bring an end to the Armenian Question. It is necessary to inform the Triple Entente, as well as the neutral states and the influential European newspapers, periodically, and to submit protests. Unfortunately, we have no other means, for the time being, to exercise any influence on the maddened Turkish government.

According to your wish, which I find justified, I shall send pontifical encyclicals to our plenipotentiary primates of various communities; I will instruct them not to appeal to political figures regarding the Armenian Question, without your knowledge, in order to avoid any contradiction that might exist in their statements and undermine the successful resolution of our case.

109

Very Rev. Vramshabouh Kibarian to Boghos Nubar
1420–1422 AA

Paris, July 19, 1915

Your Excellency:

A few days ago I received a letter from Philippopolis (Bulgaria), written by a most respectable and knowledgeable individual in community affairs. I would like to bring the following excerpts to Your Excellency's attention.

"Reverend Father, it has been a month that I am in Bulgaria. On May 1, the night of the arrests, I was sent to prison with Ketchian, the director of the Armenian newspaper *Puzantion*, and Kelegian, the editor of the Turkish newspaper *Sabah* and 300 other Armenians, without interrogation or any charges.¹ I was set free, as a result of the threat of the Persian ambassador that he would leave Constantinople [if his demand was not met]. Since I was disgusted by the atmosphere of the capital city, I went to Bulgaria to rest.

"Do not judge the situation in Constantinople by the newspaper reports, nor by their silence. Life is truly unbearable.

"The high command is in the hands of the Germans, who do as they please or let their agents do. The sultan and the ministers have only nominal power.²

"Germans are irritated with the Armenians, and most probably, they have prepared the list of people to be arrested without any valid reason.

"On the night of May 1, these 300 Armenians were arrested and the party members were exiled to Ayash or Zonguldak. Others were sent to Ankara, from where Rev. Komitas, Ketchian, Dr. Torkomian, Dr. Allahverdi, Dr. Nargiledjian, and a few others, eight or nine in all, returned to Constantinople. Those who are there are in grave danger. As soon as the opportunity presents itself, the Turks will execute those unfortunate ones, by hanging or provoking the bashibozouks [irregulars] against them, or by setting them on fire or what have you. Among them are well-known Armenians—Rev. Balakian, Rev. Garabed, Kaspar Cheraz, Shahrigian, Zartarian, Siamanto, and others.

¹ The arrests that the source is referring to actually happened on April 24, 1915.

² There are numerous sources to prove Germany's control over Turkey during World War I. The following quotation illustrates it brilliantly: "Enver was an admirer of Germany. He had brought German officers to train his troops and had finally placed these under command of a German general, Von Sanders. This general and Wangenheim, the German ambassador in Constantinople, were the youthful leader's chief advisers. Through Enver in war and Talaat in diplomacy, the Germans held control of Turkey." Charles F. Horne (ed.), *Source Records of the Great War*, vol. II (National Alumni, 1923), 93.

“Please do your utmost by resorting to all official means, to let all the people and ministers of France and England know that if the Russians withdraw from the region of Van, its outcome will be the extermination of the whole Armenian race. It is true that similar events have happened in the past, but today it is a different situation. Danger looms. The Turks and Germans don’t want the Armenians, and thus, if ever the Russians retreat, they will fall on the Armenians and massacre them to be rid of the Armenian Question once and for all. It is imperative that the four nations become aware of this reality and do not allow the commander of the army in Van to withdraw before the savage Turks.

“June 29, 1915.”

Your Excellency, I transmit the above information to you for your consideration.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my respectful greetings as well as the expression of my most devoted feelings.

110

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Charles Woods

[Excerpt]

1423–1424 FA

London, July 20, 1915

(The pasha had met Mr. Woods at Veselitsky's tea party. Mr. Woods had previously dealt with the Armenians in his work entitled, The Danger Zone of Europe. In this book he had devoted three chapters to the massacres of Adana and reproached the Turks severely. The interesting part of this meeting is that Mr. Woods has insisted that the pasha meet Lord Robert Cecil, who was at the time the parliamentary advisor to the Foreign Office and had not yet had any dealings with Armenians; later on, however, he would play an important role in the events related to the Armenian Question, in England, especially on the occasion of the incidents at Baku,¹ or in Geneva, before the League of Nations.²)

Mr. Woods very much insisted that I see Lord Lansdowne and Lord Robert Cecil, the brother of our financial advisor (in Egypt) and secretary of the Parliament in the Foreign Office.

I told him that I had asked for a meeting and hoped to see Lord Lansdowne soon. As for Lord Cecil, I said, who is in the Foreign Office, I took into consideration Sir Arthur Nicolson's remark that it would have been unnecessary for me to see his colleagues or the minister and, therefore, I was afraid I would have offended him had I tried to meet any one of his colleagues.

Mr. Woods understood my predicament. However, after praising Lord Cecil, he insisted that it would be a pity not to see him, and taking advantage of the opportunity, not to present him the Armenian case. He put so much emphasis on this that he said he would write to one of his friends in the

¹ The annotator most probably refers to the massacre of thousands of Armenians after the fall of Baku on September 15, 1918, at the hands of Turkish forces. Armenian survivors returned to their homes after the Ottoman withdrawal and British occupation of Baku in November 18, 1918. Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia 1919–1920*, vol. II (University of Los Angeles Press, Berkeley, 1982), 184–185. Later, when the British government was discussing withdrawal from the region, Sir Robert Cecil was among those who insisted that Britain had a moral obligation to protect the Armenians. *Ibid.*, 120. The British evacuation began on August 15, 1919.

² The League of Nations was the first major organization of states dedicated to the preservation of peace and international cooperation. Formally established on January 10, 1920, the league dissolved on April 18, 1946, and was replaced by the United Nations.

Parliament and see if he could arrange a meeting indirectly, without involving me.

As a newspaper reporter and editor of the *Evening News*, Mr. Woods is part of *The Times*' Lord Nordcliffe editorial group and can be very useful to us.

111**Minutes of the Meeting of the British Armenia Committee in
the British Parliament**

[Recorded by Boghos Nubar Pasha]
1425–1433 FA

London, July 20, 1915

Were present:

Mr. Aneurin Williams

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

Mr. Noel Buxton

Bryce (brother of Lord Bryce)

Mosditchian

We discussed, in general, the war and the possible fall of Warsaw,¹ and the exchange rate of the ruble, which is 160 at the present. According to Mr. Bryce, this is a reflection of a demoralized public opinion in Russia. Mr. Buxton even expressed his fears that, following the latest defeats, Russia might think of a separate peace treaty.² I found these gentlemen mostly pessimistic; they were not even sure whether it would be possible to cross the Dardanelles.

Regarding the Armenian Question, they asked me if I heard about the latest developments in Armenia. Mr. Mosditchian informed them about the news that had reached us from Constantinople and Egypt and the latest information that had come through the Italian ambassador, who had just returned from a trip to Cilicia. He had mentioned the atrocities, disentitlements, seizure of personal belongings and their appropriation by the immigrants from Macedonia, and the forced deportations of Armenians to distant provinces; he had also cited the separation of women from their husbands and children, mass killings of those who had succumbed to exhaustion and hunger, etc., etc. He had talked about the notorious behavior of German officers, who, disguised in English uniforms, had won the confidence of Armenians and later betrayed them to the Turks. He had mentioned the

¹ On August 4, 1915, Russian troops lost Warsaw to the German army under general Von Hindenburg, commander-in-chief in the East.

² On September 4, 1914, Sir Edward Grey, Paul Cambon, and Count Benckendorff, on behalf of their respective governments—Britain, France, and Russia—signed a declaration in London which stated: "The British, French and Russian Governments mutually engage not to conclude peace separately during the present war. The three Governments agree that when terms of peace come to be discussed, no one of the Allies will demand terms of peace without the previous agreement of each of the other Allies." Edmund Von Mach, *Official Diplomatic Documents Relating to the Outbreak of the European War* (New York, 1916), 521.

disarming of the Armenians of Zeitun through treachery, and finally the persecution of Armenians living in the cities, despite the promise of the Turkish authorities that they would be left alone.

This whole account shows that it is no longer possible to trust the Turks, and no solution leaving the Armenians under Turkish rule would be acceptable.

Following this, I made a comprehensive presentation of our plan, starting with the reforms negotiations, during which the British Armenia Committee had strongly backed us. I explained why we were, at that time, demanding reforms for the six provinces only; Germany, because of the Baghdad railway, had taken control of Cilicia. However, as this obstacle, after the war, would no longer exist, we saw no reason to leave Cilicia, the cradle of our last kingdom, out of a [united] Armenia.

I mentioned casually the role played by the Armenians in this war, and pointed out that the forty percent of the soldiers in the Russian army in the Caucasus were Armenians, apart from 10,000 volunteers, who were under the command of General Andranik. I also mentioned my proposal to the British government and General Maxwell to provide Armenian volunteers, in case an expeditionary force to Alexandretta would be organized. I told him how this proposal was first accepted, and I had voiced my concern that after landing the troops, the Armenians should not be left at the mercy of the vengeful Turks. Unfortunately, a decision was given regarding the Dardanelles campaign and hence the Cilicia plan was abandoned, and consequently, as elaborated by Mosditchian, the Armenians in Cilicia were persecuted.

Since I was already informed that Mr. Buxton was an ardent russophile, I pointed out the advantages the Russian would gain by the union of Cilicia to Armenia and stressed that this was the reason why we thought Russia would agree to the question of a collective protectorate by the Allies.

Mr. Buxton wanted to know what made us believe that Russia would consent to this.

I told him there were no engagements by Russia, nor were we given assurances in that respect. But based on the news reaching us from Russia, I said we had good reasons to believe that considering the international interests of Cilicia, Russia would, indeed, agree to this. Moreover, I added, when the peace negotiations would start, we could present our proposal and act according to the position that Russia would assume.

I elaborated more on the advantages of our plan both to the Allies and to us. I indicated that I had mentioned those advantages in my memoranda, and I did not intend to repeat them here. These advantages would come about through the creation of a buffer state that would become a factor in maintaining peace permanently in all of Asia Minor. I added that there should be no obstacle for giving satisfaction to the Kurds as well; if the need arose, arrangements should be made for a Kurdish homeland, on a Kurdish

populated territory, to the south of Armenia. Even certain regions of Van and Bitlis, mainly populated by Kurds, could be given to them. The nomadic Kurds of Armenia would not hesitate to settle there among their compatriots.

I stressed in detail the internal organization of Armenia, which would likely be an effective administration rather than a government; it would require no army, since Armenia, as a protectorate, would not show expansionist tendencies, nor would it have a need for self-defense. The administration would be headed by a European.

Mr. Buxton asked if we would not have a parliament.

Mr. Bryce, on his turn, wondered which authority would decide the taxes, if parliament did not exist.

I said that we did not wish to have a parliament, just a council next to the head administrator, with nominated members. This council would have the authority to decree the budget and prescribe the taxes. As protectors, the role of the Allies would be to formulate the future Basic Law of Armenia and nominate the head, whose responsibility would be to carry out the provisions of the law and oversee their correct application.

Mr. O'Connor remarked that this would be [more like] a constitution. I agreed with him.

I further explained the importance of our plan of [establishing] a neutral and protected Armenia, with respect to the vast economic and industrial opportunities opened up before the Allies, and the Baghdad railway. Our friends were interested in both of my arguments, especially in the possibility of placing the Baghdad railway terminal in a neutral state, and thus keeping the terminal permanently open before the Allies.

Mr. Buxton wanted to know if I had prepared a memorandum including these viewpoints. When I answered that I had elaborated them in a memorandum submitted to Sir Arthur Nicolson, he leaned over Mr. Williams and whispered a few words in his ear, whereby Mr. Williams said, "yes, indeed." I inferred that he had asked Mr. Williams if he could mediate to the Foreign Office so that my memorandum would be handed over to the British Armenia Committee, and Mr. Williams had answered affirmatively.

I concluded my presentation by saying that if our plan was not realized, the Armenians would refuse to remain under Turkish rule. And if Turkey was to be preserved, it would be more of a German [state]. Its existence would then be like a blazing furnace in Asia, similar to the one that existed in the Balkans. All of them manifested disagreement, saying that it would never happen.

Before taking leave, I insisted that it was necessary to engage in active propaganda, presently only through the press and speeches, in support of our cause. Furthermore, we should not raise the question of the Armenian case in the Parliament, as long as the end of the war is not in sight. In fact, I am convinced that any reference to our cause in the Parliament would leave the government in a difficult situation; consequently, the government would also be

negatively disposed toward our cause, as long as it had no assurance about the favorable outcome of the war.

All our friends in the British Armenia Committee, as well as Mr. Mosditchian, agreed with me on that point. Therefore, we decided to plan our future moves accordingly and not to submit any official request—except the ones formulated by me, which constitute a preliminary step—and not to raise any further questions regarding the Armenian case in the Parliament.

In response to Lord Bryce's proposal, it was decided that the meeting planned by Tchobanian be postponed to next September.

112

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Mutafoff
1435–1437 FA

London, July 20, 1915

Dear Mr. Mutafoff:

I received in due time your letter of July 5, as well as the copies of the reports, referring to the persecution perpetrated against our brethren in Cilicia, which you have submitted to General Maxwell.

As I had informed you, despite my numerous petitions, I could not achieve tangible results to this day, neither in France nor in England. I am sure you understand why.

Certainly, there is much sympathy for our nation in the official circles of the Allies. Unfortunately, they have no means at their disposal to prevent the massacre and persecution.

I do my best to propagate the Cilician events. I even mentioned them specifically in a memorandum on the Armenian case that I have handed to the Foreign Office.

My son Arakel wrote to me, saying that through his channels you have requested General Maxwell to allow you to dispatch to Cilicia, via Cyprus, three trustworthy individuals, in order to supply you with reliable information concerning the present situation. Mr. Damadian, on his turn, in a letter sent to Meguerditchian, had asked me to approve payment of the travel expenses, which he estimated to be around 100 pounds.

I thought that for an undertaking of this magnitude, the sum requested would be insufficient. Therefore, I cabled to Mr. Diradour, telling him to provide you a sum of 200 pounds. Meguerditchian informed Mr. Damadian by cable about this arrangement.

I get the impression from Arakel's last letter and your report submitted to General Maxwell that you have renounced the plan; because of the information you have received from a reliable source about Cilicia's present situation, you do not consider it necessary to send people there anymore.

In my case, from the national fund-raising account, I am making a credit of 500 pounds available to you. I shall write to Mr. Diradour to put that sum at your disposal so that you can take care of emergency situations.

113

Announcement by the Armenian National Defense Committee Regarding Military Action in Cilicia¹ ? FA

Presented to the Commander-in-Chief of
the British military forces in Egypt
Sir J. Maxwell

Cairo, July 20, 1915*

Confirming our previous announcement regarding a military expedition in Cilicia, we have the honor to present to the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in Egypt our national viewpoint on it.

Considering that our request at this stage to land an expeditionary force on the shores of Cilicia does not seem to meet approval because of the Dardanelles campaign;

Also considering that the Armenians in the Diaspora cannot remain indifferent and inactive anymore vis-à-vis the horrible situation of their compatriots residing in that country;

Our committee has come to reformulate its plan, which we had the honor of submitting to your approval.

Every day more and more alarming news about the massacres and persecutions of the Armenians is reaching us; the mass deportations will cause the annihilation of the Armenian population of the region if effective protection is not extended to them soon.

In this respect a movement for organizing volunteer units has already started in America, Bulgaria, Romania, and other Armenian communities. Our committee decided to lead this movement, but before implementing the plan of national defense, we believe that it is our duty to secure the permission of His Majesty's government. We do not doubt in any way that Your Excellency will assent to help us, duly appraising this patriotic undertaking of a small nation that, despite being crushed by the Turks, still keeps its faith in liberty and has decided to fulfill its duty by coming to the aid of its stricken brothers, according to its modest means.

We urgently implore the support of the British government, too, to

¹ Although Andonian's note suggests that the date 20 July is wrong, it is not. He might have thought that this appeal was the one mentioned in document 84 which was dated July 3, 1915, since there was no copy of it in the archives. A published French version of the appeal confirms 30 July as the date. Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes puissances l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives Françaises 1914–1918* (Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1983), 105–106.

* The date appears erroneously as 20 July in the records of the delegation.

crown this undertaking with success. In our opinion, the military authorities can bring that support by allowing certain facilities to our volunteers:

They can let them assemble in Cyprus, which can be used as the headquarters of the military action in Cilicia;

They can provide them means of transport to the points of landing;

And finally they can put at their disposal munitions and a small Allied detachment to ensure the success of this undertaking. Thus, with the support of the Christian inhabitants of Cilicia, who are desperately engaged in guerilla warfare, Armenians will be able to protect themselves against Turkish atrocities and even occupy military positions of strategic importance.

Needless to say this whole movement will be under the leadership and control of British authorities.

In this extremely critical situation, which brings great suffering to our nation, we are convinced that His Majesty's British government, faithful to its liberal traditions, will not abandon this unfortunate, helpless people into the hands of the German-Turkish executioners. The aid that we beseech urgently, not only will keep the military plans of the British government unchanged, but it will also have the advantage of derailing the Turkish government's concentrated action and cutting the latter's direct communication lines.

Allow us to mention at this stage the example of Van. The heroism of a few thousand insurgents and volunteers over there was sufficient to ensure the occupation of the province by the Russians, as well as the protection of the Armenian population of the surrounding areas which were threatened by the Kurds.

114**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Count Benckendorff
1439–1442 FA**

London, July 21, 1915

He asked me about my impressions regarding the general attitude in England toward us. I replied that thanks to Mr. Veselitsky, I was able to meet many personalities and found them, in general, favorably disposed toward our plan, and that for the English, such a plan was considered reasonable and might lead to solutions. I added that I noticed they refrained from supporting solutions that would fail to meet Russia's approval and that they expressed ardent gratitude toward Russia for the role it was playing in the war. I mentioned particularly what Mr. Leo Max had told me.

The ambassador replied that it was indeed the general trend in England, and that the English were grateful to Russia and its army for the role they played; but unfortunately, the news from the battlefield was not encouraging. Although he was not well informed of what had happened, he thought that undoubtedly the lack of ammunition was the cause. The ambassador also thought that not only were they not prepared for war, unlike Germany, but their supply of ammunition would hardly last six months—or a year at the most. When I expressed hope that by retreating the Russian army would eventually get an abundant supply of ammunition, he thought most probably that was what they were going to do, but then no one knew what would happen in the meantime.

Regarding the Armenian case, he asked me what I had done so far. I told him that I had submitted my memorandum to Sir Arthur Nicolson and, following his request, I had brought him a copy. I also read the covering letter. While reading it, when I came to the part concerning Cilicia, he said that the whole problem hinged on that; in other words, an Armenia limited to the six provinces, without Cilicia, would be totally dependent on Russia. However, if Cilicia was annexed to it, with an opening on the Mediterranean, the other nations, too, would have their say. He added further that he had not received any new directive from Petrograd regarding our case, even though following my first visit, he had sent them a telegram, containing the summary of our meeting. Now he was going to send my memorandum to Petrograd together with the covering letter.

When I told him that I had succeeded in arranging a meeting with Lord Lansdowne the following day and that I was thinking of leaving the day after the meeting as I did not have anything else to do but wait for the events to develop, he said that he would be interested to know my impressions of my meeting with Lord Lansdowne.

Therefore, we decided that I should see him the day after my meeting and give him my impressions.

115**Boghos Nubar to Bishop Ghevont Tourian
1443–1446 AA**

London, July 21, 1915

His Eminence Bishop Ghevont Tourian
Primate of Armenians of Bulgaria
Philippopolis

Your Eminence:

I read with emotion and great interest the news that Your Eminence had conveyed to me in his letter of June 11/24.

A few days before leaving for Europe, H. H. the Catholicos, with an extensive telegram, informed me about the persecutions, bloody skirmishes, and massacres that have taken place in Armenia and Cilicia. He also informed me that he had appealed to the king of Italy and the president of the United States for their intervention.

Since there are no other means, I followed suit. Unfortunately, the authorities of the above-mentioned states have not succeeded in persuading the Sublime Porte to change its policy toward the Armenians. As Your Eminence had mentioned in the report, this policy aims at the annihilation of the Armenian nation. Thus, in spite of these appeals, the persecutions have continued.

Perhaps, Your Eminence is aware that during the first phase of the persecutions, France, England, and Russia collectively declared to the Sublime Porte that they would hold the functionaries of the Ottoman government personally responsible for all harmful acts inflicted upon the Armenians. But since this threat was not backed vigorously, it had no beneficial effect.

A few days before your report reached me, I received a disturbing cable from Alexandria, about Zeitun, Deort-Yol, and Hassan-Beyli. This news confirms your sad report.

Even though I was sure that under the present conditions my appeals would bring no result, as soon as I received your report and the telegram from Alexandria, I rushed to Sir Arthur Nicolson, advisor to the British Foreign Office, and to the French and Russian ambassadors in London and explained the desperate situation of our compatriots.

All three expressed their sincere sympathy. But they admitted that in the given circumstances the Allies have no means to help the Armenians effectively.

Nevertheless, in my report that I submitted to the British Foreign Office, I mentioned, as supporting evidence, all the persecutions and massacres perpetrated on our compatriots, mentioning at the same time that the aim of the Turkish government is the extermination of the Armenian nation.

Needless to say, our salvation depends upon the final victory of the Allied nations. I wish that [this victory comes soon] so that our unfortunate nation is finally delivered.

I wrote a similar letter to H. H. the Catholicos.

I shall be grateful if you could kindly send me periodically information about Armenia from the same reliable source.

P. S. Just now a cable from H. H. the Catholicos informs me, in a summary, about the report of Your Eminence, and asks me to protest to the Allied nations against the extermination of Turkish Armenians.¹ I replied to His Holiness, saying that my appeals, unfortunately, under the present conditions, had not secured practical results. I mentioned that if the protest had to have an official nature, then His Holiness should personally submit it.²

¹ See document 105.

² No copy of said reply was found.

116**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Count Benckendorff
1445¹ -1450 FA**

London, July 22, 1915

He asked me if I was satisfied with my meeting with Lord Lansdowne. I told him that I was quite satisfied and had been received very well and it seemed to me that Lord Lansdowne was interested in our case but his knowledge concerning the question was rather incomplete. That's why I had to explain from the beginning—from the reforms project and the Russian plea in 1913. I explained how those negotiations had gone through different stages: the initial opposition of Germany, followed by a change in its policy and its willingness to help the accomplishment of the plan, while protecting Turkey. I told him that it had happened after my visit to Berlin, after my remark to Mr. Zimmermann that it was essential for Germany to save the Armenians and win them over on its side, because Armenians would be helpful to them for their projects regarding the Baghdad Bahn and Cilicia. I also elaborated on the appointment of the inspectors general and their dismissal right after the declaration of war between Germany and the Triple Entente. The agreement of February 8, 1914, by virtue of which the Sublime Porte had undertaken to execute the reforms, was thus torn to pieces without ever being put into effect, prior to Turkey's entry into the war. It was thus obvious that we could not rely on Turkey anymore to carry out its obligations and only an autonomy under the protection of the Allies would be acceptable.

When I informed the ambassador that I had told Lord Lansdowne that most probably Russia would not consent to the idea of collective protection for the six provinces only, if Cilicia was not annexed to Armenia, Count Benckendorff agreed with my reasoning. Thus, I believe, he accepted the idea of collective patronage. It is the first time that a Russian ambassador consented to this notion, apart from the statement in Zavriev's report, about which we have received no official acknowledgment so far. Each time I mentioned it to Mr. Izvolski, he told me that there had been some academic discussions in Petrograd but they could not be taken as decisions.

I mentioned to the ambassador that I was giving only a brief review of my report to Lord Lansdowne and that my explanations in there were complete, and I had elaborated on the arguments in my memorandum which he was going to receive through Sir Arthur Nicolson. I told him that Lord Lansdowne had found my conclusions very logical and based on serious arguments.

The ambassador seemed satisfied with my visit and said that my visit to London had been very fruitful. Then he told me that he had seen Sir Arthur

¹ An overlapping number.

Nicolson; the latter had informed him that he had read my memorandum and had agreed that "there was substance in it." Also, Sir Edward Grey told the ambassador that he was aware of my presence in London and that Sir Arthur Nicolson had advised him of my visit to the Foreign Office. He had not yet had a chance to read my memorandum since his return, but he would undoubtedly do it soon.

Count Benckendorff suggested that it would be a good idea to meet Sir Edward Grey. I replied that we had exchanged visiting cards, and I had asked Sir Arthur Nicolson's opinion about that, but the latter had considered such a meeting redundant, since he had already met with Sir Edward Grey and submitted my memorandum.

The ambassador agreed that under the present circumstances there was no need to meet Sir Edward Grey. He added that the first chance he would have with him, he was going to explain the reason why I had not requested to see him.

With respect to the plan concerning our case, Count Benckendorff said that after my first visit to the embassy, he had cabled Petrograd about it. Since then he had received a telegram from the minister, who had stressed the question of Turkish sovereignty which I had disregarded. The telegram also mentioned some academic negotiations, which had taken place between the government and the Catholicos, and the question of Turkish sovereignty was discussed, since it would not be acceptable to have Russia assume the sovereignty of a state that should be put under a collective protectorate.

I add this as a further affirmation that Russia accepts the principle of a collective protectorate.

I told the ambassador that indeed it was one of the points mentioned in Zavriev's report, but I, as an Armenian, did not want to request it, because I was convinced that the sovereignty in question would become a source of problems, no matter how normal it would be. Nevertheless, if the peace conference would impose it upon the Armenians, then the latter would be forced to accept it. However, I neither requested it nor suggested it. Apart from that, if my demands concerning that particular issue were not in agreement with Petrograd plan, it would indicate that we were not operating according to Russia's policy and interests but that I was supporting the Armenian case, conforming to their interests.

The ambassador said that he totally understood my viewpoint and accepted it.

He restated that he was very happy with the results. As I was leaving, we agreed that if the turn of events would make my presence indispensable in London, he would contact me.

117

Sir Arthur Nicolson to Boghos Nubar
1451 FA

FOREIGN OFFICE

London, July 22, 1915

Boghos Nubar Pasha
Claridge Hotel
Brooke Street

Sir:

I consider it a duty to express my thanks to you for your letter of July 15, in which you had complied to send me a memorandum concerning the Armenian Question. I assure you that I read in it, quite attentively, the present desires of your compatriots residing in Turkey.

118

Dr. Zavriev to Boghos Nubar

[Coded telegram]

1452–1453 FA

From Zurich, July 22, 1915

[Original]

Asribekov Papadjanoff cable: Keep on acting same way discussed. Talked to Director who agrees to principle. Representative Paris has already confirmation. Let us await news. Let us continue to work here against our friends' intrigues. ZAVRIEV*

[Interpreted]

“Asribekov and Papadjanoff cable: continue to act in the same direction. We talked to the director [Minister Sazonov] who consents to the principle [of making the declaration concerning Cilicia and the idea of collective protectorate]. Paris representative [Ambassador Izvolski] has received confirmation. Awaiting your news and continuing to work here against the intrigues of our friends—ZAVRIEV.”

* On this date the pasha is in London. Zavriev has received the cable in Zurich and transmitted it to the pasha. Although it is a coded telegram, it is obviously the reply from Zavriev on 8 June, 1915 in Petrograd, to the cable sent to Mr. Asribekov.

119**Announcement**

by the Armenian National Defense Committee to the
Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in Egypt,
Sir J. Maxwell
? FA

Cairo, July 24, 1915

As a follow-up to our July 20th announcement and in response to Sir John Maxwell's request, the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's military forces in Egypt, we have the honor of summing up the outline of the Armenian National Defense Committee's plan.

This plan consists of a minor military action, which could prove to be very successful, hoping in the meantime that the request of our president, H. E. Boghos Nubar Pasha for landing forces on the shores of Cilicia, be considered within an appropriate time. Furthermore, allow us to state that the military campaign in question would require a force of 10,000 to 12,000 fighters to occupy Alexandretta, Mersin, and Adana (together with the defiles) and ensure the collaboration of 10,000 Armenian volunteers and the total Armenian population of the region. Because under those probable circumstances, it would be possible to rely on the 25,000 Armenian insurgents in Cilicia and on the 15,000 more to come from nearby provinces. This formidable force of close to 50,000 would even be able to advance well beyond the borders of Cilicia and thus become an asset for the Allies. It would be just the reiteration of an oft repeated truth, when we state that in Turkey only the Armenians of Armenia and Cilicia are the inhabitants with obvious insurrectional tendencies against Turkish rule.

This plan is our national goal and it will remain so. We, together with our compatriots, place ourselves at the disposal of His Majesty's military authorities. Our request, which has been modified because of the obvious considerations forbidding the Allies to launch the campaign at once, takes into account the opportunity at our disposal to come to the aid of our persecuted brethren. Thus, all that is needed is a few preliminary military actions to pave the way for the Allies to land forces in the near future, under more favorable conditions.

These military actions can be summed up as follows:

1. To take advantage of the island of Cyprus by making it the headquarters of the campaign. The Armenian volunteers will be assembled there and the military authorities will issue identity cards to all those individuals recommended by the committee.

2. To allow us to explore secretly the coast of Cilicia to assess the military and civilian situation of the area, to organize the rebellion from there and transport arms and money.

3. To provide officers for the training of Armenian volunteers.

4. The military authorities of Cyprus will agree to facilitate the transfer of volunteer groups to Cilicia.

5. In principle, we shall take care of the needs of our volunteers. His Majesty's government would arrange for officers to accompany the volunteers if it judges it to be appropriate; it would also provide them with the weapons and ammunition and support the campaign with a small military and naval force. The materialization of this backing will depend totally upon the consent of the British government.

6. The military authorities will oversee these operations and can even take charge of them if they wish to do so.

7. The British military activities and the Armenian National Defense Committee will be in constant contact with each other. The authorities will issue the directives and the committee will communicate to them all the information that they can secure from Cilicia.

* * *

If it becomes necessary that the operations be reduced to a minimum level, then we shall be able to provide 5,000 volunteers. Moreover, following initial victories, or in case an Allied expeditionary force is landed, that number will immediately double to 10,000.

With such a force, the following military operations can be achieved:

a. To occupy Sueydia (Musa Dagh) and Kessab (Djebel Akra) and enable them to resist [the enemy]. These two areas, together with the villages on both banks of the river Orontes, have 25,000 Armenian inhabitants.

b. To occupy Deort-Yol, which is on the gulf of Alexandretta, and assemble there the Armenian population of the surroundings, to organize an efficient resistance.

c. If these two operations are successful, we can try to occupy Alexandretta and the pass of Beylan.

d. In any case, we can concentrate our forces in the mountains and from there organize guerrilla warfare all over Cilicia. If conditions are favorable, we can occupy a few important military positions in areas inhabited by Armenians, such as Hadjin, Sis, etc.

e. Over a considerable stretch of land, we can cut the telegraphic wires, destroy railway tracks, blow up bridges, and thus interrupt the enemy's communication lines.

We must get down to work right away to crown this humble project with success, not only as a response to our compatriots' call for help, but because in two months it will start raining in the mountains. The rivers will overflow and the roads will become inaccessible. If our volunteers and rebels succeed in taking possession of some important positions, the Turks will not be able to use their forces against them throughout the winter.

120**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Izvolski***
1454–1458 FA

Paris, July 27, 1915

He wanted to know if I was satisfied with my visit to London. I told him that I was impressed in general and, in fact, I was more satisfied than I had expected to be under the present circumstances. I explained that I met a number of political figures and parliamentarians, as well as representatives of the press, and that everyone had shown genuine sympathy toward our cause and the plan concerning the Armenian Question. I described particularly my meeting with Sir Arthur Nicolson and mentioned that I had, upon his request, submitted to him a memorandum about the Armenian case and our plan. I also elaborated upon my meeting with Lord Lansdowne and the director of foreign politics of *The Times*, Mr. Steede.

The moment I mentioned Mr. Steede, Mr. Izvolski asked me if the director had responded positively. When I told him that he had found our plan and my arguments well-founded, Mr. Izvolski underlined that it was important, considering Mr. Steede's reputation in the English press.

I told him that, most naturally, I had informed Count Benckendorff about my negotiations and given him a copy of the memorandum, together with a letter. The count, who had met Sir Arthur Nicolson and Sir Edward Grey and told them about my mission, had declared before my departure that my London trip had brought satisfactory results.

Mr. Izvolski asked if I had ever mentioned Kurdistan. I told him that I had referred to it in my memorandum, as well as in the memorandum that I had submitted to Quai d'Orsay, but I had refrained from giving details, in order not to give the impression that I was pursuing that matter, too. My purpose was to show that if that issue would be forced upon us, then there would be no opposition against the plan to satisfy the Kurds by creating a Kurdistan to the south of the Armenian provinces. The Kurdish nomads in Armenia would soon go to that [newly created homeland] and deliver us from their presence.

The ambassador nodded his consent.

I asked if he had received any directives from Petrograd after my last visit to him and the declaration I made to him before undertaking my trip to London. He said that he had not received anything. I expressed my surprise, because Count Benckendorff had told me that he had received a telegram about my intentional disregard for our plan concerning the sultan's sovereignty. I explained to him why I had neglected to mention it, about which I had stated my reasons during my meeting with the ambassador in London. I

* The meeting was also attended by Dr. Zavriev.

added that we would accept to submit to Turkey's nominal sovereignty, if we were forced to, in case the Allied nations could not [override that requirement], but as an Armenian I would not request it.

Mr. Izvolski expressed his agreement.

In reply to my question, the ambassador said that he had not yet discussed the Armenian Question with Quai d'Orsay, and he considered it premature. He preferred to wait for an opportune moment. In this respect, he agreed with me and with Dr. Zavriev. He thought it would be best to cut off our negotiations with governments and wait for the situation to unfold itself.

I told him it was my conviction, too, that, at the present, as everyone was preoccupied with the worries caused by war, our appeals might cause further damage to our case. Therefore, I added, I was ready to go to Aix-les-Bains and return as soon as I was called upon. I asked him to let me know whenever he thought I would be needed.

He was in total agreement with me and promised to let me know in due time.

* * *

Dr. Zavriev told him that he intended to go to Petrograd, and upon his request, Mr. Izvolski promised to arrange for him to take all my reports and letters to the Catholicos as part of the embassy's diplomatic correspondence.

Just as I was about to leave, Mr. Izvolski asked if I had any news from Constantinople. I told him everything that had been transmitted to me by the first interpreter of the French Embassy in Constantinople, Mr. Ledoulx, who had remained behind to safeguard the embassy files and had finally left Constantinople on the 2nd of July, three weeks ago. The news was distressful for the Armenians and it revealed that the plan of extermination was carried out with precise savagery. The declaration by the Allies that the Turkish ministers would be held responsible [for the crime] had had a negative effect. It had made the ruling Young Turks indignant and amplified the frenzy against the Armenians. The day following that declaration, the members of parliament Zohrab and Vartkes, were arrested and exiled to Asia Minor.

121**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Ledoulx
? FA**

Paris, July 28, 1915

Mr. Ledoulx remained in Constantinople after the declaration of war to maintain the archives [of the French Embassy,] and left Constantinople on July 2, after the Turkish government expelled him.

He briefed me on the grievous and catastrophic condition of the Armenians. Gallops in front of the Ministry of War—the Turks hung thirty people at once—and deportations toward the depth of Asia with increasing brutality. Mr. Ledoulx told me that the warning issued by the powers to the Sublime Porte, stating that the ministers would be held responsible, had a very negative impact; it simply added fuel to the fire, and instead of extinguishing it, caused the intensification of persecutions. Immediately, the day after the warning, two Armenian parliamentarians, Zohrab and Vartkes, were arrested and exiled to Asia. The Armenian population is horrified. The Young Turk government is stronger than ever; it maintains its existence through a reign of terror and the army which is under its control. German officers administer everything, and the [Turkish] government, just like the Germans, is convinced that the Allies will never succeed in capturing the Dardanelles.

A few Armenians that Mr. Ledoulx has seen in the American Embassy, under whose protection he has been since the declaration of war, asked him to meet with me in Paris so that I could do everything possible to put an end to the persecutions and massacres perpetrated by the Turkish government.

I told him that I have already done everything possible without achieving any result and that, under present circumstances, it could not have been different, since the Allies were at war against Turkey. I asked him whether he and my compatriots who have made the above suggestion think that there is anything else that I can do to obtain even the shadow of a result.

He answered that, in Constantinople, he, together with the Armenian interpreter of the American Embassy, Mr. Shemavonian, had asked the same question and came to the conclusion that there was nothing else to do, and that everything possible—threat, request, intervention of neutral embassies, etc.—has been done with no success whatsoever. [The concerned parties] all were caught by absolute incapability. The only salvation, especially for Cilicia, where the plan of annihilation is being executed most systematically, depends on the success of the army and volunteers of Van. They think that the army and volunteers are about to advance toward Cilicia.

I told him that I myself, and all my friends in Paris with whom I discussed the matter, have reached exactly the same conclusion, and that we have decided to allocate all our means to our volunteers of Van, in order to

increase their number. We hope that the Russian government will support us by supplying guns and ammunition.

Mr. Ledoulx and I agreed that there is nothing to be done at the time and that we should get together after a short time to reconsider the matter.

Speaking of the arrest of Mr. Kelegian and his exile to Konia, Mr. Ledoulx informed me that [Kelegian] had the precaution of handing over his documents to him, right before his arrest. In those documents there were also all the letters that he had received from me during the reforms negotiations [in 1913].

122**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V
705–716 AA**

Paris, July 28, 1915

His Holiness Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos
of All Armenians
Holy Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

As you are informed by my letter of June 16,* I left for London at the beginning of this month. I returned to Paris three days ago.

I had interesting talks in the capital city of England, with Sir Arthur Nicolson, advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lord Bryce, Lord Lansdowne, several members of the Parliament, and other political figures and prominent journalists. Among the latter I would like to mention Mr. Steede, director of the political column of *The Times*, who has a good reputation and plays an influential role in the political life of England.

I am quite pleased to inform Your Holiness that I was well received everywhere. It is my impression that the British government will graciously agree to support our national cause until its accomplishment, when the time will come to decide the fate of the Ottoman Empire, after the victory of the Allies.

May I also add that I submitted a memorandum about the Armenian Question to the Foreign Office. The historical and statistical data included in it, apart from some proper additions, are exactly the same as the ones in Mr. Delcassé's report, except for the last part where I have presented the question of Cilicia from the point of view of British interests. The fact that the English have no ambitions in Cilicia is encouraging.

I submitted confidentially copies of these two memorandums to the Russian ambassadors in Paris and London.

The Honorable Dr. Zavriev will personally present to Your Holiness copies of the above-mentioned memoranda, as well as a brief account of my meetings with the French and English political figures.

Your Holiness will conclude that our initial negotiations have been quite fruitful, and Russia, France, and England show a friendly disposition toward our cause.

I am also planning to visit Italy, in the near future, to create a positive political attitude toward the Armenian cause. I believe I shall be received

* This date must be June 17 [see document 67].

with the same sympathy as I have been by the other Allied states. I shall be waiting for the right opportunity though, since as Your Holiness will observe from my report, everyone thinks that unless events are turned in favor of the Allies, it will not be possible to assume any commitment vis-à-vis any question, including the Armenian Question, fearing that it will not be possible to accomplish it. I am of the same opinion, and I believe that everything depends upon the events and the complete victory of the Allies, which we all wish sincerely.

Under the given circumstances, the initial phase of my mission is over. I shall be watching the development of events and wait for an opportune moment to engage in final negotiations. Today, together with Mr. Zavriev, I went to see Mr. Izvolski; he was also of the same opinion.

I received Your Holiness' below-mentioned July 18th telegram, describing the horrifying situation of our unfortunate compatriots in Armenia Major and Cilicia.

Holy Etchmiadzin, July 18, 1915

His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha,
Hotel Claridge, London

A report dated June 11 from Bulgaria (a copy of which is addressed to you) informs us of the Turkish government's plan to exterminate the Armenian nation by deporting them from Armenia and Cilicia to Konia and Mesopotamia. I advise Your Excellency to protest to the Allies and the neutral states, on our behalf, to prevent [the implementation of] this infernal plan. I shall give more details in a letter.

Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch and
Catholicos of All Armenians

Prior to that telegram, I had received a report from Philippopolis sent by the primate of the Armenians in Bulgaria, Bishop Tourian,[†] informing me about the persecutions sustained by our brethren in Constantinople, Cilicia, and Armenia Major, the death sentences, the individual and mass exiles. It stated clearly that the Turkish government had devised a diabolical plan to exterminate the Armenian element.

Lately, the Italian ambassadors and American missionaries arriving from Cilicia and Syria in Egypt confirmed the reality of these terrible events, as I had heard from Alexandria.

Your Holiness is well aware that as soon as I received your first telegram informing me about the massacres in Armenia and Cilicia, prior to my departure from Cairo, I rushed to see the Italian and American representatives,

[†] Bishop Ghevont.

following your example. After that I left for Paris to meet the French foreign minister, as well as the ambassadors of the Allied nations. Unfortunately, I could not achieve any results. The state officials expressed their sympathy for the disastrous events, but conceded that at the moment, they were unable to offer us any substantial help.

Undoubtedly, if I petitioned again, I would receive similar negative replies.

Nevertheless, after receiving Your Holiness' latest telegram and the reports of Philippopolis and Alexandria, I made urgent requests for help to Sir Arthur Nicolson and the ambassadors of the Allied powers in London. I explained to them the misery of our compatriots and stressed that the Turkish government is pursuing its diabolical plan to exterminate the Armenian population of the six provinces and Cilicia, through massacres and deportations, before the end of the present war.

Unfortunately, just as I had predicted, the representatives of the Allied powers expressed their deep sympathy, but nothing more, by saying that at the present they could not exert forceful pressure upon the Turkish government.

In relation to this matter, the first interpreter of the French Embassy in Constantinople, Mr. Ledoulx, who had stayed behind in Constantinople until July 2 to look after the archives of the embassy, told me that the collective statement made by the Allied powers to the Sublime Porte, charging the Turkish ministers individually with crimes against the Armenians, had not only been abortive, but pushed the ministers to more severe reprisals. Arrests have become frequent, for example, the arrests of Messrs. Zohrab and Vartkes. Moreover, persecutions in Armenia have tremendously intensified, and according to Mr. Ledoulx, that note of collective protest by the Allies has been like fueling the flame.

Although Your Holiness had instructed me to present a formal protest to the world powers, I thought that under the present circumstances, it could not serve us much. Such a note would undoubtedly become more momentous and assume a far-reaching importance if it came personally from Your Holiness. That is why I sent to Your Holiness my following telegram dated July 22 from London.¹

Furthermore, as Your Holiness will notice, in my memorandum to the British foreign minister, that I did mention in the last paragraph the savage acts against the Armenians and stressed the real goal pursued by the Turkish government. I finished my memorandum intentionally on that note, hoping that its impact would be more powerful.

Since the beginning of the war I rightfully feared that the present

¹ Text is missing, but the summary of the telegram is maintained in Boghos Nubar's letter to Bishop Ghevont Tourian (see document 115). It is safe to conclude that the telegram was sent on July 21, 1915.

unfortunate situation would develop, as every time the Turks have entered into war with a Christian nation, having Armenia as their battleground, the Armenians have become the first victims.

But particularly this time, because of the marvelous performance on the battlefield of the Ottoman-Armenians and the supreme devotion of the eastern Armenians toward the czar, who regard him as the protector and liberator of the Christians of the East, the Turks have come to the conclusion that the Armenians are on their way to national liberation; therefore, they must be annihilated.

When at the beginning of the war the Russian armies invaded Armenia, I did not worry about the safety of the Armenians residing in the six provinces. However, I did not feel the same assurance about Cilicia, since I did not think that the Russian advance would be fast enough to save Cilicia on time. Therefore, I believed that a decisive military action in that region was imperative to thwart the Turkish plan of exterminating the Armenian element.

Thus, at the beginning of last November, I applied to the British military and civilian authorities in Egypt and suggested that they land troops and occupy the Cilician seashore and the ports of Mersin and Iskenderun as well as the plains of Adana. I promised to bring, upon their occupation, to the army's disposal a large number of leaders well-acquainted with the country, interpreters and lobbyists, whose mission would be, among others, to lead the Armenian population of the highlands into rebellion. Thus, they would bring their help to the Allies, on the condition that the latter would provide the Armenians with the necessary arms and ammunitions.

The advantage of this plan was twofold. On the one hand, by virtue of the presence of Allied forces, it would guarantee the safety of the native Armenians and neutralize the Turkish activities, and on the other, promote the Armenian rebellion and thus contribute to the accomplishment of our national goals.

The French and Russian authorities, too, were well aware of this plan and had not shown any opposition to it. It was also well received in England, to the extent that the British authorities in Egypt assured me at one time that it would soon be implemented. Unfortunately, some time later, when it was decided to land troops in the Dardanelles, our plan was indefinitely postponed.

Nevertheless, if we wait until the siege of Constantinople and for their landing of troops on the Cilician coast, I am afraid that not one Armenian will be left in Cilicia, and that would become an irreparable catastrophe. Therefore, it is a matter of life and death to us to prevent by all means the massacres and mass deportations of the Armenian population of Cilicia.

Since under the present conditions, the Allies, despite their positive disposition toward us, cannot come to our aid; therefore, we are left with no choice but to rely on our resources.

In this respect, I believe there is one and only one solution: to mobilize the Armenian volunteer troops in Van so that they can advance toward Cilicia, to obtain the permission of the Russian staff of the Caucasian front to increase their number, and ask them to provide the volunteers with the necessary weapons and ammunition.

I sent to Your Holiness from London 14,700 rubles with the request that it be allotted to the most urgent needs.

Today, drawing from the National Fund, through the Volga Gama Commercial Bank, I wired an additional sum of 20,000 rubles, to be used for the needs of the volunteers. I hope that in the near future, I shall be able to send more, and I would like to ask Your Holiness to make these sums available to the volunteer mission.

I have been informed through quite reliable sources that, presently, the Turks have a very small number of troops in Cilicia. Therefore, I believe that the Armenian volunteers, who have proved their worthiness on the Caucasian front, can triumphantly fight these Turkish troops. If our brave men can conquer Zeitun and other strategic positions, they can successfully prevent the massacres and mass deportations.

My argument is supported by the fact that the Turks were never able to vanquish the Armenians of Zeitun by force, except by deceit.

I am sure Your Holiness is well aware that the Turks threatened to massacre the whole Armenian population of Cilicia if the Zeitun Armenians did not surrender. The latter, worried about the security of their brothers, consented to capitulate.

The Armenian volunteers must come to the aid of Cilicia very soon, we want them to do something positive.

With this respect, I decided to send Your Holiness a large portion of funds, from the money-raising campaign of the National Fund, to increase the number of volunteers.

Many others agree with me that this plan is the only way, the last ray of hope to save our compatriots in Cilicia, provided it is implemented at once.

At the beginning of this letter I expressed my satisfaction, as a result of the positive reception of our plan by the English who do not entertain any claims on Cilicia.

On the other hand, in my letter of June 18,[‡] addressed to Your Holiness, I had written about the French ambitions in Cilicia.

I deem it necessary to present my final impressions on this matter soon.

If Your Holiness kindly reads the memoranda that I have submitted and the summary of the accounts of my meetings with political figures, he will most certainly share my conviction that at the end of the war, when the solution to the Armenian Question becomes imminent, we shall be able to rely upon the support of the British and French governments. I believe that

[‡] This must be June 17.

France will agree to leave part of Cilicia to us, enabling us to have access to the Mediterranean through a port.

N. B. I have the privilege to confirm that, as I mentioned above, I cabled funds to Your Holiness from London. The first on July 19, an amount of 8,100 rubles and the second on July 22, an amount of 5,600 rubles, both through the Volga Gama Commercial Bank. Your Holiness at his discretion will assign these sums to our most urgent needs, as I have already mentioned to Your Holiness in my two telegrams wired on the dates as mentioned above.

123**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V
718–723 AA**

Paris, July 29, 1915

Your Holiness Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch and
Catholicos of All Armenians

Your Holiness:

From my today's letter,* which contains a report on my negotiations, Your Holiness will observe that there is great sympathy for our cause in England and France. We can rest assured that after the final victory of the Allies, we shall have the benefit of their support to accomplish our plan.

Even though there are a number of obstacles impeding the achievement of our goal, I do not foresee any serious opposition from the above-mentioned nations, except for France's ambitions in Cilicia. I believe there will be a satisfactory solution to that problem, and therefore, I am not worried for the time being.

However, there is one point that disturbs me, and that is the offensive and hostile attitude of some of our compatriots. If their attacks were simply directed against me, I would not have made an issue of them; but I cannot stay indifferent, when such hostility undermines the mission that Your Holiness has entrusted me to accomplish. This is the reason why I have chosen not to join any party, although I have accepted wholeheartedly the assistance of all those who are guided by patriotic feelings without pursuing personal gains.

As I have declared on a number of occasions previously, we were able to impose on the Sublime Porte the reform plan of February 8, 1914, through the cooperative efforts of our compatriots and political organizations. I hoped that, this time also, after Your Holiness entrusted me the task of pursuing the achievement of autonomy for Armenia, the same cooperative spirit would sustain and all Armenians would gather around Your Holiness and his representative to take advantage of this unprecedented occasion and accomplish our national sovereignty.

Soon, though, I was confronted with attacks and unwillingness to cooperate; such attitudes bring harm to our cause. This predicament will provide ammunition to our enemies who have consistently claimed that Armenians are undisciplined to such a degree that they are not capable of governing themselves. Even officials, friendly to our cause, have made similar remarks.

* Referring to his letter dated July 28.

I wish our compatriots will soon realize that the present state of affairs can jeopardize our cause, and, therefore, to demonstrate true patriotic feelings of cooperation, without which the successful fulfillment of our mission is seriously threatened.

I wish to focus Your Holiness' attention upon this matter so that you take the necessary measures. Dr. Zavriev can give Your Holiness detailed information about this problem.

I would like to say a few words about the make-up of our delegation.

Apparently the war is going to last for some time, and the Armenian Question will not be solved until the war comes to an end. Consequently, my mission would be extended for an indefinite time.

So far I have sustained the bulk of responsibilities, but I feel that I need an assistant. My colleague Mr. Mosditchian brings his commendable aid every time I am in London, but his preoccupation doesn't allow him to come to Paris; therefore, I am alone here. There are a number of pretentious Armenians in Paris who wish to be part of the delegation appointed by you. I must emphasize that I can accept none of them as a collaborator, because they do not possess the necessary qualities, and I cannot cooperate with such presumptuous people. I would like to have fellow workers, who will be useful and follow my guidelines, rather than creating difficulties.

After consulting with Dr. Zavriev on this matter, we came to the conclusion that, for the time being, no changes be introduced in the make-up of the National Delegation, provided we guarantee the cooperation of a French personality, someone who can be of help to us in political circles.

We are already considering such a personality with remarkable abilities; I shall meet him tonight and hope to obtain his consent. Otherwise, I shall report to Your Holiness in order to seek an alternative.

I would like to bring a final point to Your Holiness' attention.

So far the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France and the Foreign Office of England have accepted me as Your Holiness' plenipotentiary, trusting my verbal affirmation. However, they have mentioned to me, in passing, that, to this day, they have not received any official decree from Your Holiness to that respect.

There are a couple of disadvantages with this present situation.

The first is that the Allies can one day start questioning my official capacity. The second is that it has given the opportunity to some Armenians, with no official capacity whatsoever, to submit petitions to the ministry. And the minister, in all naivety, has heeded these requests, assuming that they have come from Your Holiness.

Therefore, I ask Your Holiness to send to the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs official notices, announcing that I am Your Holiness' sole representative, and I am the only one to have the authority to speak on Your behalf about our national cause. This will immensely facilitate my task.

Considering that the letters must be written in French, to facilitate Your Chancery's assignment, I am enclosing copies of these letters in French, which Your Holiness can modify, if need be.

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Rev. Thomas K. Megrđichian to Boghos Nubar
1459–1460 EA

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OFFICE
WAR OFFICE

Cairo, July 30, 1915

Most Eminent Boghos Nubar Pasha
Sir:

You will find enclosed a letter from Mr. Ayvazian, which describes only a tiny and insignificant fraction of the pains and sorrows of our beloved native homeland.¹

The confirmed news and information that have reached me from Cilicia and Kharpūt, Diyarbakir, and Bitlis, depict a horrible situation in these localities. There is total anarchy. The Ittihat rulers, together with the Moslem Turkish and Kurdish population encouraged by them, inflict atrocities upon the Armenians, robbing, ravishing, and violating anyone they feel like.

The present Turkish administration, following diabolic German methods, is systematically perpetrating the annihilation of the Armenians everywhere. The entire population of villages and *kasabas* [small towns], male and female, young and old, are driven to the burning desert of Der Zor and Mosul starved and on foot. Often men and children are separated by lewd gendarmes, soldiers, and irregulars and sent to different directions.

Most eminent sir, the Armenians are robbed of their wealth and honor, and are now losing their lives. If help does not reach them immediately, the last glimpse of hope for survival shall vanish.

What is the use of a liberated Armenia without Armenians, especially when the honor of the Armenian women has been violated by Moslems? I beg you to do everything possible and even impossible to bring help to Cilicia and Armenia.

It seems that it will be France's task to help Cilicia. Let help come [from anywhere or in anyway]. Let our women and maidens and young boys be delivered from the hands of the monster, regardless who is helping us. We are grateful and thankful to all. May God bless and strengthen the Allied nations.

¹ See document 91. It seems that Ayvazian sent his letter through T. Megrđichian.

125

Germany and the East¹

Lord Cromer's Warning

1461–1463

30 July, 1915

To the Editor of *The Times*

Sir,—It is to be feared that the deeply significant and profoundly true words which Lord Crewe used in reply to a question asked by Lord Bryce yesterday in the House of Lords on the most recent Armenian atrocities will not reach the ears of any resident in the Ottoman dominions.² It is, however, just possible that their repetition in a letter to *The Times* may arrest the attention of some who are interested in Eastern affairs and who are fortunate enough to be living for the time being in countries which admit of the circulation of news and of opinions. Lord Crewe, after confirming the truth of the reports that “wholesale massacre and deportation” had been carried out in Armenia, went on to say, “It was also true that the crimes had not been challenged by German officials, whose presence and influence might have mitigated the sufferings of the people. These officials had shown a synical disregard of the country and its inhabitants.”

As one who has passed the best years of his life in the East and takes the deepest interest in the moral and material welfare of Easterns, I should like to state as strongly as possible that the inhabitants of the Ottoman dominions, be they Moslem or Christian, have nothing whatever to hope from the establishment of German predominance in their midst. Indeed, could they but peer into the future which awaits them in the event of Germany emerging victorious from the present struggle, they would use their utmost endeavors to resist the assertion of German influence. The results which would accrue from a

¹ Lord Cromer's warning is taken from the July 30, 1915 issue of *The Times*, not from Aram Andonian's Armenian translation.

² In his response to Lord Bryce's question in the House of Lord's meeting of July 28, 1915, Lord Crewe stated: “Two months ago, in concert with the Governments of France and Russia, representations were made in regard to outrages perpetrated up to that date, May 24, to the effect that members of the Ottoman Government and all who participated in or instigated the crimes would be held personally responsible. Since then the crimes had increased in number, and, if possible, in atrocity. Wholesale massacre and deportation had been carried out under the guise of necessity for evacuation of certain districts. It was also true that the crimes had not been challenged by German officials whose presence and influence might have mitigated the sufferings of the people, but had been a curse to the people. These officials had shown a cynical disregard of the country and its inhabitants. For obvious reasons no immediate steps could be taken for repression of outrages.” *The New York Times*, July 29, 1915, from *The Times*.

complete German victory may be foretold with the utmost confidence. Not only would every semblance of genuine Turkish independence disappear, but, in addition to this, the worst defects of Turkish administration, from which Moslems and Christians alike suffer, far from being mitigated, would be enhanced by the addition of a powerful European element which, on its moral side, would represent the least admirable features of Western civilization. Easterns, of whatsoever creed or nationality, would do well to ponder over these things.

I am, Sir, &c.,

CROMER

126**Boghos Nubar to Mr. Sazonov
1465–1469 FA**

Paris, August 2, 1915

His Excellency
Mr. S. Sazonov
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Petrograd

Mr. Minister:

I read the speech that Your Excellency delivered yesterday in the Duma. With immense gratitude, I would like to convey to you that we, the Armenians, were very touched by Your Excellency's generous commendation regarding the bravery of our volunteers and their participation in the struggle against the common enemy, fighting alongside the imperial forces.

The Armenians find in your remarks a new evidence of the sympathy that the government of His Majesty the Czar bears toward a nation that is presently subjected to savage, frightening, and unimaginable persecutions. They will never forget that it was Russia that first supported their cause, by the 61st clause of the Treaty of Berlin, upholding their demand for help for their brethren in Turkey before the European states. Also, it was thanks to the magnanimous undertaking and forceful and persistent intervention of Russia that reforms were promulgated by the January 26, 1914, agreement, which the Sublime Porte unwisely abrogated without giving any reason, even before entering the war. Today, it is the same imperial government that gives the proof of its solicitude by supporting the plan of the Armenian national goals.

The plan based upon the principle of nationalities, which inspires the present liberal policy of the imperial government, served me as a guide in my negotiations with France and England, which I undertook as the representative of the supreme [spiritual] leader of all Armenians, H. H. the Catholicos.

I always took care of both ambassadors of His Imperial Majesty by keeping them informed. I am sure this information is transferred to Your Excellency and, I believe, there is no need to go into details. I would only mention that so far, in London and in Paris, I have found genuine sympathy for our cause and sincere desire to bring a final solution to the Armenian Question after the war, when the fate of Asiatic Turkey will be decided.

I also confirmed that the two Allied governments, as an act of respect to Russia, try to allow it to exercise its initiative and they are disposed to follow its proposals.

Your Excellency must have realized in my reports that our proposed

solution with respect to the Baghdad rail terminal has particularly interested the politicians of England. Only the question of Cilicia is encountering difficulties in France, as a result of the tendency manifested by the majority of parliamentarians toward that province and Syria. Your Excellency is well aware of the arguments that I brought to their attention to support the idea of securing a free opening to the Mediterranean, explaining in particular all the advantages that France would enjoy, when an autonomous, integral, and self-sufficient Armenia, including Cilicia, would be created. The latter would be under the protection of the Allied nations and hence open to [France's] moral, educational, and economic influence. I believe I am right when I say that these observations were favorably received in administrative circles. I hope that the question of Cilicia is now going to be solved in a way that will satisfy the wishes of Armenians, as well as the imperial government.

This hope is based on the belief of support that our case will find in Russia. Consequently, on behalf of all Armenians, I beg Your Excellency to wire our wishes to His Majesty the Czar and assure him of the deep and eternal gratitude of a nation that will rise again after undesirable centuries-old suffering and persecution, thanks to the czar's liberal and noble policy.

127

Boghos Nubar to Lord Cromer
1470–1471 FA

Paris, August 2, 1915

Dear Lord Cromer:

I haste to express my deepest gratitude for your intervention in the House of Lords, in support of Armenians,¹ as well as for your letter that appeared in *The Times*; I am sure it will be read with utmost attention by all those interested and will create quite a bit of noise in the East.

It is through such demonstration of support, by authorities like you, that the press will be informed about the true situation of our unfortunate compatriots in Turkey. Through similar support, people will become aware that a radical and final solution shall be needed after the war, when the time will come to settle the problem of Asiatic Turkey.

All my efforts are geared toward that [future reality]. I submitted to Sir Arthur Nicolson a memorandum, presenting the Armenian Question the way I had explained to you during my visit. I made sure to follow your advice, while editing it; you had suggested that I emphasize particularly the principle of nationalities, which England wished to apply so generously for the benefit of persecuted nations. Included in these nations are my compatriots of Turkey, who are presently so mercilessly oppressed as a result of Germany's connivance.

¹ On July 28, 1915, in the House of Lords, Viscount Bryce questioned the British policy with regard to the killing of Christians in Armenia. Lord Cromer immediately added that “there was, unfortunately, no doubt of the truth of the reports. The difficulty was to know what to do to give practical effect to the sympathy” the British felt *The New York Times*, July 29, 1915, from *The Times*.

128**Boghos Nubar to Lord Bryce
1472 FA**

Paris, August 2, 1915

Dear Lord Bryce:

I haste to express my deepest gratitude for your remarks in the House of Lords concerning the persecution of Armenians in Turkey.¹

Your perception and understanding of the Armenian Question, to which you have lent your generous and impartial support, compound the merit of your words.

I rejoiced particularly reading Lord Crewe's vigorous reply, condemning the murders committed as a result of German complicity; this inspired in us the assurance that when the time of settlement comes, we shall enjoy the support of the English government for the final solution of the Armenian Question.

¹ On July 28, 1915, in the House of Lords, Viscount Bryce asked the lord president of the council whether His Majesty's government had any information regarding the massacres of the Christian inhabitants which were reported to have been committed by the Turks in the districts of Zeitun, Mush, Diyarbakir, Bitlis, and elsewhere in the region inhabited by the Armenians; and regarding a reported wholesale deportation of the inhabitants of some districts into Central Asia Minor and the desert part of Mesopotamia; and whether, if these reports were well-founded, there was, in the opinion of the government, any step that could be taken to save what remained of the Christian population of Armenia. *The New York Times*, July 29, 1915, from *The Times*.

129

Boghos Nubar to Mr. H. N. Mosditchian
1473–1476 FA

Informal

Paris, August 3, 1915

Dear Mosditchian:

I wrote two letters to the Catholicos to give him an overview of the state of the negotiations, and taking advantage of Dr. Zavriev's departure, I asked him to deliver them [to His Holiness.]

To keep you informed, I am enclosing the copies of these letters. You will notice that I have decided to allocate the largest portion of our National Fund, for reasons explained in my letter, toward increasing the number of volunteers in the region of Van.

I am sure you will notice in my letter that when I comment about the make-up of the delegation, I am really confused; an end does not seem imminent to this terrible war, nor do we know how long it will last. I shall not be able to stay in Paris that long and, therefore, I feel the need for someone to replace me. Unfortunately there is no one here with the necessary qualifications. Certainly, there is no shortage of candidates; in fact, we have two of them, Tchobanian and Nersesian,* who think they possess all the essential requisites, they excel each other in terms of intrigues and manipulations. But both of them I cannot accept. Nersesian is a worthless person, a bloated, vainglorious character, impossible to communicate with. As for Tchobanian, certainly he has his merits as a writer and a poet, but he is very difficult to work with and is incorrigibly jealous. He spends his time criticizing our activities and slandering us. People who know him can testify for his hateful animosity toward me. I had a very high opinion about him when I arrived from Egypt, and I thought of profiting from his knowledge for our activities, even including him in the delegation. I did take preliminary steps to that end, but soon I realized that he was an envious and supercilious character, unwilling to yield to discipline, and, therefore, I decided that it would be impossible to collaborate with him, and consequently, I was forced to give up the idea.

Unfortunately, there is no one here; it is not possible to find people like Mosditchian everywhere.

I thought of asking the Catholicos to appoint a candidate. However, I decided not to, since I was afraid that he would send a [militant], belonging to one of the political parties. Therefore, I am thinking, if it will be possible, at this point, to choose one [a Frenchman] who can replace me, without

* Nerses Khan Nersesian.

being part of the delegation. We need a man of renown, able to communicate with the leaders and political figures of France, on our behalf. I have someone in mind and will keep you informed if arrangements come to success.

I wrote to Lord Bryce, Lord Cromer, and the Archbishop of Canterbury¹ and thanked them for their intervention on our behalf in the House of Lords. I wrote to Sazonov, too, thanking him for his speech. The nature of the Armenian Question has changed; it is no longer a problem that concerns the Armenians only. We fight alongside the Allies against the common enemy and the Allies consider us as one of them. We owe this to the atrocities committed by the Turks, with the complicity of the Germans, and particularly to the performance of our volunteers in Van. That's why we must do everything possible to increase their number.

¹ Copy of Boghos Nubar's letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Thomas Davidson, is missing. It is worthy of mention that the Archbishop of Canterbury said during the July 28, 1915, meeting of the House of Lords that he had been in frequent communication with Christians in the territories of the Turkish and Persian frontiers, and letters received during the last two months had given accounts of massacres and outrages perpetrated by the Turks in territory now occupied by Russia. There was a general feeling among the people that nobody in Europe cared about them, but he hoped that something at least would be done to show the sympathy of this country and the desire to ameliorate the condition of the inhabitants. *The New York Times*, July 29, 1915, from *The Times*.

130**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Dr. Zavriev
1499–1506 AA**

Paris, Tuesday, August 3, 1915

First we talked about the meeting that I had during the day with Mr. Robert de Caix. As we had agreed, profiting from the occasion, I would suggest to de Caix that he participate in the National Delegation to help me, particularly in my contacts with French political figures.

I told Zavriev that I had avoided a direct proposal, and instead I had tried to find out if de Caix could suggest someone with the necessary qualifications to help me and replace me every time I was away from Paris. I told Zavriev that I had stressed quite emphatically my need for someone worthy for the task, someone responsible and not just an ordinary secretary. I had also added that I had the approval of the Catholicos to set aside a monthly budget of 1,250 francs. Naturally I had hoped that Mr. de Caix would realize I had him in mind. In fact, he told me that it would be difficult to find such an ideal person and pointed out that he did not suggest himself, because he was the director of *Asie Française* and could not accept such an appointment without the consent of the president. Furthermore, he added that Quai d'Orsay was thinking of offering him a political post that would compel him to go to Petrograd. I told him that I realized my proposal was not suitable to him, but since *Asie Française* was the reason for his objection, then, perhaps, it would be possible to reach an agreement. It was obvious that if his mission, which was at the moment in its preliminary stage, had been finalized, then there was nothing to be done; otherwise there would be no real impediment except for the problem of *Asie Française*, which I promised to take care of myself and obtain its president's, Mr. Jonnart's, permission. I believed that my proposal created no inconvenience; on the contrary, it offered advantages to both parties. Therefore, we decided to meet again within a week, as by that time de Caix would know whether he would have to assume or relinquish his mission to Russia.

Dr. Zavriev seemed very happy with this decision. He agreed with me that if we could secure Mr. de Caix's participation, he would be quite useful to us.

* * *

Zavriev took out of his pocket an issue of the newspaper *Azk*, published in the United States. It contained an article by Meguerditchian about the Dashnaks and their attacks against me. Meguerditchian accused the Dashnaks in that article of the death threats directed against me last April in Cairo.¹ Zavriev asked how could someone, who was my secretary, hurl such

¹ A copy of the threat, dated April 16, 1915, is kept in the archives of the Armenian

accusations against the Dashnak party, when both opposing fronts had decided to give an end to such mutual attacks in the press. He added that the copy of that issue was sent to him from Cairo.

I had no details concerning that article. I could not believe that Meguerditchian, being my secretary, could dare to initiate such polemics. I told Zavriev that I could not grasp the situation, but if indeed Meguerditchian had written that article after becoming my secretary, then I would not hesitate to dismiss him. However, I still could not believe and I had to clarify it myself.

A thought crossed my mind and I asked the date of the article. He said it was published in June, about two months ago. Zavriev himself calculated the time needed for the mail to reach the United States from Egypt, where Meguerditchian's article was written. Thus, he was convinced that it should have been written in April; at that time not only was Meguerditchian not my secretary, but I did not even think about him. Consequently, I expressed my indignation at the malevolence of Zavriev's news bearers, who had sent the newspaper from Cairo and wished to create a certain deception and prove that Meguerditchian, even after becoming my secretary, wanted to continue the polemics and, consequently, urge me to express my anger about Meguerditchian to Zavriev. Zavriev changed his tone right away and agreed that the controversy, indeed, centered around an old article. Nevertheless, he spoke with resentment about Meguerditchian, who had charged the Dashnak party with possible murder. My answer [to Zavriev] was:

1—Meguerditchian, with whom I have never had any contact, and whom I saw two or three times a year, was free to write whatever he wanted before accepting his job as my secretary.

2—I could not definitely blame him for having assumed my defense during the month of April when I had become the target for a vile attack in an "open letter" signed by the Dashnak party.² That "letter" was freely distributed in the streets of Cairo and thousands of copies were mailed.

3—Right after that "letter" was made public—in which the Dashnaks ordered me to submit to them—I received many anonymous letters in which

National Delegation. It reads: "Pasha, if until five days you do not put an end to your vice, you will be executed." A note attached to the copy says: "The original, in Armenian, most probably was sent to the police." An annotation adds that the threat was written in red ink, and that the handwriting was falsified.

² The open letter was a printed circular dated April 8, 1915, and signed by the Central Committee of the Dashnak Party in Egypt. The title said: "Yield, Pasha, in Front of the Armenian Fight." The letter was obviously written to voice concern about the fund-raising campaign launched by Boghos Nubar, *For the Defense of National Interests*, which would contradict another campaign by the Dashnak Party for the volunteers. The letter demanded that Boghos Nubar send all raised funds to the Caucasus, where national interests were being defended by volunteers, instead of using them for diplomatic and other purposes in Egypt or Europe.

I was threatened with death if I did not surrender to their authority. Therefore, it should come as no surprise, if Meguerditchian had attributed that threat to the signatories of the “open letter”; besides, I also harbored the same suspicion.

But the doctor was still angry, insisting that there was no need for such suspicions about the Dashnaks, since after those anonymous letters, they had promptly declared that they condemned those threats. He took out a small printed paper, which was indeed sent to me, too, by mail last April. There was the Dashnak signature on it, and it refused to accept any responsibility with respect to the threatening letters. I told him that piece of paper was nothing else but a simple denial. I told him that I understood why he was convinced that the authors of the threats against me were not those who edited the “open letter,” but then neither such a denial, nor Dr. Zavriev’s conviction, could be taken as proof.

He then added that the Dashnaks were incapable of such acts and if any one of them would dare to commit such an act, he would immediately be hanged by the order of the committee. I brought to his attention that in such a situation, the punishment would be too late for the victim.

The doctor persisted to convince me that the Dashnaks had nothing to do with those threats. Since I refused to be persuaded, pointing out that there was no proof [supporting his argument], he cried out: “In that case this is war. I demand that you agree with my statements.”

Right away I answered back and invited him to withdraw his threat and never say “I demand” to me.

The forceful tone of my reply calmed the doctor; he said that he simply wanted to stress the fact that his party was incapable of committing such acts and did not want me to have a negative opinion about them.

I told him that I accepted his explanation and I did not doubt his sincerity; still, I could not understand how he could vouch for a party, which counted among its members, just like in any other organization anywhere, many scoundrels some of whom I know by their names.

* * *

We talked also about other issues that concerned his trip and his duties in Petrograd and Etchmiadzin.

Our meeting lasted for another hour, but I am only mentioning the newspaper incident which revealed Zavriev’s character and left a very bad impression on me. I am sure this incident will have repercussions.

During our conversation, after referring to the death threats against me, he said that it would be better if I avoided the Young Turks in the future, after the war is over. But for the present, there is no harm, because they are very much preoccupied with the war.

131**Boghos Nubar to Yakoub Artin Pasha
1507–1509 FA**

Paris, August 4, 1915

Dear Pasha:

I received your letter upon my return to London, but since I was very busy I could not reply to it promptly. I met many people and everywhere I was received with sympathy. Our cause is not treated with indifference anymore, as was the case during the reforms negotiations. They feel that something has changed, that the Armenian Question not only concerns the Armenians but the Allies as well, with whom [side by side] our volunteers are fighting against the common enemy.

You must have read about the question period that was initiated by Lord Bryce, in the House of Lords, with the participation of Lord Cromer and the Archbishop of Canterbury. My visit to London had a lot to do with that event, since I had met previously all the gentlemen who had promised their support to me.

The answer, by Lord Crewe, to the question raised was appropriate.

In the absence of Sir Edward Grey, who has gone on vacation, I met Sir Arthur Nicolson and Lord Lansdowne at the Foreign Office. Sir Arthur asked me for a memorandum, which I readily submitted to him. Its preface and the historical part were, of course, similar to the ones included in the memorandum that I had presented to Quai d'Orsay, but I also added some statistical data. I rewrote the documentary part, taking the English interests into consideration.

After reading my memorandum, Sir Arthur wrote me a very kind letter, while Lord Lansdowne conveyed his congratulations, which made me quite proud.

In short, I believe that after the final victory of the Allies, when the time of settlement comes, we can be sure that we shall enjoy the support of France, England, and Russia. Our fate is dependent on their fate, and therefore, we ardently, more than anyone else, hope for their victory.

But alas, we shall have to wait for another winter for this victory, since no one believes that it will end before that.

Under these circumstances it seems to me that I have nothing else to do but wait and enjoy some rest with my wife. However, this is [practically] impossible, because of the innumerable intrigues of my happy-go-lucky compatriots. You witnessed one such incident while you were in Paris. Since then more of such scheming has been going on, at an increasing rate.

I could not meet Chirol in London; he was away to the Balkans on mission. I was sorry because I had pinned some hopes on him.

P. S. I am sending the entire sum of our national fund-raising campaign to the Catholicos, so that we can secure more volunteers in the region of Van and Mush. This is our only hope to save as many Armenians as possible.

132

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Jean Mutafoff
1510–1513 FA

Paris, August 4, 1915

Dear Mr. Mutafoff:

I received your letter of July 13 in time. Unfortunately, after my letters of 5 and 20 July, I haven't got much to say regarding the plan of a military expedition by the Allies to Cilicia.

Following my meetings with him, Lord Bryce asked the government, on the 29th of July, at the House of Lords, about the Armenian massacres and mass deportations. He was supported by Lord Cromer and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The government admitted with much regret that the information Lord Bryce had received corresponded, in every detail, to the news that reached the Foreign Office.

The government also mentioned that, since the collective declaration of the Allies on the 24th of May of this year, that they were holding the members of the Turkish government and certain functionaries personally responsible for the atrocities perpetrated against the Armenians; the Turkish crimes, instead of decreasing, had, in fact, intensified both in number and cruelty.

The government confessed that, under the present circumstances, there wasn't much to be done, but repeated the above-mentioned warning about the question of responsibility in the future more forcibly.

However, the first interpreter of the French Embassy in Constantinople, Mr. Ledoulx, who had stayed behind until last July to safeguard the archives, and now who is in Paris, told me that the May 24 warning had provoked the Turks to escalate their persecution, as Zohrab and Vartkes were arrested the day after that declaration. Mr. Ledoulx assures me that the warning was like adding fuel to the fire, and I can easily believe him.

Besides, from the information given above, we can easily conclude that the British government, itself, admits the grave consequences of the warning.

From all this, it is not difficult to see that the Allies, despite their good intentions and friendly attitudes toward Armenians, have absolutely no way of exercising pressure on the Turks, at the moment.

Under these circumstances, I think, the people of Cilicia should regard the Armenian volunteers in the vicinity of Van as their only hope of liberation; the volunteers should advance to Cilicia as fast as possible. This can only be materialized if, within a short period of time, with the permission of the Russian staff in the Caucasus, the number of volunteers would be increased; in a case like this the Russians will have to provide the armaments and ammunition needed for the newly drafted volunteers.

I have discussed the question with several friends and they all agree with

this idea completely; likewise, certain Armenian groups in Constantinople, who had asked Mr. Ledoulx to consult with me on this matter, also express their full consent.

I have already written on this matter to His Holiness the Catholicos and cabled him 20,000 rubles for the same purpose. I have also decided to send to His Holiness much larger sums from our National Funds so that he may use them for the organization and training of the new Armenian volunteer groups.

On the other hand, I am happy to inform you that our recent national fund-raising efforts have been quite successful. Some Armenians from Java, who are now settled in London, have made important contributions, thus bringing our grand total to 7,000 English pounds, excluding the sum of 2,000 pounds that our Committee for National Defense in the United States has voted upon and informed me about.

133

Sir George Arthur to Boghos Nubar
1514 FA

MINISTRY OF WAR

London, August 5 [1915]

Sir:

It was during Lord Kitchener's absence that Colonel Fitzgerald received your letter. As Lord Kitchener, immediately after his return, had a free moment, I came to your hotel to find out if you could see him at Saint James Palace.

However, you had left already.

Lord Kitchener requested me to convey to you his regrets and assure you that he would like to meet you next time when you are in London.

134

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Puzant Masraf
1515–1518 FA

Paris, August 5, 1915

Dear Mr. Masraf:

I received with pleasure your letter of July 14, as well as the statement of the National Funds up until July 12, for which I thank you.

I read with great interest your plan about centralizing and training the Armenian volunteers in Egypt, in order to send them to Cilicia, in case of a possible landing by the Allies on the shores of Cilicia.

It is possible to consider this plan, provided that the Allies decide to undertake such a military operation in the near future; however, at the moment, they are obliged to ship all their forces to the Dardanelles, and therefore, I am convinced that there isn't much hope [for such an expedition to Cilicia] as long as Constantinople has not surrendered; of course, it is not possible for us to set an exact time for this.

As for the question of the centralization and training of the Armenian volunteers in Egypt, it is impossible to keep it secret, and it will certainly have its consequences on the unfortunate people of Cilicia, against whom, as you know, the Turks have recently doubled their atrocities, with unprecedented savagery and rage. Besides, the chances are minimal that the British and Egyptian governments would allow us to train the volunteers in Egypt; they are careful to avoid any possible pretext for a fanatic Moslem explosion in the country. I am sure you remember the answer I had received in this respect from the British government last year while negotiating the question of landing forces on the Cilician shores.

This is also evident from the declaration that the British government made the other day at the House of Lords, in reply to Lord Bryce's question about the Armenian persecutions.

Along with the British government's confirmation and regret that the information given by the noble lord agreed with the news transmitted to the Foreign Office, *the government confessed that, under the present conditions, there was no way of preventing the evil; the only possible measure for them to take was to repeat more forcibly the warning that the Allies had sent to the Sublime Porte on May 24*, holding the members of the Ottoman government personally responsible for every new persecution perpetrated against the Armenians.

However, the first secretary of the French Embassy in Constantinople, Mr. Ledoulx, who had stayed behind until July 2 to safeguard the embassy archives, is presently in Paris. He told me that, following the declaration of May 24, by the Allies, the Turks, completely outraged, intensified their persecution. Consequently, immediately after the declaration, on the following

day, Zohrab and Vartkes were arrested. Mr. Ledoulx added that the declaration was like adding fuel to the fire, and I can believe him easily.

Considering the impossibility of a military operation by the Allies in the near future, I think that the only hope for us, for the salvation of the people of Cilicia, is the rapid deployment of the volunteers through Armenia; they are presently within the vicinity of Van. In order to facilitate this plan, it is our duty to consort our efforts and means, and try to increase the number of volunteers. I have discussed this question with many friends and they are in complete agreement with me.

Therefore, I decided to send much larger sums from our National Funds to His Holiness the Catholicos; he should use the money for this very purpose.

I am glad to announce to you that recently our fund-raising efforts have been quite successful. Up to this day we have raised 7,000 English pounds, and I am expecting a sum of 2,000 English pounds from the United States any time now.

135

Lord Cromer to Boghos Nubar
1519 EA

London, August 7, 1915

Dear Pasha:

I hope you will excuse me for writing in English but it is the only language I can use when I dictate.

Thank you very much for your letter of August 2. I hope that my short discussion at the House of Lords and my letter sent to *The Times* will prove to be beneficial. I am glad to hear that you have sent a memorandum to Sir Arthur Nicolson, but I think, as long as events are not revealed completely, it will not be possible to finalize the Armenian, and other similar, questions regarding the future of the Middle East.

136

J. V. Macmillan to Boghos Nubar
1520 EA

London, August 7, 1915

Boghos Nubar Pasha
Paris

Dear Sir:

During the absence of the Archbishop of Canterbury from London, I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated August 2, and let you know that it will be passed on to him.

137**Boghos Nubar to Mr. Aneurin Williams
1521–1522 FA**

Paris, August 7, 1915

Mr. Aneurin Williams, President
British Armenia Committee
London

Dear Sir:

I am enclosing a copy of an interesting letter which I received yesterday.¹

The author of the letter is the Patriarch of Constantinople and naturally, for reasons needless to explain, he wishes to remain anonymous.

After reading the letter, it is not difficult to conclude that the Turks, with the help of their ally, the Germans, plan to exterminate the Armenian element living in the Ottoman Empire within a short period of time; to attain their goal, they do not retreat in front of any fear.

I realize that the Allies, despite their friendly intentions, cannot do much to help us under the present conditions. Whatever had to be done is done, as Lord Crewe himself stated at the House of Lords, by issuing a warning to the members of the Ottoman government that they will be held personally responsible for the calamities.

However, while waiting for the Armenian Question to be settled, it is our duty to publicize the massacres victimizing our people; in this way, we may influence English public opinion vis-à-vis these unprecedented afflictions carried out against the Armenians.

Therefore, I would be grateful if you would be kind enough to publicize the enclosed letter in any way that you deem to be beneficial, by keeping, of course, the name of the Patriarch anonymous.

¹ See document 92.

138

Boghos Nubar to Dr. Zavriev
1523 FA

Paris, August 7, 1915

Dear Dr. Zavriev:

I was quite disappointed realizing that we had forgotten to include in your briefcase the copies of the two memoranda that I had submitted to Quai d'Orsay and the Foreign Office; they had to accompany my letter addressed to the Catholicos.

In order to correct my forgetfulness, I immediately sent the two copies to the Catholicos; I hope, since you were planning to stay in Petrograd for a few days, they will reach Etchmiadzin at the same time, when you arrive.

Please, accept, my dear Doctor, my respects, etc.

Boghos Nubar

139**Boghos Nubar to Lord Bryce
1524 FA**

Paris, August 7, 1915

Dear Lord Bryce:

I am enclosing a copy of a very distressing letter which I received from Constantinople through Philippopolis.¹ Although in the copy there is no name mentioned, the letter is written by the Patriarch himself; because of obvious reasons and the fact that he is in Constantinople, he does not wish to reveal his identity. The horrors depicted in the letter are beyond imagination and disclose the existence of an extermination plan organized by German methods.

I am horrified to realize our inability to stop these abominable crimes. However, we should do our best to publicize them and influence the public opinion of all those nations that would try to find a final solution, when the time will come to settle the accounts following the victory of the Allies and thus give an end to suffering.

¹ See document 92.

140**Boghos Nubar to Mr. Karnig Fendeklian
1525–1526 FA**

Paris, August 7, 1915

Mr. Karnig Fendeklian
Manchester

Dear Sir:

I am sending you a copy of a very distressing letter that I received from Constantinople.¹

I would like to confide in you that the letter is written by the Patriarch himself, and that his name should remain anonymous, if you decide to have it published in any way that you might deem to be beneficial.

I have no doubt that reading these unprecedented horrors perpetrated against our compatriots, you shall equally be distressed.

You are already familiar with my appeals, which I made in England, and with the results obtained. At the moment there isn't much that we can accomplish in Paris, where, after my return from London, I found the same favorable atmosphere for our cause. Presently, all attention is focused on the eastern front and the Dardanelles. We must await the events to unfold and wish a perfect victory for the Allies.*

¹ See document 92.

* Mr. Fendeklian, in his letter of 12 August, announces that he has already sent the letter from Constantinople to *Manchester Guardian*. He has requested his friend, Mr. Scott, the editor of the paper, to give it some wide publicity, and write a lead article to stir public opinion once again, as he had done on 6 August. Furthermore, he mentions that he also had an article, in the same paper on 2 August, about the volunteer operations in Van.

Mr. Fendeklian, in his letter of 16 August, informs us that the *Manchester Guardian* has published the letter from Constantinople on the very same day, together with another letter from Mr. Henry Wood [should be Charles Woods as mentioned in document 150—V.G.], a member of the American Press Association.

141**Boghos Nubar to Mr. H. Mosditchian
1527–1528 FA**

Paris, August 7, 1915

Dear Mosditchian:

I am enclosing a copy of a most distressing letter which I received from the Patriarch of Constantinople; because of obvious reasons he wishes to remain absolutely anonymous.¹

This letter is about all those unprecedented hideous persecutions perpetrated by the Turkish government to annihilate our unfortunate compatriots.

I send it to you so that you might publicize it the way you wish.

I sent other copies to Lord Bryce, Mr. Aneurin Williams, and Mr. Fendeklian.

I presume that you were able to see Dr. Zavriev; I would like to know if he has already left, or, if not, until when is he going to be in London. I am planning to leave for Switzerland on Wednesday evening for a short, three-day trip.

I was very happy to hear from the aide-de-camp of Lord Kitchener, who was expressing the latter's regrets for not having been able to see me while I was in London. It seems that after a short absence from London, upon his return, he received my letter requesting an appointment; I had sent it to him through Colonel Fitzgerald. However, when Lord Kitchener sent his aide-de-camp to my hotel to invite me, I had left already.

Please, also find enclosed a copy of Dr. Zavriev's draft letter [report]; I would appreciate that you keep it strictly confidential and that you don't mention anything about it during your meeting with Dr. Zavriev; I already had quite a trouble with him regarding that letter.

¹ See document 92.

142

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Miliukov
1529 FA

Paris, August 8, 1915

Dear Mr. Miliukov:

I learned about your painful bereavement from a newspaper; I would like you to accept my sympathies and be assured that my sorrow is as sincere as my appreciation for everything that you have done for the Armenian cause and for the valuable collaboration that you offered me during the reforms negotiations.

Once more I am in Europe to defend the cause of our unfortunate compatriots, who are presently subjected to the most horrifying persecutions. Some time in the near future I will allow myself to write to you again and explain the purpose of my mission; today, however, I would just like to let you know that my compatriots and I join you in your deep mourning.

143**Boghos Nubar to Lord Kitchener
1530–1531 FA**

Paris, August 9, 1915

His Excellency:

I was delighted to receive Mr. George Arthur's letter, which he had written following your instruction. As I received no reply to my letter sent to Colonel Fitzgerald, requesting an appointment with you, I had left London; I thought you had hesitated to see me while I was in London to discuss questions related to the Armenian cause. Now, fortunately, I realize that I was wrong; due to circumstances, your reply was delayed, and you had even sent for me at Hotel Claridge after my departure.

I cannot explain how much this pleases me. I would like to thank you, especially for the assurance that you shall meet with me during my next visit to London. Undoubtedly, I shall not fail in visiting you at Saint James Palace, but in the meantime, I would like to thank you in advance, and beg you to accept my deepest respect.

144

Dr. H. Zavriev to Boghos Nubar
1532–1533 FA

London, August 10, 1915
Tuesday

Dear Excellency:

I am leaving London this afternoon. The Russian ambassador had postponed my trip because of certain letters that he wanted me to deliver to the minister.

I prepared a detailed report, which my sister will translate and send to you.¹ I hope you will find some encouraging points in there.

I am sending you two English newspapers, in which you will find articles favorable to the Armenians.²

Yesterday, I received a cable from Tiflis, asking me to hasten my departure for Petrograd.

Yesterday, I also received a distressing cable from Geneva. It reads as follows:

“Geneva, Switzerland—Zavriev, Hotel St. Herman’s, London —

“Rostom cables from Tiflis. 25,000 arrived, awaiting 150,000 [from] Vaspourakan (Van), 35,000 [from] Ardjesh, Manazkert. When is Zavriev returning?—Troshag.”

It means that the Russian troops are retreating from Turkey and the Armenians are fleeing.

My sister will be in London for another two months; she will stay with our nephew, who has been in London for the past two years. She will prepare my reports and send them to you as soon as possible.

Excuse the mistakes, because I have written this letter alone.

My sister’s address is: Miss Anna Zavriev, c/o Princess Tamara Andronikov—325 Winchester House, Old Broad Street, London, E.C.—Tel. 9202 London Wall.

Whenever necessary, she is ready to do her best for you.

¹ Zavriev wrote his report in Russian.

² No copies of the mentioned clippings were attached.

145

Dr. Zavriev to Boghos Nubar*
1477–1498 FA

London, Monday, August 3, 1915¹

Your Excellency:

I arrived in London on Wednesday, the 4th, at 10 p.m. On Thursday, I saw the first interpreter of the Russian Embassy, Mr. Sablin, and on Friday, I was able to meet the ambassador.

I had planned to leave London on Sunday, but passport formalities, and, especially the ambassador's request to entrust to me a few documents to be delivered to the ministry, forced me to postpone my departure until Tuesday, August 10.

I would like to inform you about the events and developments:

1. MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR

The ambassador condescended to tell me the following.

"I think Boghos Nubar Pasha's visit was fruitful, and I hope that the way the Armenians are using to present the solutions they seek for the Armenian Question will be met positively in England. The press, as well as certain political figures, and a few state officials, are already talking about the role of the Armenians in this war and mention the required satisfaction (compensation) to be given to them.

"I read the pasha's memoranda. They are very well written, and I agree that the one addressed to the English should be a little different from the one written for the French. No doubt that this was the right thing to do.

"I talked to Sir Nicolson about that memorandum. In fact, he was the one who mentioned it. He said it contains practical and ideal means for the solution of the Armenian case, and he will study the suggested proposals.

"I asked Mr. Sazonov's opinion about the five points on which you have based your project. Mr. Sazonov did not endorse them fully but did not oppose them either. It means that he has thought about them and that his meeting with you was arranged following his consent, and he simply wants to be prudent by not expressing his final opinion; he is waiting for the development of events. In my opinion, your arguments are so practical that they will always be positively received, especially in England. I know that they

* Miss Anna Zavriev had sent the translation of this letter on October 16 by Russian diplomatic courier.

¹ The starting date of this letter, which was completed on August 10, should be August 9, as it is mentioned in Boghos Nubar's letter of August 25 to Dr. Zavriev.

all agree with Sir Edward Grey's theories. If Mr. Sazonov continues along the same line of thinking, he will give proof of his wisdom. I understand that Armenians do not wish to live under Turkish rule, but the Allies think that they ought to accommodate the Turks within a certain designated area. If the dismemberment of Turkey will create problems, then, perhaps, it will be better to retain some symbol of Turkish sovereignty.

"The defeats that Russia is suffering presently are delaying the solution to this problem, because these defeats are destabilizing not only the military situation but also the international political relations. I am worried about the impression of these defeats on the neutral states. For instance, it is not clear what Romania's position will be. Maybe these states will not be able to demand that Romania takes active steps because that would put them in a precarious situation.

"The Armenian participation in military operations, alongside the Allies, is making a good impression everywhere, while creating a positive attitude toward their cause.

"I believe you are right when you say that the pasha must stop his activities for the moment. He must wisely choose the opportune moment to resume his active work. But it is very important to overcome France's opposition. I believe the course of events will favor this case.

"I did not know that, as you say, Sir Edward Grey had instructed his ambassador in Paris to find out about the French public opinion about the Armenian case. This does not surprise or worry me, because public opinion there corresponds to the one here."

2. MY CONVERSATION WITH DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES: IMPRESSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The English are becoming interested in us. More and more articles advocating the necessity of autonomy for the Armenians are appearing in the press. The participation of Armenian volunteers in the war has made a great impression. The reports written from Van to the *Manchester Guardian*, by an English reporter, describe the activities of the Armenians in very favorable terms. The reporter praises highly our military qualities. The Armenian administration of the province of Van, says the reporter, shows us that this nation can organize into a state because that administration is in constant evolution, revealing the great wisdom of its leaders and the people.

Your Excellency, you are probably aware of Mr. J. Bryce's words to Mr. Gregory, referring to the occupation of Van by Armenians: "... a great advantage at their disposal. Tell the Armenians that if they can occupy two or three more cities, they will be able to make themselves heard at the conference, which will decide their future."

Mr. Gregory told me that here people are very well disposed toward Armenians and grasp the propitious role that the Armenians can play in international relations, provided they obtain their autonomy.

3. MY MEETING WITH THE FIRST INTERPRETER OF THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY, MR. SABLIN

Mr. Sablin wished to know why I was so pressed to leave and did not wish to meet important personalities.

I told him that the pasha had already met those personalities and, therefore, it was not necessary and urgent for me to present the same appeals over again. I added that it would lead to confusion in those circles, and, perhaps, even create misunderstandings.

“But,” said Mr. Sablin, “it seems to me that not all Armenians have confidence in Boghos Nubar Pasha. Even here, in London, a group of influential Armenians (these are not insignificant people; some of them are millionaires) told me that they do not trust Boghos Nubar. They say that Boghos Nubar cannot be considered as the representative of all Armenians. It is true that he acts pretentiously for having been appointed by the Catholicos, but when political questions are concerned, the Catholicos himself cannot assume the responsibility of speaking for the nation. The Catholicos listens only to Armenians of Russia, who have, because of their special experiences in the past, devised chimerical plans. The Armenians of Turkey wish to achieve none of the goals that Boghos Nubar Pasha is pursuing. What they need is the guarantee to preserve their religion, their language, and of course, their life. All these can be achieved safely if Russia annexes the Armenian provinces.

“Now it is clear that Russia has abandoned its plan of russifying the Armenians forcibly, and certainly it will not create obstacles against their religion and language.

“Armenians of Turkey have no political dreams; these dreams are created by different political parties and Armenians of Russia. Armenians cannot achieve autonomy, because nowhere do they form a majority.

“We do not understand how Russia has given its consent to this idea of autonomy. It has more than two million Armenian subjects in the Caucasus, and it is obvious that they will all incline toward an autonomous Armenia. This way, Russia will add to its problems with Poland and Finland a new one—a somewhat Armenia irredanta.

“Similarly, Armenians cannot consent to Turkish sovereignty over them. Therefore, Russia must, for the good of Armenians, simply annex Armenia.

“Witnessing the lack of unity among Armenians, and considering that there are many important people who raise serious objections to your plan, I proposed to the above-mentioned influential Armenians that they prepare a memorandum with valid arguments; they did, and the ambassador sent that report to the Foreign Ministry in Petrograd.”

Naturally, I immediately tried to bring to Mr. Sablin’s attention valid proofs to invalidate the accuracy of ideas launched by those unknown Armenians, who were operating in the dark behind our back, bringing harm to our cause and evading all personal responsibility.

I explained to Mr. Sablin that the Russian government had examined and discussed at length, just like we had done, the different aspects of the plan, and only after scrutinizing carefully the political interests of different states and also of the Armenians, had we agreed upon the project. Concerning the question of Turkish sovereignty, we had not asked for it but it was Russia that had imposed it upon us. Already, I said to Mr. Sablin, Boghos Nubar Pasha had told you that, as far as he was concerned, he would not accept it, but naturally he would give in if you absolutely insisted.

I tried to prove to Mr. Sablin that the Catholicos was right to consider himself to be the spokesman for the entire nation, for their aspirations, since by being in communication with Armenians all over the world, he knew the desires of the majority of the Armenian nation.

“Do the Armenians of Persia and India want the same thing?” asked Mr. Sablin. “These influential Armenians I mentioned claim that Armenians in Persia are in agreement with them.”

Your Excellency, I do not wish to repeat my arguments; at this stage, it is of no importance whether I was able to convince Mr. Sablin or not. What is most important for us right now is to know the effect of this affair on Petrograd.

Needless to say, I did not ask Mr. Sablin to name those Armenians. He did not mention any names either. However, I would like to let you know some of my conclusions and ask you to consider them as simple suppositions based on afterthoughts and pondering. I do not wish to harm or smear anyone while revealing the truth. But still I want to talk to you openly and sincerely, so that you take the necessary steps.

There are very few Armenian millionaires in London, barely two or three. Among them only one (Mr. [Calouste] Gulbenkian) plays a significant role in the financial world and is probably known at the Russian Embassy.²

When I was taking leave of Mr. Goulkevich in Petrograd to come to London, he asked me if Mr. Gulbenkian, who was a very well-known rich Armenian in London, would like to join the delegation.

Putting these two facts together, I come to the conclusion that most possibly it was Mr. Gulbenkian himself, leading those Armenians, who submitted the report in question to the embassy.

As far as I am concerned, I do not know him; I have never seen him, and I heard his name for the first time from Mr. Goulkevich. Therefore, I have no

² Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian (1869–1955), a pioneer of the oil industry in the Middle East, was economic advisor to the Turkish embassies in Paris and London. During World War I, he became involved in a plan to overthrow the Turkish government. In a telegram dated February 12/25, 1915, Izvolski stated that Gulbenkian had attempted to bribe Turkish politicians to organize a coup d'état in favor of the Allies in Constantinople. Emile Laloy, *Les documents secrets des archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères de Russie publiés par les Bolcheviks* (Paris, 1919), 298–299.

particular feelings for him, pro or against, and I cannot tell whether he is truly able to behave so imprudently.

Nevertheless, having been acquainted, to some extent, with the character of the well-to-do Armenians, and considering their lifelong ambition or unquenchable longing to play a role in the important events of Armenian life, as well as their proven lack of magnanimity and patriotism, I come to the conclusion that Mr. Gulbenkian must have felt hurt seeing another millionaire pasha suddenly appointed as “delegate” and representative of the nation; whereas himself, the millionaire Gulbenkian Effendi, was not even part of the delegation. For a Turkish Armenian, regardless of the fact that he has left the country a long time ago, such occurrences are sufficient to hurt him. This would even push him to resort to underhanded tactics and submit secret appeals to obstruct Nubar Pasha’s activities. Furthermore, in order to achieve his goal, he is ready to disgrace the Catholicos, Nubar Pasha, and the Armenians of Russia. He does not hesitate to present them as intriguers, acting against Russia’s interests. In order to make himself important and to win the confidence of the Russian Embassy, he becomes more of a russophile than the Russian foreign minister.

I cannot tell if this gentleman’s words have had any effect on the ambassador, because during our meeting, the ambassador did not allude to such a possibility. I did not wish to ask him either, in order not to give him the impression that this incident had any significance for me.

I know that this affair will leave a very unpleasant impression on you. You can see how pretentious these sordidly ambitious people are. No doubt, it is meaningless to pay any attention to them, but it is also true that these people can seriously harm our activities and even endanger them. That’s why I believe that we must find a way to silence them without making them more vicious.

Naturally, you must know better than me how to restrain these few rich Armenians to thwart them in their very “noble” intentions. On the other hand, considering your slightly passionate temper, I dare to ask you that you try to neutralize Mr. Gulbenkian without challenging him openly; otherwise, taking advantage of his connections with the embassy, and continuing with his underhanded dealings, he can harm your projects and create headaches for you. It is obvious that he has surrounded himself with a group of servile people who seek their interests by being complaisant to him. With their support he may always create the illusion of public opinion.

4.

Mr. Gregory told me that the English police had approached him to get his opinion on some Armenians, whom they suspect of having connections with the enemy. Naturally, Mr. Gregory did not reveal their names. But after taking leave, Mr. Safrastian, who was present at the meeting, told me that Mr. Mosditchian’s name was included in that list of the police. I am sure that Mr.

Gregory has given ample proof about Mr. Mosditchian, convincing the police that it is absolutely unreasonable to have doubts about him.

Only two or three Armenians in London are aware of this reality. Mr. Hagopian knows about it, too. He is a very likable and rich merchant from Java who made the following remark to Mr. Safrastian: "Undoubtedly, the English police are being misled by someone, and, of course, Mr. Mosditchian is irreproachable. But I am afraid that the suspicions of the English police about Mr. Mosditchian, no matter how unfounded they are, will hurt the National Delegation because of Mr. Mosditchian's participation in it."

It is very painful for me to give you all this news, but I think you should be aware of it, since you are the president of the delegation and responsible for the acts of its members.

As far as I am concerned, I find these suspicions revolting. I think the whole thing is due to a misunderstanding, since Mr. Mosditchian works for a German-Romanian Oil Company,[†] and all its managers have been removed from their posts by the English authorities. Since no proof and incriminating evidence is brought forward against Mr. Mosditchian, he has been set free. Most probably, he is under surveillance by the police, suspecting that he is sympathetic toward the Germans. Thus, poor Mr. Mosditchian has become an innocent victim.

I am sorry for Mr. Mosditchian, but I am afraid that the police, taking into account his participation in the delegation, transmit their suspicion to the minister and, consequently, put the delegation in a difficult position.

If Mr. Gregory had not mentioned Mr. Mosditchian's name, and if Messrs. Mosditchian and Gregory were here now (each has gone to the country for a while, to different places), I would inform Mr. Mosditchian about the events and caution him. This is really a painful situation, and he must take measures to get out of it. Of course, you realize that this incident will soon become known among Armenians, some of whom will believe the false charges and, consequently, they will start spreading slanders.

Since I was informed about the affair indirectly, I do not believe I have any right to interfere; it falls within your jurisdiction.

If you decide to talk to Mr. Gregory, please tell him that I mentioned Mr. Mosditchian's name to you, and that I heard it from Mr. Safrastian, and at no time did I give credence to these suspicions.

5.

Today I sent you a note, explaining the telegram I received from Greece; it reads as follows:

"Geneva, Switzerland, Zavriev, Saint-Ermin's Hotel, London. Rostom cables from Tiflis 25,000 have reached, 150,000 expected from Vaspourakan

[†] The Rumanian Oil Company Limited, 6 Lloyd's Avenue, London E.C.

[Van], 35,000 from Ardjesh-Manazkert [to the north of Lake Van]. When will Zavriev return? [signed] TROSHAG.[‡]

This means that Turks have pushed Russian troops out of all occupied places and that Armenians, fleeing from their cities and villages, are retreating with the Russian troops to the Caucasus.

Yesterday, I received another cable, which was sent to me by post from Paris. It reads as follows: "Zavriev, Hotel Splendide, Avenue Carnot, Paris. Absolutely necessary that you return to Petrograd. Cable your departure. ROSTOM."

Probably things are going very badly, and that's why they are calling me back. I do not know how I can be of any help. Such news causes me great grief. Today I am leaving London, and I shall be in Petrograd on Monday or Tuesday and send you from there a detailed report through my sister.

I was ready on Saturday but, as I mentioned before, the ambassador made me postpone my departure to entrust to me some papers for delivery. I do not know if everything is ready and whether I shall be delayed any longer.

I leave with the contentment that our work is confided to trustworthy hands. I am sure that you will be doing everything possible and you will succeed.

I was overjoyed working with you, because I have come to recognize in you a man who grasps the nature of the problem quickly and conducts his business wonderfully. Therefore, I feel extremely satisfied knowing that our case is trusted to you.

I would be more than happy if these trivial problems did not occur, and especially if those mean individuals did not exist. They are not interested in our case, but nevertheless they try to create problems in order to hinder the smooth course of our activities and disrupt the state of harmony between us.

It does not mean anything to me anymore the misunderstanding we had between us because of some personal (but not involving me) problems during the last day of my sojourn in Paris.

I have much respect for you and appreciate your work tremendously and find it rather beneficial. Always and everywhere I go, it will be a most pleasant duty for me to praise your effort.

I should only ask you to have less confidence in servile and dull people who strive to deserve your attention, and in doing so, cause a storm in our life, creating misunderstandings.

Even during the invasion of the Mongols, our people were not as much devastated as they are today.³ Faced with the tragedy inflicting us, we must

[‡] The explanatory words in brackets are given by Zavriev.

³ The Mongols first invaded Armenia and the Transcaucasus in 1220. Repeated Mongolian attacks on Armenia devastated the country. The Mongolian rule, viewed as most disastrous and savage until the massacres in 1895–1896 and the genocide in 1915, lasted in Armenia until the first half of the fourteenth century.

cast aside all personal issues and devote ourselves to the salvation of the nation.

It has been more than two years now that I have been exerting great efforts to bring about unity. At one time, unity was so perfect and strong that even the minister praised it. Must we destroy the union we were able to achieve at the cost of hard work and sweat?

We must resign to the idea that an active man in the community is always criticized, and often unjustly. People criticize ministers, even kings. England is a striking proof of that reality.

We are aware of this reality and, therefore, we must never lose our calm; we must keep working quietly toward the accomplishment of our goals and never allow people (from your faction, as well as ours [the Dashnaks]) to interfere in our relations by using blackmail.

If you attribute the slightly fiery attacks against you by certain (Dashnak) newspapers to the instigation of some of our friends, then don't you think that the attacks by Mr. Malezian in the press are a sort of blackmail? Because in his articles, by using the language of a despicable servant and by glorifying you, Mr. Malezian is guilefully commending himself; but [unfortunately] he is [in the meantime] acting indiscreetly and revealing secrets that the Russian government has confided to us and urged us that we keep them confidential.

I assure you that, upon hearing this, I became more indignant.

Don't you consider the article in *Azk*, which I asked you to read, another example of blackmail?

However, being fully aware of the extreme seriousness of the present situation, I ask you strongly to face the attacks aimed at you with more calmness and to help me so that we shall be able to forge the disrupted unity once again.

If we do not extend our efforts toward that end, the conflagration can achieve catastrophic proportions. Therefore, this is not the time to look for the one who threw the first stone. Presently, we are being stoned from both sides, and because of that, the entire nation is suffering. Foreigners witness our dissension and take it into consideration.

I told you all this with my usual sincerity, and, I trust that this will not affect our personal relationship.

Any time for any problem, I am ready to work as a single laborer for our common cause.

London, Tuesday, August 10, 1915

146**Boghos Nubar to Bishop Ghevont Tourian
1534–1537 AA**

Paris, August 10, 1915

Most Reverend
Bishop Ghevont Tourian
Primate of Armenians
Philippopolis, Bulgaria

Most Reverend Father:

I confirm my letter of July 21 (new style).

I received your letter of July 9/22, including the second report describing the situation in Armenia and Cilicia; I was immensely distressed.

In the last part of the above-mentioned report, it is recommended that I appeal to neutral nations. However, I must regretfully state that the neutral powers are as helpless as the Allies in terms of a positive interference at the moment.

In my previous letter, I already mentioned to you that the Catholicos and I have already applied to two major neutral powers; namely, to Italy and the United States of America; the former, as in the past, still retains its neutrality toward Turkey.

Moreover, our people in the United States, under the leadership of their primate, have separately appealed to Washington. I am informed, through a reliable source, that the two nations, which show some undeniable sympathy toward us, have voiced their objections to the Sublime Porte.

But what was the outcome of the above-mentioned appeal? Perhaps, it worsened the situation even more! Please, keep in mind that the Turks, after launching themselves insanely into the present war and even endangering the existence of their empire, cannot and will not accept any intervention into their internal affairs from their enemies or neutral states.

They do not and they cannot realize the terrible outcome of their perversity and wickedness.

Such an intervention from foreigners has enraged them even more than before; we should not ignore their blind hatred against foreigners.

It is already known to your reverence that in the last part of my memorandum submitted to the British Foreign Office, I have explained the recent Armenian situation; however, I have also appealed to other British government officials, including Lord Bryce, Lord Cromer, etc.

As a result of these appeals, Lord Bryce, recently, at the House of Lords, questioned the government about the Armenian massacres, and he was supported by Lord Cromer and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

On behalf of the English government, Lord Crewe admitted that Lord

Bryce's information was quite accurate, but under the present circumstances, there wasn't much they could do, except for repeating more forcibly the collective warning that the Allies had addressed to the Sublime Porte on May 24. *But immediately after, Lord Crewe added that this warning, instead of helping the Armenians, had worsened their situation, as since then the Turks had increased the intensity of their crimes and begun behaving even more recklessly.*

Mr. Ledoulx, the first interpreter of the French Embassy in Constantinople, who visited me upon his return to Constantinople last July, is of the same opinion.

According to Mr. Ledoulx, this warning by the Allies was just like adding fuel to the fire. In fact, it was the day after this warning that Zohrab and Vartkes were arrested and the massacres escalated.

It was even suggested that I appeal to Bulgaria.

For this, I presume that your reverence, as the primate of Armenians in Bulgaria, has already brought the predicament of our compatriots to the attention of the government. I am quite aware that Armenians are very much liked by Bulgarians and Bulgarian government officials. However, I believe that, because of the above-mentioned reasons, despite their sympathy and friendly feelings toward Armenians, the government of Bulgaria, too, cannot help us in our present situation.

If there is still a glimpse of hope for Armenians, it is the deployment of the Caucasian troops to Cilicia and Armenia.

147

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Hampartsoum Arakelian
1538–1539 FA

Paris, August 10, 1915

Dear Arakelian:

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of June 28, and I hope that my letter mailed on the 29th of the same month has reached you already.

I would like to thank you for the information which you were kind enough to pass on to me after your meeting with His Holiness the Catholicos.

I can, from the content of your letter, conclude that the events you are referring to either date back to the period of reforms or they had taken place before my appointment and departure for Europe.

Although certain ill-motivated individuals still continue to behave disappointingly, it is, after all, our patriotic responsibility to forgive them and try to put them on the right track. I don't have to explain that it is imperative for us to evade internal disputes, at any cost, and instead try to concert all our efforts in order to establish harmony and understanding among the people of all classes of our nation.

I notice with great satisfaction that you are also pursuing the same policy in your newspaper.

As for the Hunchak and Ramgavar parties, I wish to see no misunderstanding.

A few months ago, these two parties agreed to collaborate together to promote our national cause, and they proposed to help me within their possibilities. I welcomed their cooperation with pleasure, as I would have done for any other party or organization.

However, this does not mean that I pledged any solidarity, as I do not and I shall not belong to any political party. I have received my mission from His Holiness, from the supreme head of all Armenians, who also retains his political neutrality. Therefore, it is up to them to cooperate with me harmoniously so that I can accomplish my mission. And it is with this conviction that I accept, without any exception, the selfless collaboration of all parties.

148

Robert de Caix to Boghos Nubar
1540 FA

Paris, August 12, 1915

Dear Sir:

I regret immensely that you have been ill; I hope that your illness is just temporary.

I would like to thank you for sending me the letter from Constantinople.

Please, forgive me, since I have not yet been able to do anything for the Armenians; we were forced to concentrate on matters that needed the total attention of our paper,* e.g., the fall of Warsaw and the Balkan projects. I have all the necessary information and the article is almost ready; in any case, I shall publish it before leaving for Russia, which seems to be more imminent every passing day.

* *Matain.*

149**Boghos Nubar to Lord Bryce
1541–1545 FA**

Paris, August 14, 1915

Dear Lord Bryce:

My three-day trip to Switzerland prevented me from replying earlier to your letter that you were kind enough to send me.

You had suggested that I submit a memorandum to the American government, since it is the greatest neutral state and has acquired special rights to intervene because of the admirable work done by their missionaries in Armenia and the consequences they suffered.

But such an appeal has already been made by both His Holiness and myself, as his representative in Europe. Furthermore, our compatriots in the United States have done the same under the leadership of their prelate.

Moreover, the Russian Foreign Ministry has also reinforced the appeal of the Catholicos to Washington by manifesting its full support.

Following these appeals, the American ambassador in Constantinople has received some instructions to make friendly objections to the Sublime Porte for the benefit of the Armenians. Unfortunately these objections have not influenced the Turks; in fact, they have intensified the persecutions ever since.¹

As you will see in the enclosed letter, sent to me from Athens, the American ambassador, discouraged by the Turkish attitude, decided to apply to his German colleague in Constantinople for an intervention, but the latter refused his request by stating that Germany had no right to interfere with the internal affairs of Turkey.²

The American ambassador in Constantinople, of course, receives up-to-date information about the events that are presently taking place in Armenia and Cilicia, not only through Mr. Shemavonian, the first interpreter, who is a patriotic Armenian and is secretly in touch with our Patriarchate, but also through the American missionaries and consuls in Turkey.

But the American government does not seem to be able to protect even the lives of its own missionaries, who feel obliged to leave that hellish country every week.

There is a considerable number of missionaries who return to the United States via Beirut-Alexandria or Constantinople-Athens.

You will find details regarding this matter in my enclosed letter.³

¹ Henry Morgenthau.

² See document 91.

³ Boghos Nubar most probably enclosed Ayvazian's letter. (See document 123.)

From the above-mentioned information, and considering the mentality of the Turkish leaders, we have to conclude that, at the present, no intervention may prove to be beneficial; in fact, it may even produce adverse effects.

The only thing that the United States would have been able to do to affect the Turks was to launch a new crusade to save the Christians in Asia; this would even be considered equivalent to Americans entering the war.

Another very unfortunate fact is that the Sublime Porte has forbidden the Armenian Patriarchate in Constantinople to get in touch with the Armenian deportees and help them; they consider us real adversaries, and of course, hundreds and thousands of Christians, due to lack of medical facilities and food supplies, shall die.

Perhaps, if certain neutral nations could obtain permission from the Sublime Porte, it would be possible to save part of the population; then it wouldn't be impossible to send relief groups to deportation zones.

I think we could hope that there are still charitable people in the United States and other countries, willing to undertake such a noble, humanitarian, and Christian mission.

I will focus all my efforts toward this direction and hope that you will also extend your collaboration.

P. S. Yesterday, at a reception in Switzerland, I met a high-ranking Turkish official from Constantinople. He told me something, which is contradictory to the above-mentioned letter from Athens and that's why I wish to inform you about it.

This individual confirmed that the German ambassador, Baron Wangenheim, who left Constantinople as a result of his disagreement with the Turkish government, had visited the Sublime Porte with the American ambassador right before his departure and protested strongly against the Armenian massacres.⁴ We may somehow believe this, because this above-mentioned individual is considered to be well-informed in general.

The same individual also assured me that the relationship between the American Embassy and the Sublime Porte has deteriorated so much that the latter has made them remove the wireless (cable) station from the patrol boat of the embassy.

⁴ On July 4, 1915, pressured by German personalities as well, Wangenheim presented a formal note to the Grand Vezir simply "to put German officials on record." *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, New York, 1975 (1918), 370–374. It is important to note that Morgenthau's book surfaces the conflict between German civilian and military authorities vis-à-vis the policy of annihilation toward Armenians—a subject discussed in Boghos Nubar's letters. It is worth noting that Pallavicini, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador, had already voiced concern to Talaat on July 1. The reason for these late appeals was the war propaganda directed toward the United States to involve it in the war. Christopher Walker, *Armenia—the Survival of a Nation* (New York, 1984), 232–233.

150

Aneurin Williams to Boghos Nubar
1546 EA

Lanchester, August 16, 1915

Dear Pasha:

For the last three weeks I have been here in my own constituency. I received your letter of August 7, along with the heart-rending story of the Armenian persecutions. Immediately I sent a translation to the *Daily News*, and today, I see that this paper and others have published a long letter on the same subject by Mr. Charles Woods, an American correspondent. It is really quite painful, and yet, there is so little to be done.

151

H. N. Mosditchian to Boghos Nubar
1547–1550 EA

London, August 19, 1915

His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Paris

Dear Pasha:

Please excuse me for not acknowledging Your Excellency's letters of August 3 and 7 in time. As I was away on holiday, I received them late. Already I am afraid that the temporary absence of the secretary, who is at the moment on war duty, and a recent problem with my right hand, forced me to postpone my personal correspondence for a long time. I hope that Your Excellency will accept my humble apologies.

I was very pleased to hear that Your Excellency has decided to send all the money from the fund-raising campaign to our volunteers in Van. There is no doubt that only those Armenians capable of armed defense will be saved from the diabolical policies of the Turks. As the papers announce it today, our compatriots in Van must have lived horrifying moments during the Turkish occupation of Van until its seizure by the Russians.

It is impossible to deny the importance of offering Your Excellency a much better collaboration to enable you accomplish your mission entrusted to you by the Catholicos. You were extremely generous with your praise for my few humble services that I had tried to render as a member of the delegation; I consider them rather insignificant. It is Your Excellency, who is doing all the work, and consequently, it is absolutely necessary to make an arrangement, as of today, when still your hard work has not troubled Your Excellency's health. Please, excuse me to remind you that your health is no more a personal matter, but it is a national asset. I always thought that Mr. Tchobanian would be a valuable individual in this regard to help the delegation and offer some real collaboration to Your Excellency. Therefore, I was much surprised to hear that Your Excellency does not consider him as a possible future member of the delegation. Under the circumstances, Your Excellency has made a good decision by keeping the delegation with its present make-up for the time being, and in the meantime, try to secure, under your leadership, the assistance of a French collaborator that Your Excellency had referred to in his letter addressed to the Catholicos; I think I can guess who that person is.

You must have seen the *Daily News*, which I mailed to Your Excellency yesterday; Mr. Aneurin Williams has given the complete or partial translation of the letter sent from Constantinople last June 13 to the press; Your

Excellency had forwarded me a copy of the same letter. One can easily lose his mind realizing that there is nothing that one can do to stop such unheard-of barbarity. Apparently, Archbishop Utugian, too, has received a copy of that letter from Philippopolis and has passed it on to the Armenian Committee of Manchester; consequently, the members of the committee have come here to consult with the Armenian Committee of London and see if it would be possible to make new appeals to restrain Turkish behavior. Considering that His Holiness the Catholicos and Your Excellency have already applied to all principal neutral nations, they think that the only thing to be done is to appeal to the Pope and request from him to intervene with Germany and Austria in favor of our unfortunate compatriots of Turkey. They decided to talk to Mr. T. P. O'Connor in this respect and find out the best way for the Armenian community of the United Kingdom to appeal to the Pope.

I hope that Your Excellency is still in Switzerland, enjoying the rest that you needed after all your efforts of the last three or four months; I wish to extend all my respectful greetings to Mrs. Boghos Nubar Pasha.

P. S. I have the honor of enclosing for Your Excellency's files the minutes of the [House of] Lords' June 28th assembly, where Viscount Bryce questioned [the government] about the Armenian massacres.¹

¹ The enclosure is not kept with the original. There is confusion. The meeting in the House of Lords took place on July 28, 1915.

152

Hampartsoum Arakelian to Boghos Nubar

[Telegram]

1551 FA

Tiflis, August 19, 1915

[received August 22]

Pasha

12 Avenue Trocadero

Paris

Because of the partisanship of Tiflis Bureau, the Hunchak volunteers are not receiving help. Please cable the Catholicos to allocate them a certain sum. The Catholicos has not seen the Zavriev's project that was presented to you and, moreover, he has not consented to it.

153**Lord Bryce to Boghos Nubar
1552–1553 EA**

London August 21, 1915

Dear Excellency:

Thank you very much for your letter. I was afraid reality would confirm your descriptions and that the Turks would not respond to the American intervention. However, before such a horrifying tragedy, we had to do everything within our power. Undoubtedly, your Armenian Committee in Paris and yourself cannot do more than what you have done. My letter addressed to the American ambassador here was immediately sent to Washington, and before receiving your letter I had also written to the Ambassador in Constantinople. I am sure he will do everything he can.

It is not difficult to perceive those German controversial activities in Turkey; while the German ambassador and his civil servants seem to prevent the Turks from perpetrating massacres against the Christians, the German military authorities are doing the exact opposite by encouraging overtly or indirectly the policy of extermination.

I would appreciate if you could let me know, whenever you hear anything new; we shall do our best

154**Boghos Nubar to Lord Bryce
1554–1556 FA**

Mont-Revard, August 21, 1915

Dear Lord Bryce:

My very sincere thanks for your letter and also for the other letters that you have written to the American ambassadors in London and Constantinople. Certainly, your letters have convinced them to intervene with the Sublime Porte. Let's pray that they won't be in vain.

I had already written to you about the appeal of our Catholicos to the president of the United States; I am enclosing a copy of his telegram.

As for myself, after a long hesitation, regardless of the delicate situation, I decided to write to Mr. Zimmermann, who is an advisor to the German Foreign Ministry; I had met him in 1913 during the Armenian reforms negotiations. Considering that all our efforts had been so far unsuccessful, I thought, perhaps, that to seek the intervention of a Turkish ally would be the only way. I don't have much hope, but I considered it a duty to do everything within my power for the salvation of those unfortunate people. As soon as I receive a reply to my letter, I will let you know.

I read in the papers certain articles about the possible attack on Asia Minor and they all mention Mersin. Therefore, I decided to go to Rome. Sooner or later I had to go, because if not, it can be interpreted wrongly; now that Italy is at war against Turkey, it will probably claim its share when Asiatic Turkey will be dismembered. Under these conditions, it is preferable that I present our national aspirations to the *Consulta** with no more delay.

P. S. By chance, I am enclosing the interview of the Italian Consul in Trebizond;¹ the English press has not yet published it. It is interesting, because it is the confirmation of an eyewitness. Whenever you need to get in touch with me, please send your letters to Paris, 12 Avenue Trocadero.

* The office of Italian Foreign Affairs.

¹ No enclosure was kept with the original. Extracts from consul G. Gorrini's interview are included in James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915–16* (Beirut, 1979), 290–292.

155

Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V

[Telegram]

738 FA

Paris, August 22, 1915¹

His Holiness Catholicos
Etchmiadzin, Caucasia

Entrusting Your Holiness' discretion, I am sending, through Credit Lyonnais, 10,000 rubles for the volunteers. In my letter of June 17, I was referring to an outline for negotiations but not to a project of reforms. The misunderstanding is most probably caused by the translation, [as] the word project in Armenian is equivalent to both *program* and *project* in French.

¹ This telegram is dated August 25, 1915, in the original. We think the person who copied it made a mistake. The text of the telegram is included in Boghos Nubar's letter to Catholicos Kevork V on August 22, 1915. (See document 156.)

156**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V**
730-737B AA

Paris, August 22, 1915

His Holiness Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos
of All Armenians in Holy Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

I have just received your letter of July 19; I am answering it hastily.

Upon my arrival in Paris, I received Dr. Zavriev's plan which was approved by Your Holiness as a guideline for my negotiations. But now, in answer to my letter of June 17, Your Holiness informs me that no such plan had met your approval nor was it meant to be delivered to me. Moreover, Your Holiness adds that from now on I should not give credence to declarations made by anyone on your behalf, except to encyclicals and statements issued by the chancery.

Naturally, there are misunderstandings that need to be rectified. Your Holiness informs me that he has already written to the National Bureau of Tiflis, demanding their explanations.¹ At this point, I would also like to submit my explanations to enable Your Holiness to obtain the necessary clarifications.

First of all, it is best to define Dr. Zavriev's position. In your telegram of April 18, whereby Your Holiness appointed me as his representative in Europe and the president of the National Delegation, you advised me that my presence in London and Paris was of utmost importance, and that a few days ago, Dr. Zavriev and Abraham Ghoukasoff had left Petrograd to go to Paris and London. Accordingly, I concluded that Zavriev and Ghoukasoff were on a mission to meet me in my capacity. Indeed, Dr. Zavriev came from London to Paris the same day I arrived there to see me, and he gave me a report about the negotiations carried out before my appointment as representative by Your Holiness in the Caucasus and Petrograd. May I bring to Your Holiness' attention that, apart from Your Holiness' April 18th telegram, which I had

¹ On July 23, 1915, Khounounts, vice president of the Armenian National Bureau of Tiflis, wrote to the Catholicos that Zavriev had with him no other plan but copies of the Catholicos' appeals to the viceroy of the Caucasus and the latter's responses to be presented to Boghos Nubar. Khounounts said: "Boghos Nubar might have accepted as a plan the proposition prepared by your consent and presented to the viceroy in Tiflis." Khounounts added that the Catholicos, on November 29, 1915, communicated the proposition in person to the czar. *State Historical Archive of Armenia, Fund 57, folder 5, file 28/676.*

received on April 26 (May 9), no other communiqués had arrived. Only about a month later, on April 28* (June 5), I received your encyclical, dated April 18 (May 1).

Dr. Zavriev delivered to me a specially prepared report to keep me posted on the situation in Russia regarding the Armenian case. He also gave me the copy of a confidential letter that he had submitted to the Russian ambassador in London² in which he was elaborating on the plan that was drafted in Petrograd. That letter contained the following paragraph, which I hereby reproduce, as it concerns Your Holiness. "For your information, as I report these events to Your Excellency, I would like to point out that only the Catholicos and a few Armenians delegated to assume certain responsibilities are aware of the Petrograd meetings."

Under the circumstances, Your Holiness should not be surprised if I considered the plan to have met your approval. Consequently, I started to work according to the agreements enumerated in a letter submitted to the Russian ambassador, who had consented to them.

Moreover, may I add that I found no reason to oppose the plan: it seemed quite worthwhile to me. Based on it, I gathered a number of favorable proofs. I used these arguments during my negotiations here and in London and elaborated them in my memoranda that I submitted to the foreign ministers of France and England. I have sent to Your Holiness copies of these written communications. I have, however, introduced one single change in the plan, which I mentioned to the Russian ambassador during my meeting with him in London; Your Holiness must have received the transcript of this meeting. That change refers to the right of sovereignty by Turkey, which is accepted in Zavriev's plan. I have always reiterated that, as an Armenian, mindful of the past, I cannot demand or accept the sovereign authority of Turkey. This problem could be solved by the world powers after the war, and we might have to accept their decision if they vote for Turkish sovereignty.

This is the accurate account of the problem concerning the plan handed to me by Dr. Zavriev. If that plan has not met the approval of Your Holiness initially, I can assure that no fateful steps have been taken, and I can proceed accordingly.

On the other hand, I was informed about an article in *Meshak*, where part of Your Holiness' letter about the plan and the information requested by the National Bureau is reprinted, almost verbatim. I believe that such publications can harm our cause and bring about dissensions. These articles are reprinted in the Armenian press, and sometimes they also appear in European newspapers, and later on they are used against us. Our enemies try to

* In the French version of this letter the date is May 23, which is the true date.

² Document 8, The Petrograd Plan, is a brief version of the mentioned letter.

sabotage our work. I believe that we have to refrain from publishing accounts about our negotiations, which have always angered the Turks and pushed them to intensify the cruel persecutions. Therefore, I advised my friends not to divulge any information about the activities of the delegation.

I would like to clarify another point regarding Dr. Zavriev. He often talked to me about the National Bureau and the need to cooperate with it closely. He wanted to assure me that the [National] Bureau was elected by all Armenian political parties and that I should accept the right of this bureau to play a special role in the administration of national affairs. I refused him firmly, arguing that I represent directly Your Holiness and I should consult you regarding every task related to my responsibilities. I further added that, as the representative of Your Holiness, I do not and cannot belong to any party and that I should always stay out. Nevertheless, I always welcome the support given by any party to the mission of the National Delegation to benefit our national cause.

In the same way, I replied promptly to Mr. Arakelian's telegram, in which, after informing that the Hunchaks and Ramgavars had written to him that they have decided to lend me their support and cooperation, he was asking me to acknowledge my consent.

As for Dr. Zavriev, he was not satisfied with my explanations. He insisted that the National Bureau, in close collaboration with Your Holiness, represented the desires and the will of the majority of the Armenian population of Russia. He wanted to reassure me that the National Bureau represented all the parties, and not just the Dashnaks, and that only two Dashnak party members were also members of the [National] Bureau. But I persisted firmly in my remarks, and I can gather from the tone of Your Holiness' letter that I was doing the right thing. I would consider it beneficial if I had more information about the National Bureau. I shall be very grateful to Your Holiness if you deign to communicate to me your opinion and instructions. I wish to know whether it is true, as I have been informed, that Your Holiness had accorded his auspices to the [National] Bureau or has entrusted an official responsibility to it.

With great satisfaction, I inform Your Holiness that the European press published a number of articles on the persecutions perpetrated against the Armenians by the Turkish government. I transmitted to British and French officials a letter from the Patriarch of Constantinople, which I received through Bulgaria. Many important newspapers reprinted summaries of its contents. Thanks to these publications, the public opinion is turning steadily in our favor.

Today, I sent to Your Holiness, through Credit Lyonnais, from the National Fund, 10,000 rubles to be allotted to the volunteers' cause. I, hereby, confirm the following telegram.

Paris, August 22, 1915

His Holiness Catholicos
Etchmiadzin, Caucasia

Entrusting Your Holiness' discretion, I am sending, through Credit Lyonnais, 10,000 rubles for the volunteers. In my letter of June 17, I was referring to an outline for negotiations but not to a project of reforms. The misunderstanding is most probably caused by the translation, [as] the word project in Armenian is equivalent to both *program* and *project* in French.

I hope that Your Holiness has received my letters and the memorandum that I submitted to Dr. Zavriev; before his departure he had assured the consent of the Russian ambassador to have these documents delivered by diplomatic courier. I am enclosing the list for Your Holiness to verify receipt of all these documents:

- 1) A letter in French, dated July 28, with its Armenian translation.
- 2) A letter in French, dated July 29, with its Armenian translation.
- 3) A second letter in French, also dated July 29, together with an account of the National Fund's fund-raising activities, with a copy translated into Armenian.
- 4) A memorandum, together with a brief account of my meetings with French and British officials, in French.

After Dr. Zavriev's departure, I noticed that I had forgotten to include the copies of the memoranda that I had presented to the foreign ministers of France and England. Therefore, I hastily sent them to Your Holiness, accompanied with a letter dated August 8.

I hope all my letters and other correspondence have reached Your Holiness, enabling you to become acquainted with everything I have done so far.

With deepest respect, I remain your most humble servant.

August 23, 1915

N. B. I had just finished this letter, when I received a telegram from Mr. Arakelian to clarify the misunderstanding caused by the word "plan." In it, Mr. Arakelian indicates that the plan of reforms presented to me by Dr. Zavriev has not been approved by Your Holiness. I must mention that, in my letter dated June 17, I have not discussed any such plan. I have only mentioned a plan of diplomatic negotiations, and not a plan for reforms, which, to my knowledge, has not been formulated so far. The misunderstanding is caused by the translation and the double meaning of the word "plan" which, in Armenian, can mean both "program" and "project" at the same time. For this reason, from now on, along with the Armenian translation of my letters, I shall also include the original in French.

157

Boghos Nubar to Mr. H. A. Ayvazian
1557–1558 EA

Paris, August 22, 1915

Dear Mr. Ayvazian:

Thank you very much for your very interesting letter that was kindly delivered to me by Mr. Thomas Megrđichian.

Although I had received your friendly and official reports filled with information before, these last ones are of extreme importance; they shed some crucial new light on certain events, especially when [the information] comes from foreign and neutral witnesses.

As for your suggestion at the end of the letter, I had proposed the same thing at the beginning of last November and my plan had even merited their contentment; however, because of the Dardanelles operations, it was postponed indefinitely. We cannot expect much from it as long as Constantinople does not surrender.

Unfortunately, under the present circumstances, neither the Allies nor the neutral states can help the Armenians in a decisive fashion.

Lets hope that both the operations in Gallipoli and the Russian advancement through Armenia will soon be successful and hence create the opportunity to save at least part of our unfortunate compatriots.

158

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Dikranoff
1559 FA

Paris, August 23, 1915

Mr. Dikranoff
Government Advisor
Petrograd

Dear Mr. Dikranoff:

This letter will be delivered to you by Mr. Robert de Caix; I would recommend that you receive him in a warm and friendly way. Mr. de Caix is leaving for Petrograd to be a correspondent for several Paris newspapers, and with the intention of establishing some better relationships between the presses of the two countries.

Mr. de Caix is the director of *Asie Française* and has contributed a great deal to the success of my reforms negotiations during the International Conference in Paris; the conference pursued the accomplishment of the Armenian cause, and Mr. Miliukov had attended it, representing Russia.

159

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Mikael Papadjanoff
1560–1561 FA

Paris, August 23, 1915

Mr. Papadjanoff
Representative of the Duma
Petrograd

Dear Mr. Representative:

Please excuse me for recommending Mr. de Caix for a warm and friendly reception; he is leaving for Petrograd to be a correspondent for several newspapers. In Paris, they feel that the relationship between the presses of the two countries is unsatisfactory, and Mr. de Caix, who is constantly in touch with the Ministry of External Affairs, has assumed the responsibility of improving the relationship.

Certainly, you remember Mr. De Caix because of the valuable contribution that he rendered me during my negotiations of the Armenian reforms. He had, as the director of *Asie Française*, organized the 1913 International Conference in favor of the Armenian Question; Mr. Miliukov was also present at the Conference.

160

Boghos Nubar to Mr. Hampartsoum Arakelian

[Telegram]

1562 FA

Paris, August 23, 1915

Arakelian

Meshak Newspaper

Tiflis

I cabled Cairo asking them to send the rest of the Teachers' College professor's account. There could be a misunderstanding due to the translation of the word "program" into Armenian; I had written "outline" of negotiations but not reforms' "project." I sent 10,000 [rubles] to the Catholicos, for the volunteers, to allocate it according to his discretion. I was surprised to read your July 24 article, in which you had stated that there were no more Armenians left in Turkey. Although this statement is fortunately wrong, it may still harm our cause and make my mission more difficult. I believe in the indestructible vitality of our race. Therefore, it is necessary to protect the deportees and equally help the volunteers.

161

Boghos Nubar to Dr. Zavriev
1563–1571 FA

Mont-Revard, August 25, 1915

Dear Doctor:

Miss Zavriev sent to me your long letter of August 9,¹ which you had written from London; I am taking advantage of my holidays to answer it.

I find your meeting with the Russian ambassador rather satisfactory, for the simple reason that the English seem to find our proposals practical and see in them the complete solution of the Armenian Question. In fact, it is the practicality of the solution, as seen by the English and French, that has inspired confidence in me, naturally, by always keeping in mind the final Turkish defeat and the possible dismemberment of the empire.

No matter how much they try, they won't be able to find another solution that would secure in a best way the gains of all the interested parties, satisfy the claims of the Allies, and keep the future in mind; in other words, something which could finally solve the Armenian Question in such a way that it would not be a reason for new complication eventually.

After exposing the problem and preparing the groundwork, we don't have anything else to do but follow the events, so that, as the ambassador has told you rightfully, at an opportune occasion we may again resume our activities. While waiting for it, I shall try to facilitate the publication of all those articles concerning the Turkish atrocities and persecutions. Lately, articles are appearing more frequently both here and in London, where I sent excerpts from a letter dispatched recently by the Patriarchate.

The intrigue of our millionaire compatriots in London, which you disclose in your letter, is a painful surprise to me. If you had not confirmed, I wouldn't believe that the person in question could behave so unpatriotically following personal motivations. Indeed, these ideas come from Gulbenkian and, in fact, he himself has revealed them to me. Everybody is entitled to his opinion, but he should keep it to himself when it contradicts the collective opinion of the nation. There was no reason for him to make that appeal, which was a wicked undertaking. I don't think that the reason for it is his desire to become a member of the delegation, because he has very strong relations with the Turkish government; before the war he was a financial advisor to the Ottoman Embassy in Paris. Otherwise, I wouldn't have any objection if he wished to join the delegation, provided that he would accept our plan; after all, we cannot deny his wisdom. When I see him, I won't hesitate to talk to him about this, but we should not give too much importance

¹ Zavriev's letter had two dates—August 3 and August 10, 1915 (see document 145).

to it. I think everybody will easily see the reason for such a behavior, and I hope that in Petrograd you won't spare efforts to expose him.

I received a letter from His Holiness this week; I could not make much out of it. He was answering my letter of June 17. In it I had informed that I have begun my negotiations based on the plan that was approved by him and was given to me by you in Paris. His Holiness in his letter stated that he had not approved any program and asked the National Bureau for explanations. My surprise was even greater when I saw a similar article in *Meshak*, which I had received in the same mail. But, fortunately, it was that very same article that gave me the clue to solve the problem. Because in there, instead of using the word "program," they had written "reforms project." This may easily explain everything. It seems that the word "project" in Armenian may mean both "program" and "project,"* and as my letter of July 17 was translated into Armenian, the Catholicos thought that I was referring to a "reforms project"; whereas the word "reform" does not even exist in my letter. Since the Catholicos had not approved any "reforms project," for the simple reason that such a thing does not even exist yet, he felt rather uneasy about it and asked for explanations. It is unfortunate, however, that the press has meddled into it, creating the impression that there were some disagreements, which don't even exist; the whole thing is due to a simple misinterpretation of words. In order to avoid this, I will, from now on, attach my originals in French to the Armenian translations, as I did for my project delivered to you. I cabled the Catholicos and Arakelian, pointing out the misunderstanding; I think that by now you must have arrived in Etchmiadzin and explained the problem to His Holiness already.

Your lines regarding Mosditchian were, of course, disturbing and troublesome. There is no doubt that he is always above such doubts. I will see what can be done to prove to them that they are on the wrong track.

I cannot leave the last part of your letter unanswered; in fact, it would be better that we clarify those problems once and for all. I see that you have enjoyed collaborating with me, and you add such praising remarks that cannot leave me indifferent. On the other hand, you are fully aware of my feelings toward you, your enthusiastic patriotism, and your unselfish devotion to national questions. I have no doubt about these and I had already explained to the Catholicos in my letter, which you had seen, but as a result of your request, I had agreed not to send it. However, I cannot deny the fact that your last-minute discussion with me on the last day made a very bad impression on me; you manifested such partisanship and partisan tendencies that when the problem in question involves your party, you are incapable of exercising objective judgment. When you showed me the article in *Azk*, questioning

* Pasha does not know Armenian, but the delegation has not realized that the word, "project" [*dzrakir*] in Armenian is used for "program" and [*nakhakidz*] "draft" means "project."

how my secretary could write such a thing—especially at a time when we had agreed that each one of us would try to bring an end to the disputes in the press—I confessed that I could not say much, because I could not imagine, nor believe, that Mr. Mosditchian could have written that article against my wish. I also stated that, after investigating, if I were convinced that he was the author of the article, I would be ready to discharge him from his duties as my secretary. However, when we checked the dates, you confessed it yourself that the article, which had appeared in one of the old issues of a newspaper in the United States, was written in Egypt, in April, in other words, three months prior to Meguerditchian's appointment as my secretary, in late June; Meguerditchian at that time had no commitment toward me, and he had written it after I was attacked unnecessarily in that famous letter signed by the Dashnak Party and distributed freely in the streets of Cairo. It was again at that time that I started receiving anonymous letters threatening my life, asking me to consent to their wishes. Consequently, I was immensely troubled, and I did not hide it from you. I am quite convinced that when you cited this incident, you were not aware that the whole issue was due to an old article; furthermore, influenced by some ambiguities, you were incapable of realizing that those people in Egypt, who were not worthy of your sympathy, had tried to create misunderstandings between us. It was for this reason that I did not wish to follow up this incident and we left amicably to pursue our activities devoted to the cause. It is for this very cause that I sincerely wish you do not sympathize with such people in the future—people who do not hesitate to use the patronage of a party for their vile personal actions; such people do not deserve our attention.

The news from Armenia about the persecutions and those disgusting events surpass each other in their horror; it would have been impossible to imagine them, and my pen is incapable of explaining the degree of my anguish. Since all means of influence on the Sublime Porte are exhausted, I decided to try something else and wrote to Mr. Zimmermann, regardless of the difficulties of this decision. It is quite possible that my letter may produce no consequences, but the fact that there might have been a glimpse of hope for us in such an action was sufficient for me to try it. Needless to say that, in the letter, I made a point of concentrating on the need of giving an end to the horrifying Turkish crimes only and I did not care if the letter was going to be censored.

162**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Victor Bérard**

[Excerpt]

1572–1576 FA

Paris, September 11, 1915

Mr. Bérard does not think that a separate treaty with Turkey would be possible—a foreseen eventuality according to Mr. de Caix—but he does not consider it altogether impossible, since Dardanelles is not conquered yet. But the day Dardanelles falls, there could be no reason to fear that the Allies would consent to a separate peace treaty. In such a case, they would be implacable toward the Turks.

I told him that, whether before or after the fall of Dardanelles, the possibility of such a separate agreement inspired fear among Armenians, because in that case, the Allies would not be able to force upon the Turks the same conditions that they would have imposed in case of a total crushing victory, as well as the defeat of the central empires. In that case, the important thing for us was that the Armenian Question should not be disregarded in such a peace treaty, the Allies should not be satisfied with a five- to six-line clause—as happened in the Berlin Treaty—that would never be implemented. This was the reason, I explained, for my visit to Paris to see Mr. Delcassé and to forewarn him about that danger. Mr. Bérard said that I was justified in my request to see Mr. Delcassé, adding in the meantime that I had no reason to be anxious because the Allies would never abandon Armenia.

Referring to the request of the Armenians of Bulgaria to Mr. Radislavov, the prime minister, asking him to appeal to the Sublime Porte with the hope that he would be able to bring an end to the persecutions perpetrated against the Armenians, Mr. Bérard reproached our compatriots for having petitioned to the Bulgarian government, without taking into consideration the latter's attitude toward the Tetrads Entente. I told him that the initiative was not a political action but rather a humanitarian appeal, and no matter how skeptical we could be about the effect of Bulgaria's intervention at the Sublime Porte, I thought it had at least one percent chance [of being effective], and therefore, taking this into account our compatriots had taken a positive step. I added that in this matter my personal point of view was so clear cut that, even though it was quite difficult for me, I had not hesitated to personally write to Mr. Zimmermann, who was an advisor to the German Foreign Ministry, asking that Germany should interfere by advising its ally to bring an end to their horrible crimes and the annihilation of the Armenians. I had sent it by mail, knowing that it would have been intercepted by the censors and read; I had not seen any reason for hiding it, as mine was a humanitarian appeal and not a political action. Furthermore, I added that I did not think

it would have any positive effect; I did not even hope that I would receive an answer, but I had written it just dictated by the obligation of my mission.

Mr. Bérard said that Mr. Zimmermann would answer my letter, but it would not bring results.

I told him that I met in Bern the former khedive who had asked to see me.¹ Mr. Bérard wanted to know about the khedive's views on the Turkish ministers, their way of thinking, and the attitude of the Turkish government toward the war.

The way Mr. Bérard talked about the former khedive and showed interest in the latter's relationship with Turkish ministers, I got the impression that he was considering the khedive to become a useful mediator for the Allies.

Mr. Bérard said that since, before leaving for Italy, I should meet Mr. Delcassé to express my concern about a separate peace treaty with Turkey, it would be a good idea to inform him about my meeting with the former khedive in Switzerland and my good relationship with him. He added that he would see Mr. Delcassé himself the following day to discuss the Balkan Question, and seizing the opportunity, he would manage a meeting for me with him.

The eagerness of Bérard affirmed my opinion that if, at the present, the rumors about a separate treaty with Turkey were groundless, it was nevertheless true that the Allies would not hesitate to negotiate with Turkey if they had the opportunity. It was for this reason that I had decided to prevent such a possibility from happening, here in London, too, so that in case of a separate treaty, the Armenian Question would not be forgotten and thus disappoint the Armenians once again. That was the purpose of my meeting with Mr. Delcassé.

As I was leaving, I promised Mr. Bérard that I should see him again after my meeting with Mr. Delcassé and inform him about the outcome of that meeting.

¹ Abbas Hilmi II (1874–1944) was khedive of Egypt from 1892 through 1914. He was deposed when Great Britain established a protectorate over Egypt in December 1914.

163**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Delcassé
1577–1585 FA**

Paris, September 14, 1915

Recently I had the opportunity of meeting with Mr. de Caix, who had referred to a separate peace treaty with Turkey that could be agreed upon before the occupation of Dardanelles. Since Mr. de Caix never expresses his opinion in full, I could not tell whether the idea was his own or if it had come from Quai d'Orsay. I was disturbed by this thought, since, undoubtedly, in such a situation, the conditions of peace would be totally different from those that they would impose upon Turkey after its defeat. Therefore, I decided to find out the truth and thwart it, reminding Quai d'Orsay about the Armenian Question and guaranteeing that it would not be sacrificed to a separate treaty. That is the reason why I asked for this meeting.

Mr. Delcassé asked me what I had done since our last meeting and whether I had gone to London as I had planned.

I answered that I had, indeed, gone to London and gave him a short summary of my trip. When I mentioned Lord Lansdowne's name, he wanted to know if I had met him at his Barclay house and what had been his reaction to my plan. I told him that Lord Lansdowne seemed to be mostly interested in my arguments regarding the Baghdad railway terminal and had found them logical and solid. I had the same impression after my meeting with Sir Arthur Nicolson to whom, following his request, I had submitted a memorandum similar to the one I had given to Mr. Delcassé, with the only difference that in the one given to Sir Arthur, I had emphasized the British interests. I further stated that Sir Arthur, after reading the memorandum, had told a friend* that he had found my proposed solution to the Armenian Question quite practical and repeated that statement to me.

When I mentioned the name of Mr. Steede, the director of *The Times*, Mr. Delcassé said that he knew him and that his opinion carried weight. It seemed to me that he thought very highly of Mr. Steede.

Although Mr. Delcassé avoids expressing his opinion—as he had told me once that it was his principle—I still felt that the outcome of my London trip, which had been generally favorable to the idea of creating an autonomous Armenia, pleased him.

When I told him that I also planned to visit Rome, he gave his consent and found it reasonable after my trips to London and Paris.

I came to the main point of my visit and told him that, recently, I had heard rumors regarding a separate peace treaty with Turkey. I explained that I did not know the exact details of the rumors but considering the

* Refers to Count Benckendorff, Russian ambassador to London.

possibility of truth, I had come to ask him, on behalf of all my compatriots, that France extend its help, so that the Armenians would not be sacrificed by inserting a five-line clause in the peace treaty, similar to the sixty-first clause of the Berlin Treaty, which was never implemented.

Mr. Delcassé expressed surprise at the rumors and said that they were unfounded and never discussed.

I told him that his answer had made me extremely happy. But I further stated that such rumors were credible and could be confirmed in the near future, not as a result of the Allies' initiative but of the Turks. It would not surprise me at all that, following the capture of Dardanelles or even before, considering its eventual defeat, Turkey asked for peace, with the condition that it would not be overthrown. Even if the government fell, the new administration would be in a better position to present the same request.

Mr. Delcassé did not deny the possibility of such a turn of events, and without being definitive, said that he did not think my apprehension was justified. He repeated that at the present time, there was no question about a separate peace treaty and I could rest assured. He said it in such a reassuring manner that I told him I felt very much relieved, because there was no doubt in my mind that with a separate treaty it would not be possible to impose upon Turkey the same conditions as in the case of a total defeat.

Seizing upon the opportunity, I talked about the latest atrocities perpetrated with a view to annihilating the Armenian nation. I informed him about the news received from the Patriarchate [of Constantinople] and the provinces; I described the collective deportations and exiles in the deserts where all those who had survived hunger and exhaustion would not be able to escape death. I mentioned the article in *Journal de Genève*, which compared the present day Turks with Assyrians, saying that the latter, while enslaving the Israelites, spared their lives, whereas the Ottoman government aimed at exterminating the entire nation.

Mr. Delcassé said that Germany encouraged the policy of annihilation. It was quite probable, I replied, but I also reminded him of the assurance given to me in Bern by a Turkish notable from Constantinople that Baron Wangenheim[†] had vigorously protested to the Sublime Porte against the massacres.

Mr. Delcassé concluded that, in that case, the Germans were acting hypocritically.

I told him that whatever the case, the persecutions and massacres were a reality and pointed out that after all those crimes how impossible it was to accept a solution that would leave the Armenians under Turkish rule. I added that even though the case involved massacres and the annihilation of a whole nation, it was not the humanitarian aspect of the Armenian Question that had become expedient but the fact that its solution was imperative for securing

[†] The German ambassador to Constantinople.

peace. As I had mentioned in my memorandum and on other occasions, the Eastern problem would stay alive with all its dangers, disputes, and complications as long as the Armenian Question was not solved completely—in such a way that those people should no longer be subjected to the whims of the Turkish government, nor of Germany, whose influence in Turkey would greatly increase after the war. I continued, explaining that the solution we proposed to the Allies satisfied all those conditions and would become a factor guaranteeing peace for the countries constituting Asiatic Turkey.

In spite of the fact that Mr. Delcassé's declaration, at least for the time being, had reassured me about the unfounded nature of the rumors concerning a separate peace treaty, I profited from the occasion and made an intentional observation about our plan of an autonomous Armenia, just as a reminder.

Concerning another topic, Mr. Delcassé said that he had heard from Mr. Victor Bérard about my recent meeting with the khedive and asked me if the khedive was still involved in negotiating to abdicate the throne.

"Three months ago," said Mr. Delcassé, "I was informed that he was disposed to resign from his throne, provided arrangements were made to secure him financially."

I asked Mr. Delcassé if the khedive had appealed to him directly. He denied it and said that he had heard about it from a reliable source.

I told him that indeed the khedive had wished to see me, and I had gone to Bern after securing the consent of the sultan.¹ The khedive had thought about me to go to London and appeal to the English government to bring a solution to his problem. I was forced to decline his proposal, but I mentioned that I was always available to transmit his requests to H. M. the sultan. Our meeting had brought no other outcomes.

Mr. Delcassé said that the khedive kept communicating with Germany and had already left Switzerland and that no one knew where he had gone. I told him that perhaps he had gone to Constantinople, responding to the Turkish government's persistent call. In fact, Constantinople exerted a kind of attraction upon the princes of the East. For instance, Ismail Pasha, after his resignation from the throne, instead of going to Europe, where he could live freely, had chosen to return to Constantinople and there, until his death, he was confined by Abdul Hamid, forbidding him to travel abroad.

Mr. Delcassé accompanied me to the door, and as I was about to leave, he repeated that I should not be troubled by the rumors concerning a separate treaty.

I would also like to record that during the meeting, when the Russian defeats and their commendable resistance were discussed, Mr. Delcassé said that those defeats were only due to a shortage of ammunition, but nevertheless, the Russians knew how to score victories with successful

¹ Mohammed (Mehmed) V (1844–1918).

counterattacks. Now efforts were exerted to correct that situation and it was expected that within two to three months, Russia would have at its disposal all the armaments it needed.

164**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Etienne**

[Excerpt]

1586–1587 FA

Paris, September 18, 1915

(The pasha expounds his plan, giving documented evidence, and then adds:)

We, the Armenians, have no military power to impose our will toward the accomplishment of our national goals. Our whole power relies on persuasion, with solid arguments based upon the interests of the Allies. Mr. Etienne totally agreed with my plan and said that my arguments were concrete.

(The pasha refers to the rumors regarding a separate peace treaty with Turkey. These are denied by Mr. Etienne, who reassures the pasha that the Turks have totally lost and there is no reason to fear.)

I told him that this assurance comforted and rejoiced me, because I knew that in France and also in Quai d'Orsay there were still people who were not pleased to witness the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire and they would be ready to work toward preserving it, if they had the power to do so.

"I know," said Mr. Etienne, "I know these people of Quai d'Orsay that you are alluding to. But do not be afraid; their opinion will never carry weight. The Turks should never pin their hopes on us in that respect."

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Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Izvolski
1588–1594 FA

Paris, September 22, 1915

I explained to him the reason forcing me to shorten my holidays in Aix and to return to Paris. I had heard, from a generally reliable source, about the rumors in Paris, regarding a probable separate peace treaty with Turkey. Since such an event was not only probable but quite logical, I was afraid that, as a result of a sudden decision, the Armenian Question might be disregarded in the treaty. Therefore, I had come to Paris particularly to see Mr. Delcassé and ask him that a special clause securing a final solution to our case be incorporated in the treaty—a clause that would allow our compatriots to be delivered from Turkish rule. I added that Mr. Delcassé had reassured me that the rumors were unfounded, and he had stated that the Armenians did not need to worry about being forgotten.

Mr. Izvolski said that the information he had received confirmed my account. He was carefully watching the developments, knowing full well that certain French political circles and even some officials of the Quai d'Orsay had a pro-Turkish bias. Some even felt sorry about the eventual dismantlement of Turkey. Therefore, he was in complete agreement with my appeal, considering that if the rumors were indeed false, it was also evident that they were not improbable and could become reality one day.

He asked me if I read the newspaper *Guerre Sociale*,* and he advised me to do so because it reflected the view of the Socialist Party. He showed me Hervé's article published on the same day; I am transcribing the following segment:

“Thus for the Tetrad Entente there are two ways to deal with Turkey.

“Either, at this stage, when we suffer from a shortage of ammunition, we organize an assault with 200,000 to 300,000 fresh soldiers.

“Or, *we offer peace to poor Turkey, against which we harbor no hatred and it expresses no indignation at its centuries-old protectors, France and England, provided that it agrees to neutralize its straits and opens them before Russia.*† In order to take advantage of the Bosphorus-Dardanelles passage, and receive, as soon as possible, the munitions that is lacking, Russia might be satisfied with this half-measure. As for Turkey, it will undoubtedly throw itself in the arms of the Tetrad Entente, if the latter extends to it an olive branch with honorable terms.”

* Published by Gustave Hervé, and later renamed *La Victoire*.

† Underlined [italicized] by the Pasha.

After reading this segment, the ambassador said that it was an indication that we should always be alert, and I was right in my decision to intervene.

I told him that I was not satisfied with the idea of staying in Paris only, and I was ready to go to London if needed; however, I had fortunately found a very valuable collaborator there, Lord Bryce, and I was in constant communication with him and, consequently, I did not have to go to London. Therefore, I had written to Lord Bryce and informed him about the rumors and my concerns. I also added that his answer had absolutely reassured me, in that not only had there not been any discussions concerning a separate peace treaty, but even if such a possibility became a reality, Turkey should not nurture high hopes, because England was determined not to leave the Armenians under Turkish rule anymore. The reasons enumerated by Lord Bryce, e.g., the forced conversions to Islam, carried weight upon England's public opinion. England would not tolerate those forcibly converted Christians to remain without protection; a situation had to be created to allow them to return to their original faith. Even if Armenia had to become part of Asiatic Turkey, Lord Bryce said, "It is the duty of the Allies, either to deliver the Armenians from Turkish rule—which is the best solution—or, at least, create in Armenia a local government that will, practically, be able to protect the Christians."

Mr. Izvolski said that those were important points and he was glad to be informed about them. He suggested that more articles should appear in the press. I told him that recently, in England, a number of positive articles about us were issued, and that I had sent to the press a few excerpts from a letter written by the Patriarch of Constantinople, contriving accurate accounts of forced conversions and rapes, which would certainly impress [the public]. Moreover, I had tried to have some articles published in *Matin* and met Bounot-Varilat,[‡] but unfortunately, my meeting had produced no results, despite Varilat's promises. I should contact *Temps* about publishing articles prepared by us.

Mr. Izvolski also advised me to see the *Journal*, which had achieved importance after the takeover by Mr. Humbert. The [ambassador] gave me a recommendation letter addressed to a valuable journalist, Mr. René Moulin, who is actually working for *Revue hebdomadaire*, but he will soon move to the *Journal*.

I informed him that I was going to Italy the following week. He agreed with my plan and asked me whether I knew Mr. de Giers. He suggested that I should see him. I knew him already from the days of reforms negotiations and I told the [ambassador] that I did not need a recommendation.

Regarding the war and the operations in the Dardanelles, Mr. Izvolski said that the English had committed grave mistakes.

[‡] The owner of the newspaper.

I asked him if finally they were not going to decide to send a large number of troops to bring the campaign to an end. He thought that the Dardanelles was not large enough and the deployment of more soldiers would serve no purpose. He also informed me that lately he had met General d'Amade, who had confirmed his assumption and compared it to a huge crowd leaving the metro[§] and rushing to the exit, where the narrow passage could only allow a small number of people to cross the gate together.

Referring to the Dardanelles campaign, he said that his son was wounded there in an operation and had been decorated and that it made him very proud. I congratulated him and asked him to convey my congratulations also to Mrs. Izvolski.

[§] Metropolitan subway system.

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Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Ogagnord

[Excerpt]

1959–1597 FA

Paris, September 29, 1915

I expressed hope that during the last ministerial sessions, [because of which the minister had twice postponed his meeting with the pasha], important decisions were taken to react to the Bulgarian mobilization which represented a threat to the East and also disturbed us, the Armenians, a great deal, because if the Germans reached Constantinople with the help of the Bulgarians, no Armenian would survive.

The minister told me that, indeed, the Council of Ministers had discussed the question of the Balkans and that the Allies would come to the aid of Serbia if the latter was attacked by Bulgaria.

I had already written to Mr. Ogagnord and asked for this meeting in order to express personally the gratitude of all Armenians for saving 5,000 Armenians from Turkish persecution. A French cruiser had picked up the Armenians from the gulf of Alexandretta and transported them to Port Said.¹ The minister said that the French navy was indeed very happy for having rescued those unfortunate people from inescapable death; he also asserted that if the situation repeated itself, he would immediately send battleships to help our compatriots whose suffering was well known to him.

He added that the telegram from Cairo published in *Temps*, informing about the rescue of another 8,000 Armenians, was false. He concluded that the *Temps* reporter had misunderstood the telegram.

(The conversation centers around the solution of the Armenian problem. The pasha elaborates upon his plan and Mr. Ogagnord promises his support for its accomplishment.)

He added that as France was in a state of war with Turkey, it could not ignore the question of Asia Minor, and that as its first observation post it had captured, with the help of its navy, the island of Road, off the coast of Syria.

Naturally, I repeated my gratitude on behalf of my compatriots and on my own.

Then we talked about the Bulgarian ministerial crisis, which was announced in today's papers, confirming that Mr. Malinov would form the new

¹ Refers to the Armenians of Musa Dagh. On July 1, 1915, Storss wrote home: "Port Said is swamped by Armenian refugees, dumped upon us from Cilicia by French battleships. They are fighting the Turks very bravely." Martin Gilbert, *The First World War—a Complete History* (New York, 1994), 272.

Franz Werfel (1890–1945), the Austrian writer, has an award-winning novel—*The 40 Days of Musa Dagh* (1934)—dedicated to the heroic resistance of the Armenians.

cabinet. Mr. Ogagnord expressed his doubts about that news report. In his opinion, only a few ministers will be replaced, which, of course, does not represent any change in government policy. He added that the king of Bulgaria was surrounded by Germans and he did not think it was probable that the monarch would side with the Tetrads Entente.

Mr. Jean Gout, whom I had met this morning, referring to this crisis, had said, "It is not the cabinet but the king that must be changed."

On the other hand, Mr. Ogagnord hopes that the Allies will succeed in coming to an agreement with Greece.

I asked him if the king of Greece was not under the influence of his brother-in-law, the kaiser.² He said, "As long as the Bulgarians do not take part in the fighting, that is possible. However, there is no doubt that sooner or later the hatred that King Constantine bears against the Bulgarians will get the upper hand."

² King Constantine was married to Princess Sophia Dorothea of Hohenzollern, the sister of Kaiser William II.

167**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Clemenceau**

[Excerpt]

1598–1599 FA

Paris, October 25, 1915

He has a firm conviction about the final victory. He said that by virtue of the latest victories at Zampani and Artois it would be possible to break through the German line. Unfortunately, that was not achieved because of the stupidity of the generals.

Clemenceau was against weakening the French front. He thought the final victory depended on it. He believed that the front was going to resist the German efforts and for that all available soldiers had to remain there.

The English want to withdraw some of their forces from France to send them to Salonica. Clemenceau said he was against the move and was against the Balkan campaign for the same reason. The French had 30,000 to 40,000 soldiers there, and they will never send more than 60,000 in all, except for the English. But even such a number would not suffice to accomplish the goal.

Clemenceau confirmed that it was not the English government but the French that wanted the Salonica expedition. Although he did not want to reveal the name, he read a letter written by a very important English official who had asked him to deny all rumors to the contrary. The letter said it was Mr. Viviani, who had requested it from Lord Kitchener, and persuaded him to go to France to confer with Joffre on this matter. A week ago, Millerand had gone back to London for the same reason. The letter also contained some criticism about the English cabinet, suggesting that there should be some changes.

Clemenceau said that according to his information, the English were not worried that the Germans would reach Egypt; they thought they could stop them in Cilicia. For an army going to Syria from Constantinople, two ways were available: one was through the high mountain passes of the Taurus, which were covered with snow during winter and, therefore, inaccessible, and the second was the route by the seashore, which was within the firing range of the navy. If necessary the English could also disembark troops to build fortifications.

Clemenceau also said that France had no government but just an inept cabinet and an unqualified parliament. There was no public opinion either, because of the simple reason that all men were in the army.

But the spirit of the people is admirable [he added]; they have decided to go to the bitter end. Clemenceau has seen wounded soldiers who were indifferent about their condition; they were only concerned about France's victory.

168**Catholicos Kevork V To Boghos Nubar
748-752 AA**

Etchmiadzin, October 15/28, 1915

Your Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha

I have received Your Excellency's letters of August 22 and September 14.

1. I am pleased that the misunderstanding caused by Dr. Zavriev, Mr. Abraham Ghoukasian, and their letters to you is clarified. I would like to inform you the following about their departure to Europe. Mr. Mikael Papadjanian, member of the Duma, visited me at the beginning of April of this year and asked me, on behalf of the Committee of Petrograd Armenians and the National Bureau of Tiflis, to nominate Dr. Zavriev and Mr. Abraham Ghoukasian as plenipotentiaries and instruct them to submit official petitions to the powers. He also asked me to inform the ambassadors in London and Paris about these nominations through the minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia. I did not consent to this and told Mr. Papadjanian that Your Excellency was my sole representative and that I was quite satisfied with you. I also told him that soon you would be leaving for Europe and I had no time to assign and authorize others to negotiate, even on a temporary basis. The only concession that I made was to mention the names of Dr. Zavriev and Mr. Abraham Ghoukasian in my April 5/18 telegram to Cairo. I thought they could furnish you with important information that might have been useful to you during your negotiations.

I did not entrust them with other responsibilities.

2. I received the copies of the memoranda that you had submitted to the foreign ministers of England and France. They were necessary. I believe you have already presented a similar memorandum to the Italian foreign minister.

In the P. S. of your memorandum of July 13, presented to the foreign minister of England in London, you have discussed briefly the persecutions, the massacres, and the exiles perpetrated by the Turkish government against the Armenians in Cilicia and Armenia. You have explained more elaborately to the Deputy Foreign Minister, Sir Arthur Nicolson, and the ambassadors of the Allies in London the fiendish plan to annihilate the Armenians, by massacres and mass deportations before the end of the war. It is true that the Allies, at the moment, have no means of alleviating the pain of the suffering Armenians and delivering the helpless population from the atrocities of Turkish and Kurdish barbarians. Nevertheless, it is necessary to remind them

periodically and emphasize the true aim of the Turkish government: *to evacuate Armenia and Cilicia of its Armenian element and replace it with Kurdish and Moslem immigrants.*

And now, as we witness, with utter dismay, that the cruel Turkish government is realizing its plan uninhibitedly on the grandest scale, partly as a reaction to the charge made by the Allies with respect to the individual responsibility of the Turkish ministers—as witnessed by Mr. Ledoulx, the first interpreter of the French Embassy—one of our most important tasks must be, after securing the autonomy of Armenia, after their victory with the decision and the support of the Allies (Russia, France, England, and Italy), *to allow all Armenians* (from Russia, Egypt, America, and other countries), who wish to return to Armenia, to reclaim their properties that were usurped for decades by the Turks and Kurds.

3. In your letter dated August 22, you inquire about the National Bureau of Tiflis. For the moment, let me tell you that for over a year now, it has been receiving donations to organize volunteer fighting units. It has initiated this movement independently and is pursuing it without consulting us. When the [National] Bureau appeals to me for various problems, I sometimes agree to intervene at the highest government levels on their behalf, and other times I decline them, just as it happened in the above-mentioned case.

Also independently, the Hunchaks and the Constitutional Democrats (Ramgavars) have organized volunteer units.

The atmosphere of disagreement and dissension as created most unfortunately by our parties at these crucial times causes us a great deal of pain and distress.

I wish they would sober up as of now and bring an end to their emotional quarrels and the ensuing dissension. In this respect, you, too, express indignation at the beginning of your letter of July 29. But let us shun all our dejection, pessimism, and debilitating thoughts, and let us continue to create unity and solidarity in our activities concerning national issues. We must proceed forward, with utmost prudence, in order to achieve, after such heavy blows, the liberation of the Armenian nation in his autonomous native land, Armenia, free at last from the chains of the oppressive, centuries-old Turkish bondage.

4. I am enclosing the official documents concerning your mission, to be submitted to the foreign ministers of England, France, and Italy.

I hereby express my total confidence in your vigorous and prudent actions. I pray God to grant you health and success to ensure the salvation of our nation and to inspire us consolation.

[Annex]
Copy of Encyclical
753–755 AA

*Kevoork, servant of Jesus Christ and by the unassailable will of God, Archbishop, Bishop and Catholicos of All Armenians, Supreme Patriarch of the Apostolic, Araratian Primary National Church at Holy Etchmiadzin, Most Reverend Primate of Armenians..... * Greetings and blessings to the true children of the Mother See.*

Because of the war which shakes the world, the situation of the Turkish Armenians worsens gradually. Turkish Armenia is totally being destroyed; Armenian cities and villages are being ruined; hundreds of Armenians are being slaughtered by the bullet or by the sword, while the rest, mostly women and children, are being driven forcefully to faraway lands or are finding refuge in the mountains or in our pleas. Considering the tragic and distressing situation of the Turkish Armenians, the barbaric persecutions inflicted upon them and the fiendish project of annihilation devised by the evil Turkish government, we have appointed His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha as president of the National Delegation and our own plenipotentiary to stand up for the rights of our tortured Armenian nation. By our encyclical number 761, of April the 28th of this year, we instructed him to, primarily, protest periodically before the Triple Entente and the neutral states against the Turkish government's unspeakable atrocities and barbaric acts, and secondly, speak for the autonomy of Turkish Armenia, explaining to government officials, ministers, and state leaders of the Triple Entente and the neutral nations the present situation and giving them ample information.

With respect to the mission that we have entrusted His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha, we have officially informed the foreign ministers of the Allies.

We deem it crucial to inform you and all community leaders of our fatherly counsel to act in unison toward the successful solution of our cause, and, henceforth, not to intercede independently with state officials and ministers of the Triple Entente and the neutral states regarding the future of Turkish Armenia. We advise you to petition with respect to our case, when the need arises, but only after consulting our plenipotentiary and the president of the Armenian Delegation, His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha. Antagonisms will certainly undermine our national cause. We consider it worthwhile to publicize in all European and American newspapers our protests against the Turkish government's atrocities, by which it strives to destroy completely the Armenian nation, and consequently, by virtue of this devilish plan, to bring an end to the Armenian Question and the issue of autonomy for Turkish Armenia.

* The name of a primate to be placed.

We earnestly hope that, at this historic moment, our spiritual and beloved sons everywhere will act in unison and solidarity, in quest of bringing salvation to our unfortunate nation and the blood-soaked Armenia.

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Speech Given by Boghos Nubar
at the Banquet of the American Club*
1600–1611 FA

Paris, November 18, 1915

Mr. Ambassador and Gentlemen:

I am sure that you will be pleased if I address you in your own language, in order to express my appreciation for the honor of having me with you at this gathering of the American community, and to voice my gratitude to you. You will also be kind enough to excuse me if my elocution won't be as satisfactory and betray my origin as an Armenian.

I am also grateful to you for allowing me to expose in front of the citizens of the great Republic of America the grave condition of my compatriots in Turkey.

I am glad I can express to Dr. Adams Gibbons, who has lived with the peoples of the East and appreciated and known them closely, who has witnessed their suffering and even endangered his life for their defense, and who has been the first one to expose the truth about the massacres of Adana,¹ on behalf of all Armenians and on my own, our deepest gratitude for his active and unfailing sympathy toward us. When Dr. Gibbons extended to me your most gracious invitation to address you, I admit that I hesitated at first. The reason for this hesitation was my cautiousness, which is, especially at these critical times, due to my position as the special representative of His Holiness, the Catholicos, the Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians. In fact, the Turkish government takes advantage of the most insignificant events to intensify its policy of persecution against the Armenian population subject to its whim. Last May, the declaration of the Allies that they would hold the Ottoman ministers personally responsible for the massacres resulted in new arrests and murders. Among those, I would mention the two most renowned members of the Ottoman parliament.² The Turkish government follows closely even our most insignificant petitions and declarations, even the contents of Armenian newspapers, and mostly, as a result of my position, my activities. Whatever I do and say is always interpreted in such a way that it becomes a cause for retaliation. Therefore, under the circumstances, I am

* The Pasha gave the speech in English. We have translated it to Armenian from the French version that was prepared by the Pasha himself.

¹ Dr. Herbert Adams Gibbons (1880–1934) was an American journalist and historian. He wrote *The Blackest Page in Modern History; Events in Armenia in 1915* (New York, 1916). Later he published his *Armenia in the World War* (New York, 1926).

² B. Nubar had in mind Krikor Zohrab and Vartkes Serengulian.

absolutely compelled to remain circumspect, not to become a cause for new Armenian casualties.

Today is an exception; the reason for it is that you had been kind enough to inform me about the informal nature of this gathering, and besides, under the present circumstances the Armenian Question has lost its political nature. It has become a humanitarian issue; today the urgency is to help a Christian nation that is persecuted and martyred without reason.

Mr. Tchobanian gave an eloquent historical overview about Armenians in Turkey, which I am sure you appreciated. I shall not repeat his statements, but I will support them and reaffirm his conclusions.

I would only like to mention a few facts, which are unveiled in several authentic reports, and to read short excerpts from the exceptional report of the Committee on Armenian Atrocities³ prepared by the committee according to the declarations of witnesses. Most of these witnesses are American missionaries, who showed admirable courage and devotion during the massacres, and endangering their lives, and even at the cost of their own lives, saved some Armenians.

This important report reveals that the Turkish government, in order to give an official nature to the deportations, has sent directives to the provinces. I would like to read the second clause.

Clause 2: "The army commanding officers, independent army corps or divisions, in case of suspicion of espionage or treason, and for military reasons, can expel, both individually and collectively, the population of villages and cities and exile them to other places."

Following this directive, the Turks adapted and executed a more efficient plan of extermination to uproot the Armenians en masse from their homes and exile them to the most remote corners of the empire. These exiles have been carried out in such a way that families have been divided, husbands and wives separated, and children severed from their parents. Entire cities and villages are evacuated, with such haste that people have had no time to prepare themselves for the journey to reach their destination of exile, and in some cases, they have not been able to take the necessary provisions with them. An American missionary confirms that only from the provinces of Erzerum, Sivas, and Kharput, 600,000 Armenians were driven away from their homes. Often men were tied together with ropes and chains. Women carrying their infants or in advanced pregnancy were whipped and forced to march like cattle. Some of these women, after delivering their babies on the road, were hemorrhaged to death because guards forced them to start walking right away.

³ The Committee on Armenian Atrocities—James L. Barton, president; Charles Crane, treasurer; Samuel Dutton, secretary—was established in 1915. It undertook the examination of reports on Armenian atrocities and frequently published the results of the examinations.

Many women and young girls were subjected to the ultimate outrage. A commanding officer of the gendarmerie delivered a large group of deportees to his men, telling them that they could behave with those women and young girls any way they wanted.

In several cases, in order to save their lives, Armenians consented to accept Islam but their request was not easily accepted. Thus, in Sivas for example, they issued the following conditions to those who wanted to convert to Islam—children under twelve would be surrendered to the government, which would place them in orphanages, while the banished parents would live in areas designated by the government.

On the other hand, conversion of women and young girls was more frequent. In the province of Kharput, the women and boys were placed at the service of the Moslems. From the highest functionary to the lowest peasant was allowed to take the woman or the girl of his choice and make her a wife. Everyone was free to pick up as many women as he desired. The rest were left hungry, condemned to inevitable death.

These are but a few episodes of the loathsome measures. It was truly said with regard to these acts that if Abdul Hamid slaughtered 300,000 Armenians during the 1895–96 massacres, the Young Turk government devised a more efficient way to annihilate one million Armenians, without putting them to the sword.

Only two days ago in the British Parliament, when Mr. Aneurin Williams and T. P. O'Connor, two most generous and strong supporters of our case, asked the government to bring immediate help to agonizing Armenia, the advisor of the Foreign Affairs, Lord Robert Cecil, denounced those crimes.

Allow me to quote a few passages from his reply:

“The massacres in Armenia are the most horrible crimes ever. The Parliament undoubtedly remembers that before the declaration of war, in February 1914, the Allied nations obliged the Turkish government to accept implementing reforms to improve the conditions of life for Armenians and guarantee their safety. Some time later the war broke out, and even before entering the hostilities, the Turkish government discarded the reform plans. The Ittihat ve Terakki Committee soon seized upon the opportunity of acting without restraint and succeeded in accomplishing that heinous plan, the outcome of which we are witnessing now. Without any exaggeration, it could be said that in the history of mankind such a horrible crime has never been committed; they have not hesitated to apply the most exaggerated methods of killing.”

Lord Cecil added that Great Britain could not assume a task, as suggested, that would impel them to use the navy, army, and consular corps in support of the Armenians. After all, the best help to be extended to Armenians would be the triumphal outcome of this war (voices of approval) and therefore, and above all, all our efforts must be focused upon [securing the

victory]. With this reservation, the lord is confident that when the opportunity rises to help the Armenians, by means of consular staff or armed intervention, the government definitely will not hesitate to use the country's forces for such a noble purpose.

So far no means were able to stop the deluge of atrocities. All efforts have failed. I already told you what kind of consequences the declaration sent to the Ottoman government by the Allies had produced.

Regarding the sympathy and generous help that has been extended by the United States to our compatriots, I would like to join Mr. Tchobanian by wholeheartedly endorsing his words of gratitude to you. So clearly he revealed not only the untiring devotion of the American missionaries but their zeal to educate and civilize Armenia. These good deeds are never forgotten, and they will be cherished forever by the Armenian nation. The Turkish government tries to destroy and exterminate the achievements of your missions, the fruit of your efforts, and sacrifices of sixty years.

Gentlemen, I presented to you excerpts from that truly decisive indictment, that report which is prepared by the Committee on Armenian Atrocities. It contains the names of the most eminent personalities of your country, such as Charles Crane, Samuel Dutton, Cleveland Dodge, Arthur James, Stephen Wise, Frank Mason North, John Mott, Stanley White, James Barton, William Haven, George Plimpton, William Sloane, Carl Davis Robinson, Frederick Lynch, Norman Hapgoode, Edward Lincoln Smith, Bishop David Greer, William Rockhill, Oscar Straus, and others.

This committee, with the support of all noble-hearted people gathered around it, has not only published this report, but it has succeeded in creating a certain sympathy in public opinion [toward the Armenian case]. They have even been able to raise, as an initial assistance, a sum of 100,000 dollars and sent it to the ambassador in Constantinople, Mr. Morgenthau, as a first contribution. Undoubtedly, this is the largest sum of money that our compatriots have received so far and the fund-raising is bringing positive results at the present, beyond our hopes.

The government of the United States also gave us its official assistance, striving to end the persecution. President Wilson, in response to His Holiness the Catholicos' appeal, intervened through his ambassadors with its appeals to the Turkish government. The president approached the German and Austrian governments with similar requests. Moreover, he took the necessary steps, most generously, to facilitate the entry of the Armenians to the United States, the only refuge where they could escape death.

We still hope that President Wilson's interventions will not remain fruitless and exile will not be the only means of salvation for all those unfortunate peoples, as it is today.

Very briefly, this is [an account of] the sympathy and assistance that our cause has earned in America. For me, Your Excellency, it is a particularly pleasant duty, taking advantage of this opportunity, to ask you in the name of

all my compatriots to convey to President Wilson and our friends in America, the deep and unreserved gratitude of all Armenians.

If you allow me, I would like to end my remarks by expressing my wishes. First of all, I would ask your government to take measures so that the Sublime Porte rescinds its unjustifiable refusal to the American Red Cross to bring help to the Armenians of the provinces, in response to their request. This request is warranted. During the 1895–96 massacres, the American Red Cross sent a group of its workers, headed by Miss Barton, to help the Armenians. Today the miseries to be alleviated are tenfold more serious.

My second wish is, and this is something very close to our heart, that with your country's undertaking, regardless of the outcome of the present war, the case of all those Armenians forcibly converted to Islam be decided once and for all, so that after the war they be allowed to return to Christianity, to their ancestral faith.

Forgive me for my hope to see these two wishes fulfilled and that all these noble efforts succeed in preventing the total annihilation of the Armenian nation, the achievement of this bestial crime premeditated by the Young Turk government, before the eyes of the civilized world.

170**Boghos Nubar to Lord Bryce
1612–1613 EA**

Paris, December 14, 1915

Dear Lord Bryce:

Thank you for your initiative to talk before the members of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the French National Assembly about the activities of the Committee of Asie Française in favor of Turkey's Christians. I was delighted to hear that you had accepted to assume the presidency of the English Parliamentary Committee, which will work closely with its counterpart in France to develop more friendly relations and harmony between the political activities of both Allied countries.

I am convinced that with this endeavor, and by exchanging ideas freely and taking rapid decisions, it will be possible, from now on, to avoid certain difficulties and solve problems.

I am happy to see you share my opinion, in considering Asie Française as the ideal organization to assume the role that you have in mind—that after the war the committee settles the problems of the Christians living in Turkey. Many members of the Asie Française participate in the Foreign Affairs Commission of French National Assembly. Therefore, you will be able to contact them easily and talk about this matter. Perhaps, when you visit Paris next week, as announced in the newspapers, it would be possible for you to call a meeting of the Committee of Asie Française; a few words from you will undoubtedly create a favorable effect.

In any case, I hope I shall have the pleasure and honor of seeing you during your stay in Paris. This will give me the opportunity to greet you personally and express my thanks once again.

171**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V**
758–764 AA

Paris, December 20, 1915

His Holiness Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos
of All Armenians
Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

I had the honor of receiving Your Holiness' latest letter of October 28.

First of all, I wish to express my deepest gratitude for the satisfaction and confidence that you express in me. I would also like to thank you for your explanations about some of my undertakings accomplished before my nomination as Your Holiness' representative and about Messrs. Zavriev's and Ghoukasian's departure to Europe. It is unfortunate that I was not aware of them in time. Otherwise, if I had known that they had no official capacity, as I gather from Your Holiness' telegram, I would have treated Dr. Zavriev, who had come to Paris by himself, with reservation.

On the other hand, I am glad that Your Holiness has clarified his relationship with the National Bureau of Tiflis. It is obvious to me that Your Holiness has no connection with it. I am glad that I refused to enter into close communication with the [National] Bureau, despite some earnest pleas to that effect. Invariably, I answered to all requests, saying that having been nominated by Your Holiness for a mission in Europe, I ought to perform my duties according to Your Holiness' instructions and stay away from all parties.

In accordance with Your Holiness' statement, I, too, regretfully confirm that a spirit of discord is plaguing our compatriots, especially in the Caucasus, from where I receive continuous news of harmful and useless antagonism. Fortunately, a spirit of solidarity is noticeable in America and a few other countries where the different parties seem to be willing to cooperate with each other. I wish that this spirit continues and Your Holiness' authority and advice will bring an end to such unfortunate dissension which causes enormous harm to us. Foreigners are eventually exploiting such disagreements against us.

It is particularly unfortunate that these disagreements also involve the question of the volunteers, because they have drawn the attention of the Turks with the formation of their fighting squads. Using this as a pretext, the Turks have intensified their persecutions. This is why we have to act more cautiously when we deal with the question of volunteers.

From the very beginning, even at the time when public opinion was

favorable toward the creation of volunteer fighting groups, I was always troubled by the eventual consequences of their existence. I had even preferred that those Armenians who wanted to fight for the protection and liberation of their native land should enroll in the armies of the Allies. When I was in Egypt, I expounded this idea, but as Your Holiness remembers, my opinion was crudely and violently criticized; I was even accused of being unpatriotic. Swayed by the tide and elated by the initial success of the volunteers in the Caucasus, I was forced to contribute to the formation of volunteer units, since I, too, became hopeful, like others, that the volunteers would set the example of solidarity to our compatriots and this would enable us to demand autonomy.

Unfortunately, our hopes proved to be abortive. No doubt, serious blunders were made and the disagreements between the parties that wanted to take the credit for the formation of the units caused further dissension. This, in turn, contributed to the failure of the volunteers' efforts. Therefore, I would like to report, once again, that the existence of volunteer fighters served as a pretext to the Turks to commit atrocious crimes with unfounded vindictiveness. I am sure Your Holiness is aware of all this, and therefore, I do not want to elaborate it any further. We must learn our lesson from this situation, and allow me to point out that under the present conditions, it would be a very serious error to proceed with the same policy; this will result in further casualties among the remnants of the Armenian population of the provinces. This has been a bitter experience, and I feel personally at fault for not being steadfast in my initial opinions. I should mention that this is not solely my personal opinion. From many of our compatriots in America, England, Egypt, as well as from foreign personalities supporting our cause, including Lord Bryce, I receive letters clearly opposing the existence of volunteer fighters. They believe that not only these groups do not achieve positive results, but they expose the surviving Armenian masses to great dangers. Those Armenians who can carry arms can enroll in the armies of the Allies if they want to fight and avenge the slaughter of their brethren. This is what I tell all those people who ask my opinion about this matter. My conviction is so final that, when the Union of the Protection of Armenian Interests of America wrote to me, asking for 5,000 dollars to be sent to Your Holiness to be allotted partly to the volunteers, I asked their representative to contact Your Holiness and inform you how that sum was going to be used. I pledged to send to Your Holiness only the amount which was delivered to me previously. Your Holiness must have received a telegram in that respect from the above-mentioned organization.

After my return from England, when I wrote to you about my negotiations in France and England, we still did not realize the enormity of these ferocious persecutions inflicted upon our compatriots. At that time, we had been only partially aware of the efforts and could not imagine the immensity of the tragedy. Unfortunately, it has become obvious that the direction the

war has taken in the East, and particularly in Turkey, greatly aggravated our situation. If the extermination of hundreds and thousands of Armenians—some say up to 800,000¹—is confirmed, the Armenian Question will transform into a new issue and will not be able to be demanded by the Allies without some necessary changes when the peace treaties are signed.

I wish to believe that the horrible crimes that we have become aware of are truly exaggerated, at least in terms of the number of people murdered, disregarding the atrocities. I wish to believe that, in spite of the high count of victims, there will be enough Armenians left to justify our demands and legalize the fulfillment of our desires. At the present, everything depends upon the outcome of the war and the victory of the Allies. Our destiny is closely linked to their military achievements. It is obvious that, unfortunately, all our hopes will fade away if the war does not come to an end the way we wish. Therefore, all we have to do for the moment is to wait and see the outcome of events, to which, I repeat, all our efforts, our hopes, and wishes must conform.

For the reasons I have mentioned above, I feel obligated to bring all my negotiations to an end, since all my undertakings with the Allied nations will turn out to be inopportune and useless. Therefore, the three notices confirming my official capacity that I had requested from Your Holiness five months ago, and that reached me much later, I shall keep until more favorable conditions will allow me to present them.

N. B. I am glad to hear that the copies of my memoranda that I had submitted to the foreign ministers of France and England have reached Your Holiness. But Your Holiness does not acknowledge receipt of the summaries of my negotiations and meetings, which I had delivered to Dr. Zavriev. As the latter had more of an intimate nature, I would ask Your Holiness to let me know if you have received them.

¹ Bishop Tourian in a letter dated August 12, 1915, addressed to His Holiness Kevork V, Catholicos of All Armenians, presented the following statistics on Armenians killed, vanished, or converted forcibly into Islam: Aleppo 15,800; Sis 9,500; Hadjin 20,800; Zeitun 21,000; Frnouz 7,000; Divrig 11,300; Bitlis-Mush 51,500; Ismid 65,000; Armash 5,000; Brusa 25,000; Bandrma 15,000; Kayseri 40,000; Sivas 81,500; Tokat 23,000; Amasia 25,000; Shabin Karahisar 25,200; Samsun 20,000; Trebizond 32,700; Erzerum 75,000; Erzincan 25,500; Baybourt 17,000; Pasen 10,500; Derdjan 15,000; Kemakh 10,000; Kharput 45,000; Keghi 24,000; Seert 25,000; Diyarbakir 55,100; Agin 10,200; Arabkir 19,500; Tchameshgadzak 9,000; total 835,600. *State Historical Archive of Armenia, Fund 57, folder 5, file 96/1971*; and Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes puissance l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives Françaises 1914–1918* (Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1983), 132–134. A careful examination of the document reveals a slight difference in the figures given in Beylerian's anthology. It is worth noting, also, that the total should be 835,100 instead of 835,600.

172**Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar
765–770 AA**

Etchmiadzin, January 8, 1916

To His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Our Envoy in Europe

Your Excellency, Our Beloved:

A few days ago I received Your Excellency's report of December 20, with the French copy, which I read with satisfaction. I agree entirely with your theories and prudent thoughts.

From both personal and political points of view, it is very unpleasant to witness the disagreements between the different active bodies. Up till now it has been impossible to create a unified front and a spirit of cooperation. As much as the present situation is unfortunate, we still hope that the mistakes of the past and their doleful consequences will encourage the leaders of (our) organizations to act more cautiously and promote unanimity.

The tragic fate of Turkish Armenians and increasingly painful news about the tortures inflicted upon thousands of Armenians in Mesopotamia and the Syrian deserts, as well as the distressful situation of the Armenians left in Cilicia, Constantinople, and different parts of Turkey, forced us to appeal to neutral states and ask for their support regarding the Armenian case. We thought it would be appropriate to form a group of intellectuals from Europe and from here to appeal, under Your Excellency's advice and directives, to the neutral states of Europe and the president of the United States of America. Your Excellency shall be our only representative, and the others will act as auxiliary members. As members of this group the following were considered: Kapriel Effendi Noradounghian, Hovhanes Khan Massehian, and from here, Dr. Zavrian. But taking into account your point of view, as expressed in your previous communications that there was no need to add new members to the delegation, we considered it appropriate to ask Your Excellency's opinion with this letter.

Meanwhile, we considered to appeal to the president of the United States by a telegram and ask for his kind involvement in organizing a fund-raising campaign for the salvation of Armenians in Mesopotamia and other regions. On December 19, 1915, we sent the following telegram:

"Mr. Woodrow Wilson
"President of the Republic
"Washington

"According to information reaching us, a few hundred thousand

Armenians in Aleppo, Mosul, and also in Cilicia and Constantinople, are in a dire situation. Their very existence is threatened.

"The means of my fellow Armenians living in war zones are very meager. We have no way of bringing aid to them or helping them in their localities.

"Mr. President, fully aware of your kindness and compassion toward the afflicted, I appeal to you ardently, asking for your kind involvement in saving my nation living in Turkey, by making ways and means available so that we can supply these unfortunate people with food, clothing, and dwelling, and save them from extinction.

"The suffering of my people in Turkey is unbounded, having no match in history. I believe, without the slightest doubt, that the tragic situation of my people and my appeal to the chivalric spirit of the president of the Trans-Oceanic Republic will be worthy of consideration. I believe the noble American nation will extend a magnanimous helping hand to a nation that has a long history and is now doomed to oblivion."

At the same time, we sent a telegram to the primate of America, the Very Reverend Father Arsen; the following is the content of the telegram:

"Arsen Vehouni,
"Armenian Prelate
"Worcester, Mass.

"Today we applied to the president of the United States, Wilson, asking him to take the initiative to bring financial assistance to the Armenians in distress exiled to Mesopotamia and also to the Armenians of Constantinople.

"Arrange to meet him with a delegation on our behalf, giving him a detailed report about the misery of the Armenian nation and ask him earnestly to initiate a large-scale fund-raising campaign to save the remnants of the Armenian nation. This can be achieved by sending special representatives to the stricken areas to organize the humanitarian aid and by making available clothing, dwellings, and medical supplies. The help to be sent by us is very limited. Inform us about the outcome."

Apart from these appeals, the Armenian Bureau of Petrograd had thought of appealing to the neutral states in the same way; that is, to rouse pity toward the helpless Armenians and save them from imminent death as much as possible. On behalf of the chancery of the Holy See, we asked for information from them about their activities. When we receive the information, we shall transmit it to you, so that Your Excellency becomes aware of everything that is happening at the present moment.

Through Mikael Papadjanian, on December 19, I received the informal report that you had sent with Dr. Zavrian. My curiosity was aroused when I read it, and I was pleased about your cautious policy and your wise political

pursuit of the Cilicia question. Of course, all of these are to be decided in the future, and the nature of these political decisions depends on the victories of the Allies on the battlefields. We do not doubt about future success, for which we pray constantly.

We deem it appropriate to inform Your Excellency about all these, and at the same time, advise you to send us soon your viewpoint about the above-mentioned predicament. In order to expedite the solution of the problem, you can cable us a brief message saying “yes” in case of a positive outcome and “no” if it is negative.

I bless Your Excellency and your family. I wish you fortitude and I ask the Lord to inspire you with wisdom and prudence so that you persevere in your responsibility successfully to bring salvation to our unfortunate nation.

173**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kenork V**
771–775 AA

Paris, February 4, 1916

His Holiness Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos
of All Armenians
Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

In my previous letters I had the honor of bringing to Your Holiness' attention, more than once, the painful dissension among our compatriots. I feel that it is my duty, once again, to draw Your Holiness' attention to this matter. According to the information I have received from different sources, it seems that instead of abating, the partisan discord has reached a new peak among the Armenians in the Caucasus. I am sure that this situation anguishes and Your Holiness takes measures in order to bring it to an end. I wish to emphasize that this unfortunate situation is creating an undesirable impression in England, France, Switzerland, and America. Our most faithful and devoted supporters are disconcerted. I am afraid that if this situation persists, the sympathy as well as the merciful enthusiasm for our cause will diminish. I also dread that these quarrels and disagreements will do more harm and endanger our future by lessening the possibilities of positive reception of our lawful demands when the time will come to present our appeals. Furthermore, this may even lessen the possibilities of securing their supports for our plans, which we must pursue with unshakable faith until the final victory of the Allies.

It is imperative that this unfavorable situation immediately comes to an end, especially, if we consider that our English, Swiss, and American benefactors, disturbed by this unpleasant news coming from the Caucasus, have sent representatives to investigate, on the spot, the mentioned incidents, the distribution of aid by their committees, and their administrative activities; in short, everything related to the refugees of the Caucasus.

There is no need to emphasize the awful impression these representatives may develop when they confirm that the above-mentioned dissension and administrative inadequacies are not unfounded. Our cause will suffer a severe blow when unfavorable reports are sent to the British, Swiss, and American committees, whose sympathy to our cause, so far, has been most valuable.

Only the supreme authority and influence of Your Holiness can positively act to pacify the situation and alleviate the dissension and instruct our compatriots that it is absolutely necessary to follow the example of France

and England. In these countries, all [political] parties, even the extremists, without any hesitation, show commendable patriotic zeal and let go their disputes and grudges, stop pursuing personal interests and emotions, and concord all their efforts and strength, to create a unified front for the salvation of their homeland. The Labour Party leader of England is sitting next to the Leader of the Conservative Party. In France, the leaders of the Socialist Party are active in a certain ministry where the Republicans are together with the Conservatives and Monarchists. We must follow their example by declaring a truce, and thus create the same type of unity and coordination of forces and activities.

I believe it is not too late to find the appropriate remedy to this situation. I am sure Your Holiness' effective intervention will most assuredly bring about a salutary result. I bow in deference to your holy right hand.

P. S. I feel obligated to inform Your Holiness that I have received many letters pointing out that, so far, your chancery has not acknowledged receipt of any financial aid. Lately, the Armenian Committee of Silistra (Romania) wrote to me, saying that they had sent 1,000 rubles on the 2nd of September and a letter on the 14th of the same month. Despite their two letters, they have not received any confirmation. This week I got a letter from Geneva, in which it was mentioned that on August 15, Reverend Shahvertian had sent 3,000 francs from Sofia, and he had no knowledge to this day if that sum had reached Your Holiness. Finally, they have also written to me from New York, stating that it is desirable and beneficial to release information regarding the use of financial assistance from America to encourage foreign donations. In all these letters they ask me to inform Your Holiness so that you give the necessary instructions to reply promptly to the letters and acknowledge the sums received. I understand that these delays are due to the chancery being overburdened with work. I request Your Holiness to arrange so that, in the future, prompt replies are sent, especially to the foreign donors, to put their minds to rest.

Under separate cover I am sending Your Holiness a copy of *Revue des deux mondes*, in which René Pinon, responding to my request and the information I had supplied, has written articles concerning the tragedy in Armenia. Your Holiness will realize that in order to win public sympathy, our case is presented from the French point of view, stressing the role and responsibilities of Germany in the massacres of Turkish Armenians. No doubt, that article will leave a favorable impression for us because of the author's reputation and the fame of *Revue des deux mondes*. I am sure Your Holiness will read with pleasure four other booklets (two of them I have arranged to be translated from English), which I have been mailed to your address as a separate parcel.

174**Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar
779–784 AA**

Etchmiadzin, March 1, 1916

To His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Our delegate plenipotentiary

Your Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Our beloved son:

I received with great satisfaction your letter of February 4. You state your viewpoint about the present grave situation and the critical state of our national affairs; they are worsening because of the discordant activities of our different political parties and denominational associations.

For us, too, on a personal basis, as well as from the point of view of collective interest, such discords among our active bodies at these critical times are both displeasing and incomprehensible. The united action of these groups would give impetus to our efforts and would ensure the love and praise of our friends and of all those sympathetic to our cause.

Considering that it would be difficult to bring together the representatives of our different political parties to meet with us, at the moment, for a discussion to relieve the pain, we deemed appropriate to send out through our chancery excerpts from Your Excellency's letter to certain organizations and influential individuals, so that they would take into consideration Your Excellency's cautious arguments and the pain you are experiencing, and they would try to embrace the idea of cooperation and take advantage of the experience of those bitter events of the past. They would think about gathering around the Holy See, which has always extended its protection to its flock scattered all over the world, and eventually start acting with coordinated efforts.

We hope that such a move would make our scattered active bodies more prudent and impel them to follow the example of the European states friendly to our cause and realize the necessity of acting in unison. This is an urgent requirement, especially for a small nation like us.

We consider it very important to bring to Your Excellency's attention the fact that the obligation of providing information regarding the financial assistance does not rest upon our chancery but on the Synod of Holy Etchmiadzin.

Every single financial aid directed to us in our name is immediately passed to the synod, which incorporates it into its accounts (books) according to the projects agreed upon beforehand, and then sends receipts to the

appropriate donors. You must consider that such a complex bookkeeping has many disadvantages; the sending of receipts is very much delayed and sometimes takes many months, contrary to our wishes. You must also take into account the fact that the dispatch of money and its receipt in cash takes months at times. I hope we could clarify for Your Excellency why sometimes unjustified grumbling is heard, to which, because of the adverse conditions created by war, we cannot give satisfaction.

We have sums that were transferred during June of last year but have not been cashed yet. Of course, it is beyond comprehension for the donors not to have received acknowledgment for their donations during all this time. But, then, this is due to circumstances for which neither we nor anyone is to be blamed.

Regarding the 1,000 rubles from Silistra, I want to inform Your Excellency that this sum has been received and passed on to the synod, which has sent a receipt bearing the number 710 to Silistra, in the name of B. Minasian, on October 19 of last year. On December 5, our chancery has confirmed to Mr. Minasian, by telegram, the receipt of that sum, but (apparently) they are still bothering you with that problem.

We have received neither any money nor a letter from Sofia, except for 545 rubles and 60 kopecks that had reached us before Reverend Shahvertian's demand. So far we have not received the money or any letter from the Reverend.

We suggest to Your Excellency to inform all those requesting receipts that the acknowledgments are delayed because of the reasons mentioned above over which we have no control. As soon as we cash the donations, we send out the receipts. Please assure the donors that from the moment the amounts they have sent are cashed, there can be no losses whatsoever, not even one centime or a cent. Encourage the donors to send more, abundantly and willingly, because the needs are immense, while the financial means at our disposal are meager. Only through Your Excellency's efforts are such sums flowing in constantly.

We bring to Your Excellency's prudent attention the following most serious case, which is worthy of consideration.

With the advance of the valiant troops of the Caucasus, the liberation of our unfortunate sons is nearing. As a result of this, our responsibilities to revive the ruined economy, together with the primary goal of providing help, are increasing. Till now, the financial assistance from our European friends was sent in our name and placed at our disposal. But recently, because of various reasons, and through the efforts of certain individuals and associations, this help is being channeled to other Armenian organizations whose needs are much less than ours. This situation reflects the spirit of dissension and disunity as we mentioned above. Our efforts are the same as with Your Excellency's; we aim to bring an end to such discord. Still, the way the aid is being directed and handled is causing us to hesitate in our endeavor.

Therefore, we recommend to Your Excellency to take the necessary steps, with discretion, and refer to the people concerned to redirect the aid only to us, in our name. We, then, with a just manner and appropriate amounts, apportion the money to every need, every group or association, etc.

We pray to God to give you, the dedicated son of our nation, our beloved son, strength and wisdom and prudent farsightedness.

175**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Dr. Samné
1633–1634 FA**

Paris, March 1, 1916

Dr. Samné said France and England had reached an agreement, which was presently submitted for Russia's content. Mr. Picot, the former general consul of Beirut, after negotiating it in London, is now leaving for Petrograd for the same purpose.

The agreement consists of:

1. To neutralize Jerusalem and the Holy Land;
2. To give Syria, including Alexandretta all the way to Basra, to France;
3. The port of Haifa, with a railway running from Haifa to the Persian Gulf, as well as Mesopotamia, to England;
4. An Arab caliphate, directed by the sherif of Mecca, under the protection of England;
5. Constantinople and the entire coast of the Black Sea to Russia. (Dr. Samné's information regarding the total share of Russia is not definitive. I am just assuming from what he said that there is no final decision taken about it yet; however, it is expected that Russia annexes Armenia and the land extending all the way to Constantinople. Does this mean that Turkey has to disappear completely?)
6. Italy's share will remain within the borders of Adalia.

I asked the doctor if there was any mention of an Arab sultanate and Djemal Pasha. He confirmed that there had been negotiations but without any reference to a sultanate. Djemal would like to take charge of the Arabian government that will be established in Syria, with Damascus as its capital but excluding the Holy Land in order to neutralize it.

176**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Steede
1635–1638 FA**

Paris, March 7, 1916

I congratulated him for the lecture entitled “Foi et Vie” [Faith and Life] that he gave yesterday. I pointed out that his praises, about the bravery of the Turkish soldiers fighting at the Dardanelles and about their perfect conduct commended by the Australian soldiers, had caused a great deal of pain to our compatriots who were present at the conference; they could not understand how the perpetrators of massacres in Armenia could be referred to as “gentlemen.” I added that, personally, I had not attached any importance to the remark, considering it a little incident to underline the bravery of the Turkish soldier, which no one has ever denied; however, I pointed out that this would not decrease the abominable viciousness of those Turkish leaders and officials responsible for the crimes in Armenia.

Steed fully agreed about it; he had mentioned it, in passing, in order to stress that the war was not a “sport” for the English soldier, as many people might think; whereas the charges against Turkey, in general, and its leaders, in particular, for their barbaric acts are of an international nature.

Steed added that the Ottoman Empire should disappear at the end of the war and that the Allies would not let it stay within its present configuration. At any rate they will not leave Armenia under Turkish rule. He believes that dismemberment is inevitable; despite the decision that Constantinople and the straits will go to Russia, it is not possible to forecast the rest of the conditions.

I asked whether, upon the request of the Sublime Porte, there would not be a separate agreement with Turkey; if that was true, I wanted to know whether they would still insist on dismemberment, or to obtain that peace treaty and to divorce the Turks from Germany, they would agree to keep the Ottoman Empire with a nominal sovereignty over the future autonomous provinces. Steede does not consider this a strong possibility but also does not deny its probability; everything depends on the development of events.

As for the Armenian Question, I briefly explained my program of an autonomous Armenia under the protection of the Allies and asked him if I could count on *The Times* to support the cause. He answered affirmatively, “Yes, undoubtedly.” He added that he was in constant touch with Lord Bryce and shared with him the same opinions regarding the Armenian Question and that he would defend those opinions in *The Times*; he will do it, of course, when the time comes, just like other English newspapers, which do not wish to voice any opinion on events that will take place after the war. It would have been premature; first it is necessary to win the war and avoid, in the meantime, such discussions in the press. However, it is possible and

necessary to prepare the public opinion with studies appearing in different reviews.

Steed stated that he was soon planning to publish in the *Edinburgh Review* an article describing the general political climate; in the article, along with other issues, he will also mention the Armenian Question and wait for the opportune moment to discuss it in *The Times*.

Steed is leaving for Champagne tomorrow; he shall return to London after repeating his lecture in Lyon.

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Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. René Pinon

[Excerpt]

1639 FA

Paris, March 10, 1916

Like me, Mr. Pinon also believes that events may push the Allies into a separate peace treaty with Turkey and, in that case, there will be no question of dismemberment.

178**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Count d'Aunay**

[Excerpt]

1640 FA

Paris, March 12, 1916

The count said that Picot's plan, according to which France would get Syria and the Port of Haifa would be given to England, did not meet the approval of the representatives of the National Assembly, who found England's share too big. A small group of delegates have gone to see Briand, and Briand has agreed with them.

179

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Mihran Eram
1641–1642 FA

Paris, March 14, 1916

Eram has met Briand twice and he will see him again in two days. Briand has assured him that there will be no separate agreement with Turkey; Russia will never accept it, as it is determined to take Constantinople.

Eram has reminded him that Germans also contributed to the plan to exterminate the Armenians. However, Briand has put the entire blame on the Turks.

I believe that the principal reason for this discussion with Briand is the possible onslaught on Asia Minor, in which the participation of the Armenian volunteers is expected. I brought to his attention my strong opposition to forming Armenian volunteer groups; I explained that Armenians had to join the Allied forces instead and should not form a separate army in order to avoid possibilities of Turkish retaliation. I stated all the recommendations that the Patriarch of Constantinople had made; His Beatitude had considered that such outright manifestations might endanger the lives of Armenians staying in Turkey. Eram promised to direct his efforts accordingly.

Mentioning Leygues, he said that he was now more favorable to the idea of dismembering Turkey than before, provided that Cilicia and Syria would be given to France. He does not want a complete annexation but just an arrangement similar to Morocco.¹

Eram has met with Gervais, who is an anti-Turk but agrees with Ostrorog's plan;² he trusts Ostrorog and thinks he is a gentleman.

However, Eram stated the contrary, mentioning that Ostrorog, as a result of his activities, was not terribly liked at Quai d'Orsay.

Gervais will receive me; I shall meet him to discuss the Armenian Question; Eram doubts that I will be able to convince him.

¹ An agreement, on November 4, 1911, between France and Germany acknowledged the right of France to establish protectorate over Morocco. In return, France ceded more than 100,000 square miles of French Congo. In order to enable the French government to justify the arrangement, Germany ceded to France a small Cameroonian territory east of Lake Chad. Marshal Louis Lyautey, the first French resident-general, paid special attention to preserving what was valuable in Moroccan civilization, and improving the overall conditions of the country under his control, since another part was under Spanish protection.

² It seems that Ostrorog's plan was to maintain the territorial integrity of Turkey. Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes puissances l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives Françaises 1914–1918* (Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1983), 452.

Eram expects to be sent to Egypt to generate some propaganda among the Moslems in Syria and Asia Minor; this will be done concomitant with a military operation.

180**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Edgard Rohelse**

[Excerpt]
1648–1649 FA

Paris, March 16, 1916

He does not think that Turkey may decide to seek a separate peace treaty, because the Germans, who control the army, will not allow them. He does not believe in the defeat of the Turkish government either, which may only be overthrown by the army. It is true that there is still the Syrian army under the command of Djemal Pasha, but part of it must have been sent to Armenia, against Russia, and besides, Djemal Pasha is as Turkish as the leaders in Constantinople. Although there were rumors about separation and an Arab sultanate with Djemal Pasha as its head, those are still trifling, unfounded stories.

I mentioned the Picot plan, according to which Syria would be given to France and Haifa to England to become a major stop for railway running to India via Baghdad. He answered that there is nothing serious and final yet.

Then while talking about Syria and the aid it is receiving, especially Shukri Ganem, from the French government, Mr. Rohelse said that Shukri Ganem was not a serious man and the most crucial thing for him was material help. The Arab newspaper that he had started is generously being funded.¹

I thanked him for having published in *Temps* several articles favorable to Armenians. He promised to continue to do the same whenever the opportunity would rise. He stated that the information he had used for his article on the German attestations confirming the massacres came from *Algemeine Mission Zeitschrift*, and that it was brought to his attention by the Propaganda Bureau of the External Affairs situated on François 1st Street; he also mentioned that he could get the complete article in German from Mr. de Caix.

While taking leave, we talked about the hostile attacks launched by Clemenceau. Mr. Rohelse stated that Clemenceau's criticism is not being received seriously and that they don't affect the morale of the forces.

¹ *Al-Mustakbal*.

181**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Messrs. Briand and Berthelot***
1643–1647 FA

Paris, March 17, 1916

Mr. Briand first received me alone and then sent for Mr. Berthelot; we met him in Mr. Briand's office.

The premier said that he was fully aware of the negotiations concerning the reforms; he also knew about the 8th of February agreement, the nomination of the inspectors general and their dismissal by the Sublime Porte, which had stopped the reform activities.

I told him that after that experience, the Armenians could not accept any solution that would still keep them under Turkish rule. Mr. Briand agreed and assured me of the sympathy and the protection from the government of the republic. As for the future decisions, he thought it would be premature to discuss them; under the present circumstances, it is not even possible to talk about them. All the plans that people are discussing are quite indefinite, and Mr. Briand can do nothing for the time being besides repeating to me that the Armenians should rest assured of France's sympathy in the future.

I delivered to him His Holiness the Catholicos' letter to the government of France to confirm my mission. Mr. Briand read and noted it.

While taking leave, he suggested that I should meet with Mr. Berthelot and tell him all about my interviews that might be useful to him.

Consequently, we went to Mr. Berthelot's office and had another meeting; I am summarizing it here below:

— Mr. Berthelot considers the rumors about a separate treaty with Turkey unfounded and does not think it could be possible, especially because of the problem of Constantinople.

— As for the question of signing an agreement with Djemal Pasha, he does not believe it either; despite the rumors circulating like "dust particles," there has been no serious negotiation with him.

— There is absolutely no decision made regarding the solution for Asiatic Turkey.

— Russia should take the initiative for Armenia; any move made by another nation in that respect will not please Russia. No one knows anything at Quai d'Orsay about Russia's plans for Armenia.

— I reminded him that, last year, Russia had expressed its wish not to annex Armenia, and instead, grant it autonomy. Mr. Berthelot answered that Russia might have changed its mind and insinuated that, in such a case, France would have no objection.

— I told him that, undoubtedly, we hoped to obtain autonomy that

* This interview took place at Quai d'Orsay.

would be put under the protection of the Allies; however, should Russia annex Armenia, we expected that France would claim Cilicia and Syria. Mr. Berthelot mentioned that in case of a division, Cilicia should go to France.

— According to him, autonomy, with Armenians in a minority position, is impossible. I told him that numbers could probably create an obstacle if it were a question of [full] autonomy; however, it is not as important when the issue is about semi-autonomy under the protection of the Allies. Because autonomy will be given to the Armenian provinces but not to the Armenians; the Moslem population of these cities will also profit from it. Under a regime of equality and freedom the Armenians will soon become a majority. Mr. Berthelot agreed with me.

— I referred to the rumors regarding a plan for an agreement about Syria with England; according to it, Haifa is given to England, as a principle stop for the railway going to the Persian Gulf. He answered that there was nothing done about it and that the circulating rumors were insignificant. (This seems to confirm Count d'Aunay's remarks, as he had assured me that certain representatives of the National Assembly were against the plan and that they had even protested it).

— While taking leave I told him that the National Assembly Propaganda Committee had invited me to its session the following Monday. I gathered from Mr. Berthelot's answer that he did not think much of that committee.

— At last, like Mr. Briand, he also repeated that the Armenians had all the sympathy of the French government, but under the present conditions it would be premature to think of solutions, and that it was impossible to make plans before the development of events and the bells for peace negotiations start ringing.

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The Parliamentary Committee for Operations Abroad to
Boghos Nubar
1650 FA

Paris, March 18, 1916

His excellency Pasha
12 Avenue Trocadero

Your Excellency:

I would like to confirm what you were kind enough to accept during our telephone conversation—the Islamic Subcommittee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Flandin, will be happy to meet you at 243 Blvd. Saint-Germain, on Monday, March 20, at 4:00 p.m.

I am enclosing a list of the members of the Subcommittee.
Please, accept, Your Excellency, my respects, etc.

E. Fournol

The List of Members of the Subcommittee
of the Islamic Countries
1651

President: Mr. Flandin, senator

Messrs.: Georges Leygues
Morris Long
Louis Marix
Franklin-Bouillon
Shukri Ganem
Lucien Hubert
Dr. Samné
Cabaton
Emile Brousseau
Augustin Bernard
René Moulin
René Pinon
Etienne Fournol

183**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V
784–791 AA**

Paris, March 23, 1916

His Holiness Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch
Catholicos of All Armenians
Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

As soon as I received Your Holiness' letter of January 8, I cabled my reply. The postal service to and from Etchmiadzin is very slow, and it is absolutely impossible to communicate with letters; consequently, I decided to send Your Holiness the following telegram.¹

Although I have not received any communiqué from Your Holiness in this regard, I hope that Your Holiness has already got in touch with the three people mentioned in the letter, namely the highly esteemed Noradounghian Effendi, Hovhanes Khan Massehian, and Dr. Zavriev, and that as a result of your supreme influence, they have accepted their appointments. It is important to remind Your Holiness that before receiving your letter, I profited from our highly esteemed Massehian's stay in Paris on his way to London from Berlin and made him the same proposal, but I was quite disappointed to hear that, because of his active involvement in Persian diplomacy, he could not accept it.² However, it is hoped that after Your Holiness' request he might, perhaps, be able to find a way of rearranging his diplomatic responsibilities and accept the mission proposed by Your Holiness.

I had a similar experience with Dr. Zavriev when he was in Paris recently. I conveyed to him the excerpt about him in Your Holiness' letter. Dr. Zavriev stated that he could not assume that post, as he would be obliged to return to Russia soon; I also regret to add that he did not like to be part in a council where Your Holiness has nominated a member [he dislikes]. I am sorry to see that such personal matters interfere with the interests of our

¹ Text is missing. But it is obvious that B. Nubar cabled informing His Holiness the Catholicos his consent for the appointment of new members to the Armenian National Delegation.

² Hovhanes Khan Massehian (1864–1931) was known as the private interpreter of the Shah of Persia since 1884. He was entrusted many missions abroad; functioned as director of the media department in the foreign ministry; became ambassador of Persia to Berlin in 1912. Massehian played an instrumental role in establishing and improving educational institutions in Persia. He is also known for his translations into Armenian from Shakespeare, Byron, Tagor, Shiller, Saadi, Khayyam, etc.

endangered nation; besides being a good friend, I respect Dr. Zavriev for his valuable collaboration to promote the Armenian Question and for his undeniable talent in diplomatic matters. Dr. Zavriev had already made the same objection to me when I was writing to you last July to request that Your Holiness nominate collaborators for me; even at that point in time I had, in my draft letter, mentioned the above-mentioned names, in other words, the names of the highly esteemed Noradounghian Effendi, Hovhanes Khan, and Dr. Zavriev.

It is worthwhile to underline that Your Holiness, in his letter, has named exactly the same people as I had thought of proposing last July. I would like to add that it was upon Dr. Zavriev's request that I refrained from mentioning these names in the original text of my letter of July 29, which Dr. Zavriev himself would deliver to Your Holiness. Since I was unable to find other suitable candidates, I had decided to nominate a Frenchman as a collaborator of the delegation, who could, because of his actual position, be of help to us; Dr. Zavriev had also agreed to this. This arrangement did not materialize, and today, I repeat, I shall accept, with utmost gratitude, collaborators nominated by Your Holiness; they can secure the success of our future solicitations.

As I have already mentioned in my telegram, I would like Your Holiness to let me know the result of his appeals to these people.

Your Holiness has been informed directly from the states that your appeals to President Wilson have been fruitful in that several American committees have raised important sums of money and sent more than 1.5 million francs while continuing their fund-raising efforts successfully. Then, thanks to the intervention of the State Department, these committees have succeeded in getting in touch with the Patriarchate in Constantinople and sent them relief support. The American ambassador, agreed with the Patriarchate and is distributing the aid among the survivors. Profiting from this opportune occasion, I also dispatched to Constantinople to His Beatitude the Patriarch 84,589 francs, not counting the sum of 58,000 francs which I had sent directly to him through the Association for the Protection of National Interests in America; through the same channel again I forwarded 29,139 francs to the Catholicos of Sis, and via Switzerland 11,275 francs to the orphanage in Urfa.

Also our compatriots in the United States, through the State Department in Washington, have received a communiqué from the Patriarchate of Constantinople; I am enclosing a copy of that communiqué for Your Holiness in case it has not been sent to you directly from the states. In it, His Beatitude the Patriarch makes several recommendations to the Armenians in the Diaspora, among which he suggests that they refrain from any action, such as publications, demonstrations, etc., that may endanger the lives of our compatriots living in Turkey.³

³ There was no enclosure. See text of telegram in Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes*

As Your Holiness knows, since the beginning of the Turkish decision to annihilate the Armenians, I have followed the same policy and tried to avoid reasons for retaliation or revenge on our surviving compatriots who have become their hostages. Consequently, I have always tried to be prudent and recommended that our compatriots watch out for reasons that might create occasions for revenge.

It was for this reason that we were so careful not to participate officially in conferences and sympathizing demonstrations or not to reveal our names in publications (newspapers or books) in France. On April 9, under the presidency of Mr. Paul Deschanel, the president of the National Assembly, there will be an important symposium in Sorbonne, where many well-known personalities, including Mr. Painlevé, the present minister of education, Anatole France, member of the French Academy, etc., will speak.

The capture of Erzerum and the outstanding triumphs of the Russian army, as we hope that it will also save Armenia from Turkish rule, are creating a new phase for the Armenian cause.⁴ It is redundant, perhaps, to tell Your Holiness that I have once more started to appeal in order to prepare in advance for opportunities that we might be faced with because of developments during the war.

The Armenian Question is not a separate problem anymore; it is related to the Ottoman Empire and, in particular, to the final solution of Asiatic Turkey; therefore, we have to foresee certain developments that may enforce changes regarding our plan. Perhaps, it is difficult to determine those today, but, of course, they are all connected with future events.

Your Holiness understands well that I am unable, at the moment, under the present conditions, to clarify certain points; however, I would like to assure you that I am following the events with utmost attention, and I am

puissance l'Empire Ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives Françaises 1914–1918 (Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1983), 179–180.

⁴ Erzerum was captured by Russian troops on February 16, 1916. Contrary to Ludendorff who says: "The Russian advance into Armenia, which in the spring of 1916 led to the capture of Trebizond and Erzerum, was of no strategic value." Erich Von Ludendorff, *Ludendorff's Own Story—August 1914–November 1918*, vol. II, (New York, 1919), 246, most specialists agree that "The conquest of Erzerum was one of the most brilliant strategical episodes in the war." Erzerum's fall "meant the loss of Turkish Armenia. The country where the record of Turkey was blackest was, by a stroke of dramatic justice, the first to be reft from her hands." John Bucan (ed.), *Nelson's History of the War*, vol. XIII (London, 1915–1919), 96–97. General Yudenitch, the commander of the Russian troops, in his turn, mentions that with this Russian success "the connection between the Turks in Anatolia and their forces across the Persian frontier and south of Lake Urmia was severed," while Philips Price, the official British observer with the Russians, states: "The capture of Erzerum . . . might be regarded as the turning point of the war in the East." Philips Price, *War and Revolution in Asiatic Russia* (New York, 1918), 84.

constantly in touch with all these people who may have some influence on the final solution of the Eastern problem. There is no doubt, especially today, that the solution of the Armenian Question is highly dependent on the humanitarian considerations of the Russian government toward us. Among the Allies, Russia will gain most and our problem will be solved in Petrograd but not in Paris or London. Unfortunately, it will be impossible for me to go to Petrograd because of my wife who has been seriously ill for the last few months; this situation worries me a great deal, and I cannot leave her alone; moreover, as a result of my hard work, which I have been trying to accomplish for some time, I am not feeling very well either, and I cannot undertake a long trip.

Therefore, I would recommend that, along with my appeals, Your Holiness also get in touch with the government of His Imperial Majesty and request a plan which could serve us as a basis for our negotiations with other states. Indeed, these negotiations should take place in Petrograd, because the Russian ambassador in Paris is not quite familiar with the Armenian Question and hesitates to make a daring move on his own initiative.

Therefore, presently I am quite concerned and decided not to make further appeals, as they may prove to be against the intentions of the government of His Imperial Majesty; we are all aware of their favorable inclination and unanimous feelings, which they have always manifested toward our brethren in Turkey. Furthermore, such feelings guarantee that when the time comes to solve the Armenian Question, Russia will be eager to satisfy our just demands.

P. S. I am enclosing for Your Holiness the statement of contributions⁵ to the National Fund, placed under your supreme auspices.

⁵ No statement was attached to this copy.

184**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. René Pinon
1652–1654 FA**

Paris, April 17, 1916

Picot's plan is not finalized yet because its nature will depend on the upcoming events. For the past three weeks, Mr. Pinon has heard nothing about it. His latest information is about the difficulties concerning Palestine and about the fact that no agreement has been reached with England. Apart from that, Picot has gone to Petrograd with Sykes, an Englishman.

Mr. Pinon said that they could not take a decision at the moment anyway. It seems the plan has been devised in such a way that it can befit the conditions arising during the signing of the peace treaty, and it takes into consideration the states of autonomy and spheres of influence, as the case may be.

Mr. Pinon said that he had not read the plan and did not know anything about the details. But he has been informed that France will get Syria and Cilicia; England will get Mesopotamia and probably—this is still uncertain—the Arabian Peninsula. As for Russia, it will get Constantinople, with the straits, and Armenia. The Turks will be confined to Anatolia. Mr. Pinon thinks that the Turks can become independent without the patronage of the Allies. This took me by surprise, and I told him that in such a case Turkey would become an open field for growing German influence. Mr. Pinon replied that perhaps it would not be possible to avoid this since it was not possible to allot to Germany any other part of Asiatic Turkey. He added that a Turkish state confined to Anatolia, having Russia on its borders by way of Constantinople and Armenia, could not become too harmful. Nevertheless, he conceded that in the future it could present a danger leading to war. It seemed that Mr. Pinon did not have in mind any countermeasure against such an eventuality. He is strongly against the rule of condominium since it will not be possible to exclude Germany from it. If Turkey is to be subjected to a trusteeship, it would not be possible to prevent any of the nations from claiming a part in it.

Concerning collective protection and condominium, Mr. Pinon seems to share Mr. Leygues' opinion. The latter had told me that he did not agree with the system. Mr. Pinon told me that in the Islamic Commission, my proposal of collective protection was considered to be the weak point of my plan.

He informed me that Mr. Leygues supported the minister regarding Picot's plan and that Leygues and himself were against annexing Syria to France.

He also revealed that, a week ago, he had attended de Cressati's lecture on Syria, but seeing that de Cressati demanded the annexation of Syria to France, he had left before it was over.

185**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Izvolski
1655–1660 FA**

Paris, April 22, 1916

I told him about my telegram to the king of Spain, in which I had asked his intervention for the Armenian intellectuals taken before the war tribunal of Constantinople, and I informed him about the king's reply.¹

I also told him about the information I had received regarding Picot's plan. He said that Picot and Sykes had finished their task in Petrograd and returned already. He has no detailed information yet about the outcome of the negotiations. He knows, however, that the problem centers around the transfer of the caliphate jurisdiction to the sherif of Mecca, and that France's share will be Syria together with Cilicia and Palestine, excluding the Holy regions, as they will be given international status. The port of Haifa will be given to England, together with a stretch of land to be allocated for its railway extending to the Persian Gulf.

According to my own information, England would get the whole of Palestine, but Mr. Izvolski said that it was a false notion and, according to the plan, Palestine would be given to France while England would get Mesopotamia. As for Russia, Mr. Izvolski said that he did not know what would be allotted to it but believed that Russia would be given a free hand in the six provinces and Anatolia, and it would get Constantinople and the straits, too. However, he stressed that there was nothing definite yet and, at the present, no decision could be finalized.

I asked him if Russia intended to annex the six provinces, except Erzerum and the surrounding area, which would be used in border adjustment. He replied that he did not think so and believed that Russia would grant them autonomy.

I brought to his attention that if I could have some assurance in that respect, it would greatly facilitate my negotiations. Moreover, that would allow me to secure approbation to join to autonomous Armenia part of Cilicia, together with Adana and the port of Mersin, so that it would be possible to acquire a free passage to the sea for the trade route of Caucasia. I further stated that the option of dividing Armenia into two parts, bringing the six provinces under Russian control and making Cilicia a French possession, would not be profitable to Russia. Nonetheless, we would accept such a solution with gratitude, because it would deliver us from Turkish barbarity and

¹ The response of King Alfonso XIII (1886–1941) was not kept. From a copy of a telegram, dated April 25, 1916, from the king to Marquis Del Muni, ambassador to Paris, we learn that instructions were given to the Spanish ambassadors to Berlin and Constantinople to intervene in favor of the Armenians.

would grant to the Armenian population of the six provinces and to the Cilician Armenians under French protection as much happiness and prosperity as the Armenians of Caucasia enjoy. But, in this way, Russia would be divided from the Mediterranean by a French barrier. I reminded him that it was imperative for Russia to have an opening to the sea; consequently, I reiterated all the arguments in my new memorandum concerning the different conjectures to be considered regarding the Armenian case: inefficiency of Constantinople and the straits in wartime to provide free passage; advantages that would be created if Armenia would be neutralized by placing it under a collective protectorate, and thus converted into a neutral port to be used for Russia's as well as India's trade; removal of the danger of future disputes with France, since the latter would not object anymore about Russia's access to the sea, etc., etc.

Taking all this into consideration, I told him that I thought it would be really profitable if, at the cost of a token sacrifice, the concept of collective protection was accepted as a final solution. I told him that I was exerting some efforts in this respect, and I had spoken in support of my plan before the Parliamentary Committee of French Interests in Moslem countries, and the Senate Committee of French Interests in foreign countries that had invited me to expound our complete plan. This is the plan that had been accepted by the Russian government the year before. As far as I am concerned, I will never stop affirming that the solution of the Armenian Question depends on Russia, first and foremost, because Russia is mostly interested in the six provinces; thus, Armenians can only accept with gratitude the solution suggested by Russia. But in order to carry on a fruitful activity in this respect, we must have a plan at hand, which, apart from reflecting our desires, must meet Russia's support. Only in such a situation will it be possible for me to engage in profitable negotiations to convince the French government [to change its policy] about Cilicia. Therefore, it is necessary to know whether Russia will continue to lend its support to last year's plan, particularly regarding the question of Cilicia and the concept of collective protection.

Mr. Izvolski said that since Russia had agreed that Cilicia should be left to France, now, naturally, it could not ask France to renounce its claim; therefore, it is up to us, Armenians, to work actively in that respect.

I told him that I could not argue against that reality; but, in order that I succeed in my efforts, I ought to know if Russia would object to my activity, telling the French that collective protection would be acceptable only if it was not limited just to the six provinces, and Armenia would be given free passage to the sea. Mr. Izvolski said that this particular point, which was included in our discussions of the year before, was accepted by Russia.

Taking advantage [of that affirmation], I said it was my conclusion that we could continue with our negotiations as before, and I hoped that I would be able to secure the right for us to have a free passage to the sea.

Later on, we examined my map, and he listened to my arguments as expounded in my new memorandum. He seemed interested in my explanations and asked for a copy of the map, which I promised to send. In turn, he promised to write to Petrograd to find out about his government's viewpoint and affirmed that he would let me know in case he received an answer.

Finally, we talked about other problems in general, and discussed, specially, the case of those Russian soldiers who were sent to France as a guarantee of solidarity. I congratulated him for the capture of Trebizond.

While I was blaming the Italians for not following Russia's example to send a detachment to France, Mr. Izvolski noted that the Italians did not have enough ammunition yet, and the other Allied nations were also in the same predicament.

186

Death Sentence Pronounced Against Boghos Nubar
(published in the May 10, 1916 issue of the newspaper *Tanine*, No. 2661)
1661–1662 FF

The death sentence by hanging passed on Boghos Nubar Pasha has been announced by the military authority of Constantinople.

Having been established and proven by the Tribunal that Boghos Nubar Pasha has collaborated with the French, English, and the Russians, as a pretext to defend Armenian interests and the Armenian nation; and with the authorization of the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin has raised funds, which he has used to help the Armenian volunteers who have joined the Russian army in Caucasia to fight the Turks; and considering that he has appealed to Armenians living in America by means of circulars published in the newspapers of that country; also having established during this trial that Boghos Nubar Pasha has divulged military secrets; given the provisions of the law against espionage and betrayal, chapter 14, paragraph 10;

He has been condemned to death by hanging, and, according to Articles 28 and 31 of the Civil Penal Code, the loss of his civil rights and decorations, rank and official functions; and according to Article 371 and the provisions of the next chapter of the Penal Code, his properties have been seized and placed under administration.

These decisions and sentences passed by the court martial of Constantinople, in the absence of the defendant, having been approved by imperial decree, every Ottoman citizen is compelled to notify the authorities whenever the convicted party reenters Turkey.

187**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V
? AA**

Paris, May 16, 1916

His Holiness Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians
Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

In order to write to Your Holiness, I waited for the reply to my May 8 telegram, in which I said that it was impossible for me to leave Paris and attend the conference in Petrograd, and I asked Your Holiness to appoint someone else to replace me. Today I received the following reply:

“You can stay. Your presence in Paris is necessary. We refuse to appoint someone else in your place. We are sorry about Mrs. Nubar’s poor health and we wish her prompt recovery.”

I am deeply touched by Your Holiness’ understanding and the latest proof of your confidence in me. Nevertheless, allow me to say that, despite my willingness and honest desire to serve my people, I realize it will be impossible for me to continue conscientiously in my prestigious function as Your Holiness’ representative, because of my wife’s illness. My wife’s condition requires my constant presence at her bedside; moreover, it prevents me from any travel. That is what the doctors told me when I consulted them; therefore, I cannot leave her alone even for a very short time. It is as if I am bedridden myself. I am convinced that the fate of our nation will be decided in Petrograd and not here, and therefore, my presence there is essential. I am not taking into consideration possible trips to London and Rome, which are equally useful. Therefore, since I have become totally incapacitated to continue my mission, I feel obliged to repeat my request that I had communicated to you in a telegram so that you appoint someone else in my place.

I assure Your Holiness that I have decided to submit my resignation because of the extreme urgency of my case. It is with deep regret that I resign my function, leaving my duty unfulfilled. I do not wish the successful outcome of our case to be endangered because of me.

Since last year I had brought to Your Holiness’ attention the need to provide me with competent aides. Unfortunately, all those compatriots on whom we, Your Holiness and myself, had pinned our hopes refused to lend us their assistance. Had they gone along with our request, they would be able to continue the work that was initiated with their help. Nevertheless, thanks to Providence, I do not doubt that Your Holiness will find the ideal candidates who will consent to devote themselves to this patriotic cause.

Allow me, Your Holiness, to say that, based on my experience, I have

come to the conclusion that the delegation need not have a great number of members. Four or five, at the most, are sufficient. And, before embarking on its activity, the delegation must be supplied with a working plan, based on a general outline, that will serve as a guide in its negotiations.

I still do not know what will be the exact purpose of the Petrograd conference, since I have only received vague telegraphic communications in that respect. My deduction is that it will be a regular meeting, attended by the representatives of Russian relief associations, helping the Turkish Armenian refugees; they will aim at regulating the means of extending assistance and thus ameliorate the state of the refugees. I was invited by telegram to this conference and asked to advise the relief associations of Europe, Egypt, and America to send their representatives.

From this information I conclude that the purpose of the conference will be to create unity among these relief associations, as I had dared to focus Your Holiness' and some of our compatriots' attention in Russia upon that point. It will be a joyful and congratulatory occasion if this conference does accomplish that unity which is so essential for all of us.

However, I believe that the conference will not confine itself to that role. It will expand its sphere of negotiations, taking advantage of the presence of well-known personalities, who will naturally be in contact with the Russian government and will develop a plan that will contribute to the accomplishment of our national demands. It is for this reason especially that I feel deeply sorry for not being able to attend the conference.

Nevertheless, if the conference limits its activities and deliberations to the discussion of relief associations, for reasons that I presume valid, then it becomes necessary for Your Holiness to prepare a plan with the participation of appropriate persons.

It was suggested to hold a conference in Paris or London, with the participation of representatives of all Armenian communities all over the world. I do not think it is necessary to call another meeting after the Petrograd conference. Moreover, I do not think that such a conference, with the participation of so many delegates, brings positive results, particularly if it is held under the conditions explained to me. Some people wish that the conference discusses the plan of our national claims. Others want the conference to be running continuously, like a parliament, where much time will be lost in debates, without arriving at conclusions. It will be very difficult, even impossible, to hold such a conference without causing countless protests and arguments with the participation of all political parties and community representatives who will assume the right to take part in this conference according to the degree of their importance. In this respect, we have to take into consideration, particularly, the Armenians of Russia, who are undeniably more numerous, and therefore, must enjoy more elaborate rights of representation.

Even if we consider that there could be a consensus in that respect, the decisions of the conference will not carry weight and will not be imposed on

everyone, since the meeting will be held away from the zone of Your Holiness' authority and influence.

For this reason, I believe that in all respects it will be best to convene those compatriots of ours who, by virtue of their position, their specialization, and experience in community affairs, are the best candidates. This meeting should be held under Your Holiness' auspices and the chairmanship of Mr. Papadjanian, a deputy in the Duma. It would be most preferable not to have many participants in that meeting, six or eight, maximum ten members, including the chairmen, in order for it to achieve results. Your Holiness can assign many members of the Tiflis National Bureau, and I believe that Dr. Zavriev, who has taken part in the negotiations so far and understands the political events and has valid political opinions, should take part in this meeting. The plan of our national cause must be finally prepared at this meeting, based on the plan that I relied upon in my negotiations, guided by the viewpoints of all nations, especially the Russian imperial government, with whom the assembly convened by you should be in constant contact.

In order to profit from my experience of the past year, and to continue with my appeals the same way as before, I can prepare an extensive report to serve as a guide to the new plan, in which the newly created requirements, because of political and military maneuvers, must be incorporated. It is imperative that our future plan not be one and invariable and should not be limited by our demands only, but it should consider the possibility of their execution. It should be adaptable to all situations and must suggest different solutions, each of which must correspond to the hypothetical resolution of the problem posed by the Ottoman Empire. This will enable the members of the future National Delegation to face unexpected situations and champion any solution of our cause that might come about unexpectedly.

I believe this is the most positive solution that would affect finally and effectively the future negotiations and lead to a worthwhile outcome. Therefore, it is up to Your Holiness to act accordingly.

As I wait for your decision, I shall keep on working and do my best until Your Holiness appoints a successor to me as president of the National Delegation.

I express my deep regret for the above-mentioned situation and repeat my gratitude for your understanding. I kneel to Your Holiness' right hand and I remain your most humble servant.

188**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Miliukov***
1663–1669 FA

Paris, 25 May 1916

First I thanked him for his speech that he had delivered at the banquet of the Franco-Foreign Friendship and declared that Russia was fighting to secure autonomy for Poland and Armenia.

He said he had proclaimed in the Duma, too, that Russia should grant autonomy to the six provinces but did not agree that Cilicia be joined to them for reasons that he had enunciated in his speech.

I told him I was aware of those reasons and stated that my proposed solution would surely satisfy them, allowing the union of Cilicia to the six provinces toward the creation of an integral and autonomous Armenia. I expounded our plan, citing the following advantages: Armenia would be a neutral, buffer state; Russia would have free access to the sea through neutral Armenia and would have a free port at its disposal without having to keep a fleet for its defense; it would avoid future conflicts with France, since France would not be an obstacle on Russia's marine communication route, etc., etc.

Mr. Miliukov said that he considered this plan to be more profitable to France than to Russia. In such a situation, France would be cut off from a Turkey that would be confined to Anatolia. He obstinately insisted that in case Armenia's borders would extend to the sea, Russia would have to keep a fleet in the Mediterranean for the defense of the coast. He added that the fleet would be threatened by the English in Cyprus, and reiterated that he did not have much faith in the advantages of neutrality because Belgium's example proves that it is not possible to fend off the violation of neutral states. He added that from the economic point of view, by signing a treaty with France and declaring Mersin as a free port, it was possible to come to an agreement toward securing a free trade route through French Cilicia. He even seemed opposed to the idea of an integral, autonomous Armenia, because he thought that would appeal to the Armenians in the Caucasus who would decide to join to it, thus forming a vast Armenian homeland.

Dr. Zavriev did not deny the possibility of such a situation but added that its realization would be chiefly dependent on the active regime in Caucasia. If the Russian government would not apply a sufficiently liberal policy toward the Armenians, then the latter would tend to join their brothers in Armenia. However, this would not materialize if the Armenians in the

* The meeting took place in Hotel Crillon with the participation of Dr. Zavriev and Mr. Chingarov.

Caucasus would experience a much better treatment than their brothers in Armenia living under Turkish or Arab rule.

I brought to Mr. Miliukov's attention that it was my conviction that Russia would, first of all, annex part of the Armenian highlands as a corrective measure to its borders; and this, I found, quite natural. Therefore, when we mention autonomy, I said, we consider the remaining part of the six provinces minus the territories to be annexed by Russia.

Mr. Miliukov said that he was assured about that but did not know about the dimensions of the territories to be annexed to Russia. Before he had left Russia, there was some talk about returning to the boundaries as specified by the Treaty of San Stefano.¹ But he now believed that following the recent victories, the generals would be more demanding. He added that he had no idea about the government's viewpoint and said Mr. Sazonov's knowledge of the Armenian case was very inadequate, to the point that, until recently, he thought Armenia was mainly inhabited by Kurds. Even though it was brought to his attention that his information was erroneous, he still has only vague ideas about the Armenian Question. Mr. Miliukov said that it would be a good idea to supply him some information to acquaint him with the Armenian case.

Coming back to the question of Cilicia, he said he did not think the presence of France in Cilicia, between autonomous Russian Armenia and the sea, would cause future conflicts because Russia, having secured Constantinople, would not need to reach the sea by way of Cilicia. Constantinople and the straits would become a zone of defense for the Russians in case of a war.

I brought to his attention that in case of a war, the straits would be blocked by the enemy fleet and submarines. He agreed with me but argued that the same would happen to Mersin, which is situated opposite Cyprus that belongs to England. I told him such a situation would be avoided if Mersin was to become the port of neutral Armenia. But Mr. Miliukov remained adamantly skeptical about the efficacy of the state of neutrality.

Mr. Chingarov said that it was possible to give Armenia a port on the Black Sea. Referring to the map, I pointed out that, starting from Trebizond, we had relinquished a large territory along the shore so that a free passage would be created from the Caucasus to Constantinople. Dr. Zavriev, too, reminded Mr. Chingarov that this settling of the limits was one of the demarcation plans considered in Russia, particularly by General Kouropatkine.

Dr. Zavriev and myself asked Mr. Miliukov whether he had met with government leaders in England, and if he had, what was the outcome of the meetings. He said that he had talked to Lord Bryce, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Williams and others who had consented to the ideas that he had expounded

¹ According to Article XIX of the Treaty of San-Stefano, Russia took hold of Kars, Ardahan, Batum, Bayazid, and the Plain of Alashkert. The last two, however, soon were restored to Turkey under British pressure, to which Czar Alexander II yielded.

in his speech delivered in the Duma; we had the accurate French translation of it in front of us.

Mr. Miliukov said he had also met Sir Edward Grey, with whom the conversation had proceeded approximately in the following manner:

Miliukov: "What do you think about the Armenian Question?"

Sir E. Grey: "Your speech in the Duma made a strong impression in England (from the expression on his face I could tell that he was not satisfied). England will give a free hand to Russia to settle the Armenian case; but Mr. Sazonov wrote to me expressing his desire that Armenia should be annexed to Russia."

Miliukov: "According to you, what will be the southern borders of Armenia, toward Mesopotamia?"

Sir E. Grey: "I cannot say anything in that respect since I have no map before me."

Miliukov: "There are natural boundaries—the dividing line in the mountainous region of the plain."

Sir E. Grey: "I cannot discuss that issue at the present.

Mr. Miliukov asked us not to utter a word about this conversation.

We also talked about the war and the visit to the battlefield by Russian members of parliament.

We agreed that we could continue this meeting in a more useful way in Petrograd once Dr. Zavriev returned there and had his meeting with Mr. Sazonov.

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Meeting of Dr. Zavriev with Mr. Izvolski
(Registered by Boghos Nubar Pasha)
1670–1671 FA

Paris, May 28, 1916

Mr. Izvolski is under the impression that the French absolutely demand the annexation of Cilicia; whereas for Syria, the question hinges on autonomy, which will be subjected to the influence or even to the rule of the sheriff of Mecca, soon to be proclaimed as caliph.

According to him, England and France have come to an agreement with respect to the territories they will receive from Turkey and have left Russia free to take over, as it wishes, any part of what remains from Asiatic Turkey; that is to say, Armenia and even the rest of the country, remnant of the Ottoman Empire.

Personally, Izvolski does not agree with the annexation of the six provinces to Russia. If he, too, is assigned to participate in the peace negotiations, he will support our plan and will try to persuade Russia that it should avoid needless annexations. On the other hand, he believes that the solutions considered now will probably not be accepted because they will undergo great changes during the peace negotiations.

The neutralization of the Baghdad rail line—going through a neutral country, as it was included in my plan—is acceptable to him because he does not believe that owning the straits will provide Russia with security. According to him, it is very desirable to have a continuously free traffic via a neutral railway.

190**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Izvolski
1680–1684 FA**

Paris, June 6, 1916

I told him that after his last meeting with Dr. Zavriev, I agreed with the latter to go to Petrograd to see Mr. Sazonov and to find out about the present viewpoint of the government and see if they were still in favor of last year's plan. It is imperative that I become well informed about all this, before proceeding with my appeals.

Mr. Izvolski agreed with me completely.

I told him that I had seen Mr. Miliukov and had been quite disappointed to see that he did not consent to our plan concerning Cilicia, for the same reasons he had expressed in the Duma. I had hoped that our views would satisfy him, but, despite my arguments, he kept on opposing them.

Mr. Izvolski said that Mr. Miliukov's opinion did not carry much weight, and it was of no use to try to convince him. He stressed that it was important to win the French politicians because he had come to the conclusion that in France the Cilician question was dealt with great interest, and it would not be overlooked under any circumstances. He believed that the French wanted all of Cilicia, until the Taurus, including Mersin and Adana, and they would insist on claiming it. He believes that Syria alone would not satisfy France because it constitutes only the bare bone without the flesh which is Cilicia.

I replied that I knew that and that the French had given me the same arguments but had affirmed at the same time that Russia had more urgent interests in Armenia. Consequently, the wishes of the latter would always be taken into consideration.

Mr. Izvolski said that my argument applied only to the six provinces and not to Cilicia where the French claim to have particular rights and interests.

Myself: Yes, but I believe it will be possible to secure an opening to the sea, that is, Mersin and Adana, if I can assure them that the plan has the support of Russia or, at least, its approval.

The ambassador: You may obtain an explanation from Dr. Zavriev to whom Mr. Sazonov will most probably reply. According to my information, France would like to take hold of Mersin most of all, and especially Adana. I wish you success in your mission. It is up to you to secure its achievement and, I repeat, its outcome will most likely be decided in Paris rather than Petrograd.

Myself: I have always strived toward achieving that goal, and I shall keep on exerting my efforts. But, in no way can I succeed if I do not receive from Petrograd the positive response that I am hoping for.

I presented him the memorandum I had prepared for the members of the French Parliament, stressing that I have always tried to bring out the

advantages of my plan from the point of view of French interests.¹ At the same time, I have refrained from mentioning the advantages from the Russian point of view, for example, the region that we have ceded to Russia on the northern front of the planned autonomous Armenia. That area will provide Russia free passage to Anatolia and Constantinople and, on the other side, it will border a buffer state under Russian, French, and English protectorate. I illustrated my explanations on the small map accompanying the memorandum. He picked up from the table the large map that I had given him and examined it carefully with me. He promised to read my memorandum and give me his remarks, if any.

Among the French personalities, he advised me to see Pichon, since as the director of an important newspaper,* he has great influence; also Clemenceau, Barthou, Leygues, Clotz, and especially Berthelot, who is very influential in Quai d'Orsay. He does not consider Joseph Reinach to have influence anymore, after the day he stopped participating in the National Assembly.

Among the Russians, he advised me to see Chingarov (whom I had met with Mr. Miliukov); he believes that he has more influence in Russia than Miliukov. He is more serious and less fickle than the latter. He also mentioned Colonel Engelhard, member of the Duma, who made a speech at the banquet of the Franco-Foreign Friendship recently. Colonel Engelhard is at the battlefield currently. Mr. Izvolski will ask him to see me on his return to Paris. His opinion might carry weight since he is a military man.

We agreed that I keep on with my work here and see important personalities while I wait for news from Petrograd. He reiterated that he is always against territorial annexations and believes in autonomy. But, he added, they would not ask his opinion in that matter anyway. Everything depended upon the central government, particularly the military.

¹ No trace of the memorandum mentioned here and in the next document.

* *Petit Journal*.

191**Meeting of Boghos Nubar Mr. Clemenceau**

[Excerpt]
1678–1679 FA

Paris, June 7, 1916

(The pasha presents his new memorandum to Mr. Clemenceau. In his entries, he repeats many times that Clemenceau agrees to his viewpoint. However, Mr. Clemenceau considers it premature to deal with such problems because, he says, everyone is concerned with Verdun these days. All negotiations between France and England concern military and defense matters. In this respect, he talks about the following incident.)

The day before yesterday, a mindless senator (he used an even more characteristic qualifier), Mr. Flandin, talked before the Foreign Affairs Committee about the Syrian question. Nobody listened to him. As long as the circumstances remain the same, no one will want to consider problems that are not related to war and national defense.

Mr. Clemenceau also talked about Lord Kitchener, who passed away yesterday. He considers this a great tragedy for England.

192**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Colonel Engelhard
1672–1677 FA**

Paris, June 13, 1916

First we talked about the latest Russian victories against the Austrians and I extended my congratulations. He said he hoped that the army would continue its successful operations because the Austrians are using their last reserves on the battlefield. They have called upon the nineteen-year-olds and even the eighteen-year-olds. But it is not the same with Germany which still has reserves that can last up to one year. When I told him that Russia, on the other hand, had extensive reserves, he said that that was a false notion. It was true Russia's reserves were great in number, but, he added, that in France they erroneously believed that those reserves were in proportion to the number of the entire population. He stressed that one should consider the population density per square kilometer, which is much less in Russia compared to central empires. Admittedly, Russia's reserves are numerically vast.

The colonel attached great importance to the eventual agreement between the Allies, after the war, to fight against German trade. He believes this is one of the most difficult questions and he deems it necessary that the conference to be held the following day in Paris comes up with solutions in this respect.¹

We now deal with the Armenian Question.

Given the fact that he is not well informed about the origin of the persecutions and the massacres, and he is under the impression that Armenian rebellions have initiated them, I explained to him that the Turks were using that motive as an excuse to justify their crime. I told him that it was natural for the Armenians to sympathize with the Russians who had come to rescue them from the Turkish yoke; and many of them had joined the liberating Russian army as volunteers. But this could not justify the extermination plan that the Turkish leaders were putting into effect against the Armenian population living in all the provinces of the empire. The truth is, the Turkish government has devised and activated a Machiavellian plan of annihilating the total Armenian population of the empire, with the acknowledgment, if not the encouragement, of the German government. The latter could prevent these crimes but has done nothing in that respect.

I presented him our plan in detail, stressing that our fate depends first and foremost on Russia. I said that if Russia wanted to annex Armenia, we

¹ Representatives of eight allied nations held an economic conference in Paris (June 14–20, 1916) to discuss ways to cripple their enemies' economic power during and after the war.

would comply, although our plan was devised according to the provisions of the agreement reached in Petrograd the year before. The government had made it clear to us then that it did not want outright annexation and consented to autonomy in the six provinces under the protection of Russia. It had even agreed to share that protectorate with the Allies if Cilicia was annexed to Greater Armenia. I explained to him that French leaders insisted upon acquiring Cilicia with Syria—as confirmed by Mr. Izvolski himself, who must have informed him about it—and my efforts were focused on showing the French government that the detachment of Cilicia from the other Armenian provinces, and, consequently, its annexation by France, would not only constitute a mistake, but it would be against French interests. These arguments that I have mentioned in my memorandum have convinced many political figures, such as Clemenceau, Flandin, d'Aunay, Jonnart, etc., and changed the unwillingness of many others.

The colonel asked about Mr. Caillaux's opinion. I told him that it seemed favorable.

The colonel was taking notes and following my explanations on the map.

I brought to his attention, successively, all the arguments and their consequences for Russia. When I mentioned Armenia as being a buffer state, I explained that it would be a buffer territory for Russia against the English protectorate in Mesopotamia as well as the French protectorate. I told him that I had excluded a large territory on the shores of the Black Sea so that Russia could have free passage to Turkish Anatolia and Constantinople. I said that it was natural for Russia to bring about a rectification of borders and annex part of Greater Armenia, probably Trebizond, as well as the territories to the west, in order to secure direct contact and control of Turkish Anatolia, all by itself or with the Allies collectively.

After expounding my arguments, the colonel asked me many questions to which I gave the appropriate answers. He particularly asked if it would be possible to create two identical protectorates, one with a Russian governor general in the six provinces under Russian protection, and the other in Cilicia under French protection. I told him that, indeed, that corresponded to one of the proposed solutions in my memorandum; but a French Cilicia would actually create inconveniences to Russia, whose free passage to the sea would be blocked, and to England as well, whose traffic to India would be obstructed.

The Colonel agreed with me and praised my plan for having taken all those various interests into consideration.

In conclusion he stressed that he could not express a final opinion with this very first analysis. He reiterated that he would examine the situation thoroughly by reading my memorandum and would later comment about it to Mr. Sazonov. At the same time, he said that he would prepare a report to present it to the Duma.

The colonel is an Octobrist and belongs to the Landowners' party.² He advised me to see Mr. Chingarov. When I told him that Mr. Miliukov opposed the idea of uniting Cilicia to the rest of Armenia, he said that this was due to Mr. Miliukov's pacifist nature.

He asked about Mr. Izvolski's opinion. I told him Izvolski had declared many times that the solution of the Armenian Question depended solely on Petrograd. He said he had not been consulted to that effect; he mentioned that, personally, he was against annexation and favored autonomy.

Our conversation lasted more than two hours. As I was taking my leave, the colonel promised to meet Mr. Izvolski and to discuss our case with him once again.

² The Octobrist Party was formed in November 1905, deriving its name from the manifesto of October 17, 1905, in which the czar had agreed to establish a constitutional monarchy.

193**Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar Pasha**

[Telegram]

814–815 FA

(Translated from French. This cable, dated June 20, reached Paris on June 27 in a totally illegible state. Boghos Nubar Pasha immediately asked for a second copy from Etchmiadzin and one from the Paris post office. The latter sent a copy of the original in poor condition, upon which is based Boghos Nubar Pasha's July 17th cable. The copy of the rectified telegram—the translation of which is given below—reached Paris on August 7.)

Etchmiadzin, June 20, 1916

His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha
12 Avenue Trocadero
Paris

We have received your letter dated May 16. We feel sorry about Mrs. Nubar Pasha's illness. We believe strongly that your presence, as head of the delegation, is a sine qua non condition of achieving success. Therefore, we cannot accept your resignation from your function as our representative. We cannot think of anyone who can replace you and handle the affairs as skillfully as you with the necessary prudence and persistent enthusiasm. We implore you to keep exercising your function, an honorable yet heavy burden that we commit onto you once again. We consider this an urgency. You are free to secure the aid of worthy coworkers. We already have Massehian Khan's consent. Recruit others, too, but remain as the head of the delegation and as our sole representative. We know that this is too much to ask, but the Armenian Question imposes upon us [such obligations]. Just causes exact many sacrifices. I am absolutely sure about your good will and I bless you, as well as Mrs. Pasha, wishing her convalescence and health.

194**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Robert de Caix
1685 FA**

Paris, July 6, 1916

Mr. Robert de Caix, too, agrees with my plan and he will make a declaration to that effect to the Syrian Committee. He prefers it to Picot's plan. He does not want to leave Haifa to England, nor does he want to have Palestine become internationalized. Like Khairallah, he supports the idea of establishing several separate French protectorates in Syria. Consequently, it will certainly be possible to create a French protectorate in Armenian Cilicia, in case my plan for an integral Armenia, because of Russia's opposition and demands, fails to materialize. We both agree on this point. This coming Tuesday we shall have lunch at my place and resume discussing the same issue.

Mr. de Caix has an unfavorable opinion about Syrians. He considers them unruly, fighting each other vaingloriously. He believes that Khairallah has his ambitions to become governor general of Syria.

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Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Jonnart

[Excerpt]
1686–1687 FA

Paris, July 6, 1916

Mr. Jonnart informed me that he had accepted the presidency of the Syrian Committee unwillingly. He had refused it many times in the past, as he was preoccupied with the senate, the Suez canal, and especially, with the northern provinces occupied by the enemy, which he had to represent in the senate. He was elected president in his absence, despite his past refusals, and now, he was forced to accept it. Because of this situation, he told me he would not be able to assume the presidency of the France-Armenia Committee¹ that I had come to offer him. Nevertheless, he assured me that he sympathized with our cause and promised to bring every help possible, in the senate or elsewhere.

We talked about Picot's plan, which he disagrees with. He is against relinquishing Haifa to England and internationalizing Palestine. He is opposed even more to the idea of leaving Palestine to England.

With reference to Delcassé, he said it was obvious that he was deceived by the Bulgarians. However, he stressed that in this respect he followed Sir Edward Grey, the most responsible person for the policy which caused Delcassé's resignation. The major fault in Delcassé's character was his drive to accomplish everything on his own without consulting anyone.

Apparently, the other day the English sustained a serious defeat on the Ancre front because of a shortage of officers. Therefore, they decided to ask

¹ The France-Armenia Committee, as a branch of Amitiés Franco-Etrangères, was established on July 29, 1916. It had the following members:

Honorary presidents: George Clemenceau, Denys Cochin, Anatole France, Etienne Lamy, Georges Leygues, and P. Painlevé.

Committee of Directors: Louis Renault and Albert Sarraut, presidents; Etienne Flandin, Guernier, R. Georges-Levy, Antoine Meillet, and Joseph Reinach, vice presidents; René de Chavagnes, general secretary; M. F. Macler, adjutant secretary; M. Escoffier, treasurer.

Political and Economic Relations Committee: Cont d'Aunay, E. Carnot, André Cheradame, Paul Escudier, Franklin-Bouillon, Baron Hottinguer, Louis Martin, René Pinon, de Vaurel, Vlasto, and one administrator from each of Bank Mirabaud and Paquet Company.

Intellectual Relations Committee: Paul Adam, Mme. C. Andre, Paul Boyer, Rev. Charmetant, Henri Coulon, Ch. Diehl, N. Doumergue, J. Finot, Mme. G. Gaulis, F. Herold, L. Laloy, Mme. Menard-Dorian, Gabriel Mourey, Rebelliau, E. Senart, Schlumberger, G. Seailles. *State Central Archive of Armenia, Fund 57, folder 5, file 118/761.*

France to put a few staff officers at their disposal, and the French complied. Joffre himself went to confer with the English commanding officer.

Mr. Jonnart said that the English would have never asked for French officers if Lord Kitchener was alive. Kitchener had obstinacy and pride.

196**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Robert de Caix
1692–1693(?) FA**

Paris, July 10, 1916

His opinion seems to have changed since the last time I saw him. He affirmed that there was an agreement with Russia and, according to this entente, Russia would get Constantinople and the straits, with a region on the European side bordered by Enos and Meria, and a territory on the Asiatic side that would include Izmit. In return, France would get Cilicia extending all the way to Sivas and Diyarbakir, these two cities included. He confirmed that England had given up its plan to secure Alexandretta but wanted to take over Haifa with a view to turning it into the main terminal of a railway extending up to the Persian Gulf.

I told him that from the English point of view Mersin would be preferable. But he did not share my opinion, although he agreed that relinquishing Haifa would be against French interests.

Regarding Russia, he believes that it does not need an opening to the sea through Cilicia since it would gain Constantinople and the straits.

This same argument was expressed by Mr. Paul Cambon in England last year.

As an answer to his viewpoint, I repeated my arguments mentioned in my memorandum, which I do not need to mention here, but he did not seem convinced. In general, because of the many different races living in Armenia and the present state of the Armenians as a minority, he considered the Armenian Question extremely complicated. With respect to autonomy, he said that Russia should first grant it to the six provinces; perhaps later France would condescend to agree to it and join to the six provinces the part of Cilicia that we were claiming.

In short, his attitude was one of refusal, and it was also obvious that he had assumed some undertakings concerning Cilicia. I doubt he has promised to support the Picot plan. I plan to meet him again at an opportune time.

197**Boghos Nubar Pasha to Catholicos Kevork V**

[Telegram]

816 FA

Paris, July 17, 1916

Catholicos
Etchmiadzin

Because of errors in communication which made the text unintelligible, I received your corrected version today. I am deeply touched by your expression of trust in me, and complying with Your Holiness' insistence, I consider it my duty to devote my efforts to our cause as long as I am able to. I am overjoyed for having secured the valuable assistance of Massehian Khan, who has already assumed his activities.

198**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Izvolski
1688–1691 FA**

Paris, July 19, 1916

I gave him the letter that I had written to Mr. Sazonov to inform the minister about the Conference of Nationalities held in Lausanne. I had also asked him to send the necessary directives to the Russian army of the Caucasus, in order to carry out searches in the liberated regions of Armenia and deliver those women who were forcibly converted and kept in harems against their will.

Mr. Izvolski promised to send my letter to Mr. Sazonov urgently today.

Then I informed him about our successful negotiations, concerning the formation of a Franco-Armenian committee. I told him Albert Sarraut, Painlevé, Bourgeois, Louis Renault, Joseph Reinach, and others had already consented to participate in it. Mr. Jonnart could not be part of the committee since he had already accepted the presidency of the Syrian Committee. However, he is sympathetic to my plan and will try to coordinate the Syrian and Armenian interests, which are not in contradiction anyway.

Mr. Izvolski said that it was still too early to make plans about territories which belong to countries that are presently engaged in the war. In reply to my concerns that the cabinets can precede us with their plans, he said that even though the cabinets were actively involved in planning, it was quite probable that none of their conceived plans would be put into effect. According to him, adoption of any plan will depend on the events and circumstances during the final peace negotiations; particularly, he emphasized that one should consider unforeseen situations.

I affirmed that I was convinced about final decisions to be taken at the negotiations table. But, I reiterated, I considered it indispensable not to wait until that day [of negotiations] to discuss and support an appropriate plan that would be beneficial to all parties concerned.

Mr. Izvolski expressed his agreement to my point of view but stressed that it was my responsibility to work in that direction since I was to speak for our cause and win over those personalities whose say and influence would promote success. As far as he was concerned, he said that he had to retain his neutrality and let me work for our cause alone, by myself, as someone who pursues the cause of the Armenians in Turkey.

Before taking leave I asked him if he had received any instruction from Petrograd regarding the Armenian Question. He said he had not received anything and promised to inform me immediately, as soon as he had any news.

199**“France—Armenia”****First Meeting of the Constituent Committee****1694–1698 FF**

Paris, July 29, 1916

Speech by H. E. Boghos Nubar Pasha
President of the Armenian Delegation
and Representative in Europe of H. H. George V
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians

Gentlemen:

In my capacity as president of the Armenian National Delegation, I have the privilege and honor to express the deep gratitude of all Armenians for the most valuable support that you are lending to our just cause by establishing today the France-Armenia division. I am sure you share the feeling of our gratitude that we extend to our most gracious president, Mrs. André, who is [unfortunately] not with us today, but she is always in our grateful hearts. We owe to her the moving and impressive demonstration of the Sorbonne, which we shall never forget. With all her heart and most delicate charm, she has been devoted to this task for the sake of justice and mankind.

I would like to thank also Mr. Chavagnes, the distinguished founder and secretary general, who has presented with so much vigor and eloquence the Armenians' claims and the rights they exercise for the protection of France.

There is no need to remind you of the unprecedented tragedy in the annals of mankind that has befallen my compatriots of Turkey; you are well aware of its tragic and sinister vicissitudes. The whole world has shuddered with horror at the account of the extermination campaign that the Turkish government, with the undeniable complicity of its German ally, has pursued in Armenia. These atrocities have not been equaled even in the most remote and barbaric times. The Armenians, who have been the most persecuted and oppressed people in the Ottoman empire, emerged, once again, from this latest ordeal shattered and crushed but not annihilated and ready more than ever to perform their time-honored role of leader of civilization in the East.

For more than two millennia, this race has survived all sorts of adversities, invasions, conquests, inexorable persecutions, persistent massacres. All Turkish efforts [aimed at their destruction] have been shattered against this unbreakable vitality of the Armenians which, drawing its power from their religion, have the rocklike character of their mountains. Thus, we expect from the Allied powers, on the day of final victory, not the resurrection of our national entity, which has persistently remained alive, but legitimate redress and restoration of the ancient Armenian nation on its ancestral native land, and on its own soil saturated so many times with its own blood. We have

never asked for an independent Armenia, just like today we do not think about it. Our goals are more modest and, if I may say so, more sensible. What we ask for our people is security to exist freely and enjoy their belongings so that they can live and work in peace, at last, in their homeland, in an autonomous system, under the protection of the Allied powers, who will thus deliver them forever from the yoke of their oppressors.

By virtue of its racial qualities and its glorious past, Armenia expects this restitution, which it rightfully deserves, from chivalrous France, the eternal protector of the weak and magnificent dispenser of justice in all crimes and iniquities. Armenia expects France, in particular, to carry out that justice, since by its French-like cultural upbringing, its manners and emotions, it has always been drawn to France and lived under the intellectual influence of the latter. Its undisputed affinity for French spirit, its unshakable fondness of French civilization, have brought to it commendations for valor, considering the blood of its sons spilled while fighting side by side with the French during the crusades and on the battlefields of today, for the same ideals and the triumph of the same principles.

While hoping [to achieve our goals], we do not lose sight of actual realities and do not consider proposing solutions that would not protect, at the same time, the interests of all the Allied nations.

By their very nature, the Franco-Foreign Friendship intend to attain the following objective, according to the wonderful definition advanced by their founder and secretary general: "the radiance of thought, the propagation of French ideals, the protection of its moral and economic interests, and the successful outcome of just causes."

In this respect, the France-Armenia division must devote itself particularly "to defend all French interests in the East, and especially the Armenian national claims."

Gentlemen, this is the very objective that you are offered to pursue by creating this division. May I assure you that this is the same goal that we Armenians have continuously pursued. Therefore, it is in the interest of both France and Armenia that the solution to be passed in the peace conference, whatever its nature, must not become another disastrous mistake as the Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty. It must be a viable and final solution, that precludes the danger of future conflicts and the recurrence of all apprehensions, in a not too distant future, of the Eastern Question, whose complexity would be transferred from the Balkans to Armenia. I would not hesitate to assert that the solution of the Armenian Question will be as an important factor for the maintenance of peace in the East as that of the Serbian Question, which has caused the present war.

We firmly believe that our plan, which, if you allow me, I will gladly submit to you, shall satisfy all the above-mentioned conditions as much as possible for such a complex issue where so many factors and interests are involved.

Surely, France cannot intervene in favor of Armenians at this time when the blood of its sons is being abundantly spilled on the battlefield. But the time will come—very soon, indeed—when the defeated enemies of France will be judged by its law of justice, and, thereby, France will be able to grant rightful reparations to the oppressed people who expect to receive from France according to its fair tradition. It is with the expectation of this day, and before its arrival, that you, gentlemen, the most renowned friends of Armenia, have gathered to establish the France-Armenia division. You have taken upon yourselves the task to study [the Armenian Question] starting today and cast the foundation on which the future of autonomous Armenia will be built when the time of settlement comes.

The impressive authority of the eminent political figures who are part of this new committee, their mighty and lawful influence in parliamentary and government circles, the sparkling brilliance of the intellectual elite of France that brings its generous contribution too [to our cause], confirms our confidence that, under such favorable circumstances, the wishes of Armenians will at last be granted and justice will be done to them following the victory of the Allies.

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Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V

[Telegram]

817 FA

Paris, July 29, 1916

Kevork V

Catholicos of Armenians

Etchmiadzin

I am happy to announce the formation of a committee, consisting exclusively of armenophile Frenchmen, who are members of the French National Assembly and the academy, and whose sole purpose is to bring their unmitigated support to our cause.

201**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V
821–824 AA**

Paris, August 1, 1916

His Holiness Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos
of All Armenians
Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

The cable sent to me by Your Holiness on June 20 contained so many telegraphic errors that I was forced to ask for another copy. I am enclosing an exact and precise copy of it so that Your Holiness can verify how difficult it was to decipher it.

Because of war, telegraphic communication has slowed down to such an extent that Your Holiness's cable reached me in nine days.* The second copy that I had asked for has not arrived yet.† Therefore, after waiting for a week, based on the copy sent by the post office—which was a little more intelligible and shed a little more light on the contents of your cable despite its many repeated mistakes—I decided to send Your Holiness a cable reply.

Therefore, today I am enclosing a copy of my reply, and without waiting any further for a second copy of your telegram—which I have no hope of receiving—I come to express to Your Holiness my very sincere appreciation of your confidence in me, and particularly, of your insistence for me to remain as your representative and the European president of the National Delegation.

I comply with your demand according to Your Holiness's desire, and I continue to perform my duties to the best of my ability, regardless of the difficulties arising from my position and my apprehension that I might not be able to perform efficiently under such conditions. I have already secured the collaboration of His Excellency Hovhanes Khan Massehian, who has already assumed his activities. His contribution will be most valuable for me. I hope to have others cooperating with me, and thus facilitating my task. Unfortunately, H. E. Massehian Khan, after a few days' stay in Paris, was forced to leave for Switzerland; thus I am all by myself once again.

I reiterate my dedication to our national interests and will devote my total efforts to our cause, regardless of the many difficulties that I may encounter.

* It took exactly seven days according to the entry on the copy of the telegram.

† The second copy arrived on 7 August.

Your Holiness is aware that the British Armenia Committee is in existence for the last few years and is quite active. It is composed of members of the British Parliament, including Lord Bryce, who has rendered many services to our cause.

For a long time I was striving to create a similar committee with the participation of our friends in France. As I had mentioned in my cable, I am happy to announce to Your Holiness that, following my successful efforts, we have been able to form the Committee of France-Armenia. Your Holiness will notice from the list of members I have enclosed¹ that I have secured the participation of important personalities from the National Assembly and the academic circle, namely: Messrs. Painlevé and Denys Cochin, ministers, the presidents of the senate and the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, Georges Clemenceau and Georges Leygues, as well as other former ministers, senators, members of the [National] Assembly and members of the academy, such as Anatole France and Etienne Lamy, secretary for life of the academy.

This committee convened for the first time, to which I was invited and asked to make a short speech. On behalf of all Armenians, I thanked the members for their valuable support and, at the same time, I expounded our desires and demands. Naturally, on this first occasion, I had to limit my address to generalities, saving the details of our general program to the forthcoming sessions. You will find enclosed a copy of my speech, which must not be published, for reasons well known to you. In here, too, I refused to have it printed in the local press, although while giving an account of the meeting, the essence of my remarks were published, too.

After listening to my speech, the committee decided to send a letter to Your Holiness to express their sympathy; I am enclosing a copy so that you become acquainted with the exact content in case of telegraphic errors in the cable that you have received.²

Also, it was decided in the same meeting to send a congratulatory telegram to His Excellency the Grand Duke Nicholas, for the occasion of the victory in Erzingan and its capturing.³

Kneeling to your holy right hand, with deepest reverence I remain your most humble and obedient son.

¹ No enclosure was kept. See annotation of document 194.

² Copy is missing.

³ Erzingan was captured on July 12, 1916. The military operations ended on July 20, 1916. Thus, Russia gained total control over the Trebizond-Baybourt, Trebizond-Erzingan, and Erzerum-Erzingan road, confirming the final loss of Turkish military operations in Western Armenia. The Armenian Sixth Volunteer Unit participated in the battles for Erzingan.

202**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Eugene Semenov
1699–1706 FA**

Paris, August 4, 1916

I had invited him to my home for lunch. First he talked about Poland. He said that he did not want Poland to be granted independence or even broad autonomy because there were many anti-Russian elements there. He stressed that Poland would not pose a threat to Russia if it decided to join Germany and Austria in a future war. He enumerated the many wars that Poland had waged against Russia during different stages of its history and the many claims it had issued, even aiming at conquering Moscow. Thus he made it clear that he was for the preservation of a Poland under Russian domination, annexing to it all those Polish provinces that are under German rule, e.g., Polish Galicia. He favored the idea of creating a special administrative system for Poland, leaving to Russia the control and management of the army, the finance and justice ministries, on the condition that the appellate court would be in Petrograd. By virtue of a liberal state administration, it would be possible, in due time, to grant autonomy to Poland without exposure to danger.

He favored the dismemberment of Austria. He believed that the empire's 9 million Germans would inevitably join Germany which, according to him, would compensate for the loss of the Polish provinces. On the other hand, by detaching Hungary from Austria and all its Italian and Slavic territories, the inhabitants of these regions, numbering 40 million, would be taken away from Germany in case of renewed war. Therefore, he considered of utmost importance the dismemberment of Austria during the coming peace conference. This corresponds to André Cheradame's viewpoint that he has expounded in his book about Pan-Germanism.¹

As for the Armenian Question, he said that he had talked to many politicians and was amazed at their reluctance to treat it as an important issue. Furthermore, he explained that they did not seem to be concerned about it and that they were mainly interested in Cilicia, and the French government seemed quite decided not to make any concessions. The fate of Constantinople was finally decided. The parliamentary committees were actively discussing it and had even signed an agreement whereby Russia was granted absolute right over Constantinople and the straits. This way, Russia would secure a passage to the sea and, consequently, it would not be able to

¹ André Cheradame (1871–1948), a French writer and member of the France-Armenia Committee, dedicated his life to studying Pan-Germanism since 1901. He was author of *Pan-German Plot Unmasked* (1917), *The United States and Pan-Germanism* (1918), etc.

claim Cilicia, to which the Allies would not consent anyway. It would be possible that Germany could instigate Russia to annex Cilicia to the six provinces; the purpose of such a maneuver would be to create dissension among the Allies.

Mr. Semenov stressed emphatically that Russia, having conquered the six provinces, has decided to annex them. He mentioned that, personally, he was for autonomy but did not think that the Russian government, particularly Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. Stürmer, shared the same view. As a reason [for the latter's reluctance] he mentioned the danger that the Armenians of Caucasia might be pushed to demand the unification of the Caucasian district with the autonomous Armenia.

During my meeting with Mr. Miliukov, attended by Zavriev, Miliukov, too, had referred to the same danger.

I told Mr. Semenov that such a danger should not cause apprehension, because Armenians in the Caucasus, alongside Russians, Georgians, Tartars, and others, are a minority. The maximum that can happen is that Armenians of the Caucasus might migrate to the autonomous state of the six provinces; and this could not alarm Russia. I added that if Russia, after conquering the six provinces would decide to annex them, Armenians would not want, nor would they be able, to stand against it. Furthermore, Armenians would enjoy the benefit of being relieved of Turkish yoke and would henceforth live in the same conditions as their brothers in the Caucasus, contented and prosperous. The problem was whether this was the best solution and corresponded to Russia's interests. Undoubtedly, in case Russia annexed the six provinces, France would be forced to unite Cilicia to Syria which would be its share from the dismemberment of Turkey. In that case, as it was promised to us, the Armenians of Cilicia would be granted autonomy under French protection. Armenians would be assured of finding a more liberal administration over there than what they had at the present in the provinces occupied by the Russian army, where they were isolated by the military authorities because of their preference for the Turks instead of Armenians.

Mr. Semenov, who seemed to be aware of these events, said that the reason for this treatment was the fear of espionage. I asked him if he really believed that Armenians could spy on Russians in favor of the Turkish government.

I added that the autonomy of Cilicia Armenians would be independent of the autonomies of Syria and Lebanon; and, considering French traditions, that autonomy would be very liberal in nature and correspond perfectly to the peoples' desires. It would truly become an Armenian autonomy, endowed with the best assets for a lively existence, with an opening on the Mediterranean. I said I did not want to bring forth other advantages, and I wondered if, from the Russian point of view, it would not be preferable to take into account the solution that we had considered the year before and the government in Petrograd was fully aware of.

Mr. Semenov avoided answering my question directly but let me know that the decision to annex the six provinces was made in Petrograd. He also pointed out that there was no hope at all to reappeal the decision. He reiterated that he favored autonomy but that should not be achieved immediately; it should be granted after some time, following the shaping of events. It would depend on the demeanor of the peoples of the six provinces.

This is only a summary of our long meeting, without mentioning the details of our program that I presented him. My vivid impression from this meeting is that certain decisions have been taken in Petrograd about the six provinces, which will be annexed by Russia. At the same time, the Allies have come to an agreement whereby France will take over Cilicia.

I got the particular impression that Mr. Semenov, who had spontaneously come to see me (was referred to me by Sir Austin Lee), wanted to keep me informed about the decisions taken by the Allies, and, perhaps, he was delegated by Russia to specifically transmit to me that information. In any case, he will discuss our meeting in Petrograd after his return.

Mr. Semenov's statements are worthy of consideration because of the fact that they correspond to the contents of Zavriev's telegram, which he had sent me after his meeting with the foreign affairs minister.²

Therefore, today it becomes imperative to change our plan and base it on an autonomous Armenian Cilicia under French protection, while continuing to demand autonomy for the six provinces under Russian protection.

² Boris Stürmer (1849–1917) was both premier and foreign minister of Russia at that time (January–November 1916).

203**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Denys Cochin**

[Excerpt]

1707 FA

Evian, August 20, 1916

In general, he has no confidence in Russia. Even though he is very reserved in his appraisals, he told me confidentially that Armenians should not expect any help from Russia; especially they should not nurture any hope about autonomy.

We talked at length about that issue, as well as about Sazonov's fall and the change in policy, as a result of Mr. Stürmer's appointment as minister of foreign affairs. At the end, we both agreed that if—as it seems quite probable—the plan of an integral Armenia under a collective protection failed, then the Armenians should ask France to grant autonomy to Cilicia under its protection.

204**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Jonnart**

[Excerpt]

1708–1711 FA

Evian, August 31, 1916

First of all, I asked his indulgence for having inconvenienced him on the day of his departure to Paris. I told him I wished to consult him at a time when the events, and especially the ministerial changes, in Russia forced me to amend our plan.

In fact, our initial plan, which I consider to be the best in all respects from the Allies' viewpoint as well as from ours, will never be accepted by the extremely conservative, imperialist minister who succeeded Mr. Sazonov in Petrograd. Certainly, I will never stop demanding that the six provinces, which are under Russian occupation at the present and will be annexed to Russia, be granted a sort of autonomy. I admit that we have no high hopes in finding satisfaction in that respect. We now rely totally on France. We believe that, according to the agreement between the Allies, which leaves Cilicia together with Syria to France, the latter will turn Cilicia into a French protectorate with an autonomous region. Consequently, our interests coincide with those of France. It is beneficial to both of us that the territories allotted to France be as vast as possible. For this reason, we would like to have Sivas included in Cilicia from the north and Diyarbakir from the east. But after achieving all this—and that is where I ask for Mr. Jonnart's assistance—we would be totally disappointed if France did not grant a liberal autonomy to Cilicia and did not accord Armenians broad privileges in their homeland, respecting the rights of nationalities.

Mr. Jonnart agreed, declaring that he is an ardent sympathizer with the idea of decentralizing the administration of the colonies. He had applied that principle in Algeria at the time he was governor there; he assumed that position on condition that his plan should be accepted. He believes that all those countries that will fall under France's jurisdiction should have separate and autonomous administrative bodies, each one with its own governor, legislative council, and administrative councils. Three autonomous administrations must be established: one for Syria, one for Lebanon, and one for Cilicia; others could be formed, too. The governors of these regions will communicate with each other through a governor general, whose duty will be to oversee the application of the provisions of each region's constitution. Mr. Jonnart believes that the number of French officials should be as limited as possible, and instead, local elements should be used. He reiterates that, if he were given the task of organizing the administrative systems of those regions, he

would simply need two or three financial inspectors to create a budgetary system and institute taxes first of all.

We also talked about the necessity of sending medical aid and provisions to the deportees in Mesopotamia. I told him about my unsuccessful appeals that I had submitted to the United States and even Germany, and about our efforts to convince the latter to use its influence on the Sublime Porte and secure permission for dispatching food and medicine. A neutral Swiss official, who had assumed that task, had the strong impression that the German government was willing to go along with the request in order to erase the bad opinion created by its behavior in the past and also to show that it was truly concerned about the fate of the Armenians. Unfortunately, today Germans have no more influence on the Turkish leaders except for military matters, and, therefore, the government in Berlin was unable to secure the required permission.

I asked Mr. Jonnart what he had been able to achieve for the Syrians because I knew that he had submitted appeals in order to help them. He said that he had petitioned the king of Spain so that the latter persuaded Turkey to agree to the shipment of food and drugs to be transported by neutral missions and oversee their distribution. He added that the king of Spain had gladly interceded with Turkish officials but had received no answer so far.

We agreed that we would keep on waiting for the outcome of that appeal, and in case it receives a positive response, I should submit a similar petition.

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Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Maurice Murais
1712–1717 FA

Morges, September 12, 1916

I gave him the related notes that I had prepared for an article to be published in *Gazette de Lausanne*, with some explanation. He totally agreed about the essence of the notes and promised to use them at least for one article.

At the same time, he showed me the typewritten translation of an article that had appeared in *Rech*, which he had received by mail but had no idea who the sender was. After reading it, I realized that it was the exact transcription of the article that *Tribune de Lausanne* had published on September 11, without mentioning that the same article had already appeared in the July 28 (August 10), 1916, issue of *Rech*. This article assumes a certain importance as it has already been published in that paper; at the same time, it leaves no doubt about the russification plan of the conquered Armenian provinces by Russia.¹

Mr. Murais said that a certain Armenian, whose name he would not mention, had visited him. That person had come from Paris, where he had stayed for months, but eventually he was asked by the French authorities to leave the country. Mr. Murais thought that the Armenian had close contacts with the members of the Young Turk government and was sent explicitly by them to work for the conclusion of a separate peace treaty with Turkey. For that purpose, that person had tried to buy the shares of such Swiss newspapers as *Gazette de Lausanne* or *Journal de Genève*, to be able to publish articles in them to pave the way for a separate peace treaty. Mr. Murais had told him that he was wasting his time since Swiss papers were not for sale. Then the Armenian had told him that he was prepared to start a new Swiss newspaper, with Swiss editors, whose sole aim would be to promote energetically the idea of a separate peace treaty with Turkey. According to that individual, that treaty would be signed by new Ottoman politicians, who are presently inactive, because of the deadlocked situation. But if they could be given the assurance that the Allies would consent to a separate treaty, then they would move to depose the Young Turk leaders. Also, the Armenian had told him that he had at his disposal 500,000 francs, and he had even declared naively that the Turkish Foreign Ministry was to make a contribution to that project

¹ James Bryce enclosed in his letter of October 2, 1916, to Boghos Nubar the article called, "The Colonization of Turkish Armenia," which appeared in the July 28th issue of the *Rech*, considering it more the policy of the "Russian military authorities." The article stated that the project of colonizing the conquered region of Turkish Armenia with Russian settlers was urgently being pushed forward.

worth 200,000 francs. He had further mentioned that he was in communication with the Turkish ambassador in Bern and followed his instructions. He had even given evidence to Mr. Murais to that respect, submitting to him a typewritten statement outlining the whole project, and asking him to study it until his next visit.

Mr. Murais told him that, under the present conditions, he should not count on his collaboration; but then he had not refused to meet him, considering that it would be worthwhile to be informed about the outcome of this man's activities.

He asked my opinion about all this. We discussed the issue at length based on the consideration that the Allies would have a lot to gain by signing a separate peace treaty with Turkey. This question was thoroughly examined by Colonel Faler in his series of articles that was published in *Journal de Genève*. The colonel's conclusion was that it was in the Allies' interests to deal separately with Turkey, provided the latter agreed to the terms imposed on it. What is the nature of these terms? Mr. Murais agreed with me that the Allies, who had submitted a collective, official warning to the Sublime Porte holding the Turkish leaders liable for the atrocities and massacres in Armenia, would not negotiate with them. Yet certainly, this would not be a stumbling block, as evidenced by that Armenian's appeal, if the present Young Turk leaders were willing to sign a separate treaty. They could withdraw from the limelight, letting others conduct the negotiations, hoping that after the signing of the treaty they would return to power once again.

As for the terms of peace, he said that undoubtedly Turkey should suffer the consequences of its senseless act, that of declaring war against the Allied nations. He stressed that the latter should demand Turkey leave Constantinople to the Russians, given the fact that they had made a commitment in that respect, and left the caliphate to the sherif of Mecca. At the same time, following the latest atrocities, the Allies would not consent to the Armenian and Syrian provinces staying under Turkish rule anymore since Arabia was already lost for the Turks. Therefore, even if for the sake of signing a separate peace treaty, the Allies gave up their claim on those provinces, they would at least demand that they became autonomous under their protection, leaving them under the sultan's rule only nominally. This way, the actual Ottoman Empire would be limited to Anatolia, with Konia or Brusa as its capital, since in all other autonomous provinces the sultan's authority would only be nominal.

Mr. Murais said that these were minimal demands that the Allies could impose on Turkey as a condition for agreeing to a separate peace treaty.

He promised to keep me posted on the activities of the Armenian individual working on behalf of the Young Turk government for a separate treaty.

N. B. The Armenian mentioned by Mr. Murais is Loris Naflian. He must not be confused with architect Nafilian.

206**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Maurice Murais**

[Informal]

1718 FA

Lausanne, September 22, 1916

He said that a strong pro-Turkish campaign is being waged in Lausanne. The Ramberts, father and son, are actively involved in it.

They want to realize a sort of Ouchy treaty.¹

They even think about erecting a mosque in Lausanne, for which they have raised 10,000 francs so far.

Naflian has offered 10,000 gold pounds to *Tribune de Lausanne*, provided the paper engages in an anti-German campaign and promotes the idea of a separate peace treaty with Turkey. The management of the newspaper has replied that its word is not for sale. This proposal has been presented by a major manufacturer of paper that supplies printing paper to the press.

¹ The Treaty of Ouchy or Lausanne was signed on October 18, 1912, putting an end to the Italo-Turkish war which broke on September 28, 1911, over Tripoli in North Africa. The treaty formally recognized Italian sovereignty over Tripoli.

207**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Gout
1719–1726 FA**

Paris, October 2, 1916

He announced that French Commanding Officer Romieu had left for Egypt on Saturday. His function would be the training of a group of military and nonmilitary volunteers for a possible expedition to Asia Minor. This group would be trained in Cyprus, and they would form the core of an expeditionary force, with a French C. O. and staff members. They would remain there until the opportunity for action arises. There were two possibilities for such an expedition to materialize. First, the northward spreading of the rebellion of the sherif of Mecca, all the way to Syria, and second, a victory by the Allies in the Balkans, which would cut the communications line between Germany and Turkey, causing the isolation of the latter and hence the defeat of its army that would then be driven to Anatolia.

In either case, the Allies would land an expeditionary force in Syria or Cilicia. Such a force would primarily consist of a large Allied regiment to which the volunteers under arms would help with their knowledge of the country and the language. Later on, the officers and other high-ranking members of a future militia would be chosen from this volunteer group, and they would participate in the civilian administration of the country. For the time being, it is not clear if an expeditionary force would disembark; that depends on the turn of events. Therefore, the whole question was only about a possible eventuality.

Mr. Gout asked if it would be possible to find close to 1,000 Armenians in Egypt who would be willing to become volunteers. He added that in Port Said some 200–300 able-bodied Armenians were fit to become volunteers, but the number was still too small to be considered adequate.

I answered that my return to Paris concerned that issue. In fact, I told him one of our community notables in Egypt had written to me, informing me about the conversation he had with a French colonel. He had not mentioned the latter's name, but I believed it was Colonel Brémont himself, who had passed by Egypt on his way to Mecca, on a special mission.¹

Mr. Gout confirmed that it should, indeed, be Colonel Brémont, because there were no other French officers of that rank in Egypt.

I further added that the colonel had met the prominent persons of the Armenian community and had discussed with them the question of volunteers without much detail. My compatriots had stated that they were ready to offer their help but had also brought to the colonel's attention that the formation of volunteer groups consisting of Ottoman Armenians, especially in

¹ The notable is Levon Meguerditchian, and the colonel, indeed, is Brémont.

a country like Egypt, could endanger those hundreds of thousands of Armenian deportees who were held as hostages by the Turk, around Aleppo and the Mesopotamian desert. They had also mentioned that they would not make any decision without consulting me. In agreement with the colonel, they had decided to ask me for directives by cable.²

After giving all these explanations to Mr. Gout, I assured him that without any doubt the Armenians would happily accept the plan considered by the French government because they had been waiting for too long for an invasion in Asia Minor, a plan which I had submitted to the French representative in Cairo, in the winter of 1914, offering our total help. But, I added that since then the Turks subjected the Armenians to the most horrendous treatment leading to their annihilation, and as a justification, they said that they were forced to resort to such means because the Armenians had enrolled in enemy armies from the first day of the war to fight against them. Undoubtedly, it would be easy to refute this false justification of their crimes, but this pretext was still used by Turkey's ally, the Germans, in booklets published by them to defend the Turkish actions. I did not wish to create new opportunities for further retaliation and subject the deportees of Mesopotamia to new acts of vengeance, I added. Therefore, I said, I believed that above all we should avoid bringing out publications referring to the enrollment of volunteers and not to draft the volunteers in Egypt. I suggested that those who wished to be enlisted for service could be transferred to Cyprus in groups and trained over there rather than treating them the way it had happened with the Port Said refugees. But the case of these refugees was different from those to be enrolled now because the latter were liberated and taken care of by France and were subsisting in Port Said thanks to the means supplied by the French government; therefore, it would only be logical to assume that France would transport these men in its care to Cyprus or some other suitable place at its own expense. On the other hand, I did not think that the issue involved an invasion achieved only by 1,000–2,000 Armenian volunteers; I believed that the day the project would be put into effect, a strong detachment of Allied forces would participate in it, supported by the volunteers. Furthermore, I explained that, even then, it was my conviction that no

² In his memoirs, Mihran Damadian writes that Colonel Brémond, while heading a mission to Hijaz and Yemen, made a stop in Alexandria and showed up at a function organized by the Armenian community in support of the Allies and the Red Cross, in autumn 1916. The colonel informed that France had decided to form an Armenian legion upon petitions received from the Armenian refugees of Port Said who were saved by French ships from Musa Dagh. Meguerditchian and Damadian, during a private meeting, advised Brémond that the French government should negotiate the matter with Boghos Nubar. In turn, the colonel advised them to ask Boghos Nubar to contact the Quai d'Orsay. Mihran Damadian, *Im Housheres* (From My Memoirs) (Beirut, 1985), 105–106.

separate volunteer group must be formed with its own identification, but the volunteers must be absorbed in the expeditionary force, as was the case with those numerous Armenian volunteers who had fought in Verdun and the Somme³ as part of the French regiments. These volunteers fighting on the French front were supposed to be sent to Cyprus, too, where they would be more useful than in France.

Mr. Gout assured me that he understood my apprehension, and he agreed with me that the danger of Turkish vengeance was quite real; even if the Turkish alibi was not justifiable. Consequently, he consented that the matter should be pursued according to my plan.

Seizing upon the opportunity, I talked about the solution to be accorded to the Armenian Question, stressing particularly the case of Cilicia, which would most probably be given to France together with Syria. I told him that it would be a great reassurance and also a motive to encourage the enlistment of volunteers if Armenians were given the hope that France would grant autonomy to Cilicia—separately from Syria—under its protection. I explained that news coming from the provinces occupied by the Russian army was not encouraging; the Russian government was pursuing a policy of annexation and russification. The Armenians of these provinces were subjected to a very unjust treatment and they were totally disillusioned. Now they hoped that France, faithful to its democratic traditions, would establish in that territory such a propitious regime that it would give us the opportunity to rebuild our nationhood under its protection. I stressed the existence of the Armenian element in the East as being of extreme importance, mentioning the opinion of the Germans, too, (Rohrbach), that the Armenian race could have in the process of peaceful infiltration and development of the country.

Mr. Gout said that he agreed with me about the Armenian element being the most important and gifted and reiterated that France would certainly take it into consideration. He mentioned that it was not possible yet to sell the bear's hide* but repeated we could rest assured that France would grant the Armenians a liberal administration; and such an action, he said—as I had mentioned before—corresponded to France's democratic traditions.

We decided that I write to Arakel† urging him to see Commander Romieu.

³ The battle of Verdun lasted from February 21 to December 18, 1916, and ended with a French victory. The French suffered about 550,000 casualties against 450,000 Germans. The battle of the Somme, where the British introduced the tank to the battlefield, ended on November 18, 1916, with the victory of the Allies after almost five months of fierce fighting. Overall casualties were 650,000 Germans against 615,000 Allied troops. Armenian volunteers fought in both battles alongside the Allies.

* A remark for the Turks—"A bear's hide can't be sold before killing it."

† Boghos Nubar Pasha's son.

208**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. René Pinon**

[Excerpt]

1727–1728 FA

Paris, October 2, 1916

He wished to meet me to let me know that Commander Romieu had left for Egypt. He expressed almost the same opinion as Mr. Gout concerning the preparation of an expeditionary force in Cyprus. I told him that I was already informed by Mr. Gout and from the letters I had received from Egypt.

During a discussion on general topics, he said he strongly doubted that an expeditionary force would be landed in Asia Minor; everything depended on the upcoming events. Even if such an invasion would become a reality, he believed Tripoli would be the ideal landing spot.

He said they had tried to sign a separate peace treaty with the Bulgarians but had not succeeded. The Bulgarians had insisted that they did not want Thrace, but Macedonia.

As for the possibility of a separate peace treaty with Turkey, he advised me to see Mr. Briand, adding that my information from Switzerland would certainly interest him. He said he was sorry that Mr. Tittoni was not with us because of sickness; my information would have interested him very much and he was capable of making good use of it.

209**Boghos Nubar to the Armenian National Union of Egypt
1729–1733 FF**

Paris, October 6, 1916

My dear Meguerditchian:

Just as I had advised you by telegram, I have advanced the date of my return to Paris in order to gather information and answer your letter with full knowledge [of the situation]. Let me tell you, first of all, that you have given a very wise reply to Colonel Brémond, bringing to his attention the danger threatening the surviving deportees in Turkey that would be caused by the enrollment of Armenian volunteers and telling him that you would have to ask for my instructions. Even though you had not mentioned his name, having met you and taken steps concerning the question of Armenian volunteers, I at once presumed that you were talking about him. It goes without saying that we cannot refuse our participation; on the contrary, we must promptly and eagerly respond to the call made to us. A long time ago we ourselves called for a landing by the Allies, and you must remember that I had taken action in that respect by seeing the three ministers of the Entente powers in Cairo at the beginning of the war, in the winter of 1914, offering them the total [contribution and] participation of the Armenians of Cilicia in an expeditionary force. Unfortunately, at that time, such a landing in Asia Minor was not included in the plans of the Allies since there was already a decision taken concerning the Dardanelles campaign. Today, the circumstances are not the same anymore. The massacres and deportations have depopulated those Armenian territories, and hundreds and thousands of our compatriots are penned in the deserts of Aleppo and Mesopotamia. We must not forget that these unfortunates, as well as all the Armenians of Turkey, are at the mercy of the Turks. The latter have continuously mentioned in all their publications the enrollment of Armenian volunteers as a pretext and excuse for their atrocities in Armenia. Certainly, it is easy to refute this so called justification of their crimes, but the pretext advanced by them is still used by the Germans themselves in their published brochures and in their declarations made in the Reichstag as their main argument to defend their ally. Therefore, let's not supply them with new excuses.

I have had many meetings concerning the issue of enrollment since my return to Paris. Let me warn you, first of all, that there can be no question of a landing at the present. Everything will depend on the turn of events. There could arise certain possibilities that would make such a landing a necessity. Even if these possibilities are not probable to happen under the present circumstances, the Allies have considered all eventualities in order not to be caught unawares. Nevertheless, we have, at once, become aware of the reality of the danger threatening our compatriots of Asia because of the

enrollment of volunteers, especially in Egypt, and the necessity to act with utmost discretion and prudence.

Needless to say, when a decision will be taken regarding the possibility of a landing, this will not be achieved by only a thousand Armenian volunteers. A mighty contingent of Allied troops would be sent, and naturally the volunteers would be incorporated in it, just like it happened with those Armenian volunteers who enrolled in France since the beginning of the war and fought so bravely in Champagne, at Verdun, and the Somme. I know many of them who have won the Croix de Guerre and even the Médaille Militaire. These volunteers of France would be recommended to be shipped to Cyprus to be part of the expeditionary force. In any way, it is my strong conviction that we must avoid forming a separate force of Armenian volunteers, but they should be incorporated in Allied troops, just as it was done in France.

Concerning the enrollments, I have suggested that we must particularly refrain from enlisting Armenians in Egypt, but only in Cyprus or anywhere else. Those Armenians in Egypt, who would like to enroll, would travel to Cyprus by boat, as this was the point of assembly, chosen unanimously by the English and French governments. Only there, they would enlist, in the English or French forces and would be advised whether they were chosen for civilian or military duty. We must avoid disclosing the reason of their voyage, saying, for example, that they are looking for work, or wish to enroll in the Allies' auxiliary services, according to their aptitudes. The refugees in Port Said are to be excepted since their case is a special one. They have been saved and sheltered by the French navy and, naturally, the French government that has taken upon itself for many months now to care for them can deal with them and transfer them anywhere as it sees fit without consulting us. Therefore, nothing can prevent those men among the refugees fit to serve, to be put aboard the ships of the fleet.

In any case, any reference or publication that could give a hint in the press, and particularly in the Armenian newspapers, should be avoided. I know that with respect to *Arev* my request to you will be sufficient; but *Housaper*, too, must comply, and for that, I am going to write to my son Arakel to ask the English and French authorities to call the director of that paper and give him the proper instructions, as well as to other newspapers in Egypt. At all events, I suggest that you see Abah and his friends¹ and demand, on my behalf, that they exhibit a most cautious attitude, particularly stressing the absolute necessity of avoiding all publicity.

If these conditions are observed—and it is in our own interest that they be because the Allies have no reason whatsoever to inform us about their preparations—then we shall avoid providing the Turks with another excuse to start perpetrating new atrocities, while at the same time taking part in the

¹ The Ramgavars.

landing with the Allied troops to liberate our native land. In this respect, I have always insisted in my talks, as much as the circumstances allow, that in order to encourage enrollments, we must have some assurance that our national goals in Cilicia will be fulfilled, definitely under the protection of France. No doubt, it is not possible for the Allies at this stage, when the fate of the Ottoman Empire, which depends on the turn of military events, is not decided yet, to set my well-defined plan. But if, according to the news reaching us from Caucasia, the Russian government's policy toward the Armenians in the provinces conquered by its armies has changed, betraying our hopes and causing great deception, it will not happen the same with the French government in Cilicia. All the Armenian territories that will go to France during the final settlement at the end of the war will enjoy a liberal administration conforming to the traditions and the tolerant principles of France that will thus provide the opportunity to accomplish our national goals; I have been assured in that respect by everyone. Today, the French political figures unanimously agree that the Armenian people are the most important element in the East, absolutely necessary for France to accomplish its task of bringing civilization to Asia Minor and improving the country in all respects. It follows that the capabilities and natural aptitudes of the Armenians give them the right for a political structure.

Coming back to the most pressing project of ours, I must let you know that the French government has decided to send to Egypt Commander Bouvier, who will take care of all arrangements; he is bound to leave this week. To my deepest regret, he had left Paris before my arrival and I was not able to see him. It would have been very helpful had we discussed all these issues. Therefore, you will have to go and see him once he arrives in Egypt and come to an agreement with him, according to my above-mentioned instructions and directives. But first of all you must come to terms with my son Arakel, to whom I shall send a copy of this letter to keep him informed. I ask you to see him first before embarking on any undertaking.

210**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V**

[Telegram]

820 FA

Paris, October 7, 1916

To the Catholicos
Etchmiadzin

The American government has decided to proclaim October 21 and 22 as days of fund-raising, all over the country, in favor of deported Armenians. I hope Your Holiness will be obliging to send a telegram of blessings and thanks to President Wilson so that he can send it for publication in the newspapers before October 21.

211**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Jonnart**

[Excerpt]
1734–1735 FA

Paris October 7, 1916

I told him about Colonel Brémond's proceeding in Egypt regarding volunteers and asked him if the same action had been taken for Syrians. Mr. Jonnart said that there were no appropriate elements in Syria who could bear arms. He had had a meeting with Mr. Briand lately, together with his committee's members, and had asked him to station fighting units in Syria. Mr. Briand had told him that was not possible because they definitely needed England's help, and the latter had refused to go along with their request, arguing that they did not have enough soldiers. The English had deployed all their available forces on the western front (France) and Salonica. Mr. Jonnart said that he did not think an invasion was possible unless there would happen major changes in the military situation.

He said the Syrians were divided among themselves, each group pursuing its own aims and ideals. One such group had recently approached him and demanded that Syria be granted absolute independence. Others, like Cressati, insists that France should annex Syria. Khairallah expresses some unrealistic claims, too.

212**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Flandin**

[Excerpt]

1736–1738 FA

Paris, October 18, 1916

Mr. Flandin said that landing an expeditionary force (in Asia Minor) did not seem probable at the present moment. At the beginning it was being considered, with the hope that the sheriff's rebellion would spread north. But the staff could not secure enough soldiers. Many army corps were needed, but they had only a few divisions.

We talked about the negotiations regarding the partition of Asiatic Turkey. According to Mr. Flandin:

— A final decision has not been reached;

— France will get Syria, together with Cilicia, extending to Sivas, Kharput and Mosul, but excluding Diyarbakir;

— There is no agreement yet concerning Palestine. England is claiming Haifa, with a strip going through Syria that it considers essential for its railway reaching the Persian Gulf, and it wants to internationalize Palestine. It seems, Mr. Briand agrees to the idea of internationalization, but some members of the Parliament are against it, arguing that it will create antagonisms. They prefer to internationalize the holy places under the protection of the Allies, provided that France is allowed a preponderant position;

— Some are concerned that the internationalization of Palestine might impede the question of reestablishing relations with the Vatican;

— Alexandretta will become part of Syria, although England has not abandoned its claim on it.

According to Mr. Flandin, England will either lay claim to Haifa or Alexandretta. He seemingly wants to push France to the north.

I asked him what would happen to Cilicia if Alexandretta was left to England. Mr. Flandin said that it was inconceivable for France—while getting Cilicia—to consent that England would take over Alexandretta, right in the middle of Cilicia and Syria.

In short, all these issues are still being discussed; no final decision has been reached yet.

Italy wants a large share, too, and is not satisfied with Adalia only. It claims Smyrna and even Alexandretta.

Some territory should be given to Greece, too.

213**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Izvolski
1739–1742 FA**

Paris, October 19, 1916

While talking about Switzerland, he mentioned that there were many Turkish spies (over 500) in that country, all involved in intrigues and conspiracies. He named the famous Rashid Bey, in particular, who was the minister of interior in Kamil Pasha's cabinet. Mr. Mandelstam, who is now back from Switzerland, has given him some interesting information about this situation. Mr. Izvolski wanted to know if I had the chance of meeting any of them while I was in Switzerland. I told him that, indeed, the place was infested with Germans and Turks but I had no desire to get involved in their schemes; therefore, I intentionally tried to avoid them, including the former viceroy, who lived in Clarence, close to Valmont where I stayed for a week.

I conveyed to him the rumors I had heard, in that the Turkish government was trying to arrange a separate peace treaty. Mr. Izvolski thinks that this cannot be Enver's idea; he says it is, probably, Talaat's initiative. I reminded him that this news circulated even before the Romanian defeat, and because of the Turkish readiness about a separate peace treaty, the facts might have changed ever since.

On this point, Mr. Izvolski says that Russia is doing its best to help Romanians and that although the situation is serious, it is far from being worrisome.

I spoke about the news from the Caucasus and on the article that appeared in *Rech*, the newspaper, causing a great deal of grief among Armenians. According to this write-up, Russia will try to convert the conquered Armenian provinces into a settlement populated by Russian peasants and Cossacks, and, subsequently, deport the Armenians. The intention is to separate the Russian Armenians from the Armenians of Turkey by creating a purely Russian zone. Furthermore, Armenians won't be permitted to return and take possession of their properties without proof of ownership.

Now the same newspaper, *Rech*, states that this decree prohibits the Armenians from returning home since it is highly doubtful that people in Turkey would have documents, and even if they had, they must have lost them; these unfortunate people who have taken refuge in Russia and elsewhere have not carried anything with them during their exodus.

I also made reference to the interview with General Peshkov that appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*. According to it, the Armenian refugees of certain vilayets, such as of Van, will be permitted to return to their country, but they will be grouped separately, regardless of the villages or places they have lived and owned properties before. Likewise, Kurds will also be grouped separately.

I pointed out that such arrangements, needless to say, caused immense disappointment and anguish among Armenians. I also mentioned that I could not ignore this situation and I hoped that the discussions were not final and that I believed in the spirit of freedom and charity promoted by His Imperial Majesty.

Mr. Izvolski told me that he had not read the *Rech* article; he was not even aware of it. However, he does not think that the article in question, if it exists, reflects a ministerial project. He suggested that if I wished to submit a memorandum on this subject, he would be ready to send it to Petrograd with a personal note. Mr. Izvolski, after Mr. Sazonov's departure, has no influence of the latter's successor; he does not even know him personally. The change of minister, he said, had not changed the external politics of the government, but he admitted that it was not the same for its internal affairs. As for Izvolski, as a liberal, he does not agree with these policies; he has always supported the Armenians, and even while he was in Rome, he personally struggled against Golitsyn's policy.¹ Izvolski repeated that if I wanted to file a memorandum, he would endorse it personally and send it [to Petrograd] immediately.

I accepted his proposal, expressing my gratitude. However, in order to obtain all the necessary details, we decided that I write to the Catholicos first. Subsequently, I will hand him the memorandum, after my return from London, where I will stay for only a few days.

¹ Prince Grigorii Golitsyn (1838–1907) was appointed governor general of the Caucasus in 1896. He imposed strict limitations on Armenian organizations, persecuted the Armenian intelligentsia, seized the estates of the Armenian church (1903), and devised a policy of strong opposition to national movements for liberation. In 1901, during a session of the council of ministers, Golitsyn declared: "The only way to russify the Caucasus, and to uproot once and for all the Armenian dangerous separatism, is their deportation to Syberia . . . and to replace them with orthodox refugees." Kapriel Lazian, *Hayasdan yev Hay Tade Hayevrou Haraperoutiunnerou Louysin Dag* (Armenia and the Armenian Case in Light of Armeno-Russian Relations) (Cairo, 1957), 95. In 1904, Golitsyn was quoted saying: "In a short time there will be no Armenians left in the Caucasus, save a few specimens for the museum." Luigi Villary, *Fire and Sword in the Caucasus* (London, 1906), 157.

214**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Malcolm
1743–1744 FF**

London, October 23, 1916

The discussions took place in the headquarters of the English Ministry of War and not in the Foreign Office. We debated the Syrian and Armenian Questions, and it seems to me that there is an agreement between France and England regarding Cilicia; according to it, France will assume jurisdiction over a territory exceeding greatly the limits of Cilicia, extending to Sivas in the north, and to Mosul along the Persian border in the east. Furthermore, an autonomous Armenia will be created under the protectorate of France. At this point, Malcolm adds, “with an English prince [as its head of state].”

According to him, Alexandretta will be comprised in it and this arrangement will be accepted by Mr. Picot. As I bring to his attention that France would not give up on attaching Alexandretta to Syria, he says that my objection does not stand, since Cilicia, just like Syria, will be under French protectorate. This future autonomous Armenia, in order to be able to take care of itself and maintain internal order and security, must have a body of gendarmes and militia consisting of Armenians with a French staff. In this respect, we have thought of creating that force right now by recruiting volunteers who will be used in case of a landing.

Mr. Picot asked Malcolm how many volunteers would be available. It seems as though he was expecting a great number. There had been a landing project, in fact, which was abandoned later because of a shortage of troops; it was impossible to remove soldiers stationed on other fronts, and that’s why it was thought of recruiting volunteers.

Mr. Malcolm talked about the dangers threatening Armenian deportees caused by the enlisting of volunteers. But it does not seem that enough concern has been expressed in that respect. In any case, he said that nothing could be decided without consulting me, and he agreed with Mr. Picot that I would be meeting him after my arrival in London. Mr. Picot advised me to keep these discussions confidential and not to let the Quai d’Orsay become aware of them.

Mr. Malcolm says that it will be necessary, some time before the Paris Conference, to start a massive propaganda campaign in the press, and for that purpose, a sum of 40,000 pounds will be necessary. He mentions two persons who could be very helpful in such a campaign: a former secretary of Mr. Raymond Poincaré, whose name he does not recall, and Mr. Wormser, former secretary of Waldeck-Rousseau. He knows them and he will put us in contact with them.

I mentioned the summary of the report that Mr. Malcolm presented me and that it will be useful in future negotiations. I asked him to arrange a

meeting first with Sir Mark Sykes and then with Mr. Picot; I would like to elucidate a number of points to Mr. Sykes before seeing Mr. Picot. He agreed that he would telephone them to arrange appointments with me.

215**Meeting of Baghos Nubar with Sir Mark Sykes**

[Attended by Mosditchian]

1745–1748 FF

London, October 24, 1916

After I presented my report, he talked confidentially about Baghdad:

— The question of Baghdad is not the same as before. It is agreed with France that by giving Alexandretta to them, the existing Baghdad line will not extend beyond the segment already built, before laying a new line starting from Alexandretta and running parallel to the Euphrates all the way to Baghdad and the Persian Gulf. Moreover, England will have the right to build a new line from Haifa and meet the existing line on the Euphrates. This will neutralize the importance of the actual Baghdad line, and the French will have the right to prevent its completion by virtue of their thirty percent share of participation. For Alexandretta, there will be an agreement that will eliminate all possibilities to impose taxes on the Baghdad communication line.

— The question of Palestine does not concern only the Allies. The Jews, the Moslems, the Christians, all have their interests in it, and consequently, in addition to the Allies, the neutral states, as well as the Pope, are concerned with it. Therefore, this question cannot be settled by the Allies alone at the signing of the peace treaty and must be subjected to a subsequent settlement. Can we ever imagine this country, together with the Arab hinterland, under the rule of the tricolor flag?

— I gather that they would like to deal with this question independently of the case of Asiatic Turkey.

— There is indeed agreement between the three Allied powers, France, England, and Russia, the latter taking over Van, Erzerum, Bitlis, Mersin, and Trebizond. France will take Syria, Cilicia, a truly extensive area (see the map attached) comprising Sivas, Kharput, Diyarbakir, Mosul, reaching the Persian frontier; and England will have jurisdiction on the territory lying to the south.¹

— Within these limits, it is possible that the southern borders of autonomous Armenia extend up to Alexandretta, including Aintab, etc., (see the map) since to the north of Mosul this city lies outside the limits.

— This autonomous Armenia will be under French protectorate, having a prince as its head. Similarly, a Christian state will be created on the Mediterranean coast, in Lebanon, also under the protection of France. The Moslem regions of the Syrian hinterland will be included in a zone and put under French control; the limits are drawn on the accompanying map.¹ This

¹ No attached map was found.

region itself will be divided into distinct districts united into a state of confederation.

— Sir Mark thinks that, in order to secure more rights in favor of the above-mentioned solution, the Armenians should organize an army. He appreciates fully the precautionary measures that I have explained in my expose, but he believes that we should keep the details secret. He gives little importance to the gathering of a large force in Cyprus and is convinced that a battalion is sufficient. Whereas, in France and America, volunteers could be enlisted and be sent to France in small groups, to Pau for example, where they can be trained. There is no need for them to be there quite soon, probably not before a year. Because, even if he is convinced that the war will not be over before a successful landing in Cilicia, we cannot think about such an eventuality under the present conditions. An appreciable number of available Armenian volunteers, at the present, will not be of any use either, since in time the size of the armies, except for those of Russia and England, will diminish. Within a year, every soldier will lose its effective usefulness compared to the present, in the ratio of three to one. Moreover, when the time of demobilization comes, once the war is over, the Armenian volunteers will replace the occupation armies. With respect to reprisals, it is true that they are to be expected, as a reaction to threats, but the Turks will give up and become submissive before an energetic show of force.

— I ask him if I am obliged to go to the Foreign Office since I wouldn't like my absence to be interpreted wrongly. He assures me that he will see Mr. Picot in the evening, after our meeting, and will talk to him and ask for a meeting with Lord Grey and introduce me to him personally.

— Mr. Mosditchian asks about Russia's attitude regarding the creation of an autonomous Armenian Cilicia. Sir Mark answers that the plan should please Russia because it considers Cilicia as the center of conservative Armenian parties, and it welcomes all attempts to strengthen them against the revolutionary Armenian parties in the Caucasus.

— Concerning the massacres, I tell him about the report of a nonpartisan who had been to Berlin to see the Chancellor and De Yagow on behalf of the Red Cross and ask for provisions and medicines for the deportees. Both ministers had told him that Germany deplored the Turkish atrocities but was totally powerless in Turkey today in all matters of nonmilitary nature. Sir Mark says that we can no longer <...> and one word from the kaiser or Von Hindenburg will be sufficient to bring an immediate end to the atrocities and help the victims.

— As for Syria, Sir Mark says that the Arabs, even though they are incapable of self-government, are, especially the Christians, much more refined than westerners in matters of commerce and economy.

216**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Picot
1749–1753 FF**

[October 24, 1916]

As an introduction to the issue to be discussed, first he talks about the war and its aims. It is not a war of revenge, but mostly a war of liberation of oppressed peoples. He is happy that the Armenians are among these peoples. It is through the coordination of efforts that the goal will be attained; he expresses his satisfaction for this opportunity to talk to me.

I tell him that I, too, was impatiently waiting for this occasion; I had acted with reserve up to now, knowing that he was engaged in talks based on principles different from what we expected. In fact, our program involved the creation of an integral Armenia. But the recent events in the Caucasus and the change in Russia's policy toward the Armenians, which strives toward the russification of the provinces and shuts out the Armenians, have greatly disappointed and urged us to modify our plan. But this plan must be devised in such a way that it will be acceptable to France, as well as to England, since we have waited to understand better the viewpoints of both governments and the mutual agreement between them, if there is any. In any case, it becomes evident, from facts reaching us so far, that Cilicia must be incorporated in France's share. Under these conditions, our hope is to obtain from France conditions which will permit the rebuilding of our national entity on the land of the last Armenian kingdom, and bring to the Armenian Question a final solution, averting all dangers of future wars. Mr. Picot says that, unfortunately, such occurrences never lack and believes that the present war will be followed by others. I bring to his attention that, in this case, solutions must, at least, be found to steer us away from such a possibility. We agree on this entirely.

Mr. Picot says that we are right in relying on France, and that the integral Armenia we had envisaged under the protection of many powers was not likely to survive; this means that there would actually be no protection at all. Such an Armenia would soon become another Albania. As for an autonomous Armenian Cilicia, he still cannot outline the exact boundaries but assures that they will certainly surpass those of Cilicia proper. It will include Sivas, Diyarbakir, etc.

I ask about Alexandretta, given the fact that Syria, like Armenia, will be placed under the protection of France. Alexandretta becoming part of Syria, rather than Armenia, will be of no interest to France, but it will be a fair and politically wise move to make this port, which has no Syrian character whatsoever, part of Armenia. I add that we regard this question with great interest, since Armenia, which will be established as a buffer state against the future Ottoman Empire, would be strengthened by possessing such an important port as Alexandretta.

He replies that, as far as he is concerned, he favors joining Alexandretta to Cilicia and assures that he will support it. As for the internal organization of Armenia, he believes that only Armenian civil servants should be used, except for the head of the state, who will be a European. I express to him my contentment about hearing these ideas and about his wise and liberal opinions. I mention Mr. Jonnart's similar opinion that, if he were given the task to organize future Armenia, he would take three or four French inspectors and use the services of Armenian civil servants only.

Talking about the future of the Ottoman Empire in Anatolia, and taking into consideration that despite the outcome of the war, Germany would still exert an influence on the Turks, he answers clearly that this situation will come to an end the moment Constantinople ceases to be part of the empire. He further states that even if France recaptures Alsace and Lorraine, the aim of the war will not be achieved if Constantinople continues to stay in Turkish hands; German influence would not be extirpated in that case. After this statement, Mr. Picot comes to what he calls the second part of the Armenian Question and asks me what kind of contribution would the Armenians be able to make to help the creation of an autonomous Armenia. He thinks that if they could provide a few thousand volunteers, public opinion in France would become favorable to them. I answer by explaining to him that since the beginning of the war, I have suggested that Mr. DeFrance and other Allied ministers in Egypt provide them volunteers for a possible landing; and I mention the successive events: refusal by the Allies, the Dardanelles expedition, the latest measures taken by Colonel Brémont in Egypt, my response concerning the present situation, danger of reprisals against the hostages after the massacres and deportations, our firm willingness not to disregard the request made to us and do everything possible to accomplish it not only as a duty, but also for our own interests; [I also mention] the precautions that I have specified in my reply sent to Cairo, and also in the one that I have forwarded to Quai d'Orsay, where I had been summoned by telephone. He agrees on the existence of danger and on the necessity to take all the precautions that I have mentioned in my letter; he considers it unnecessary to enumerate them here. Under these conditions, he proposes to organize immediately a sample battalion in Cyprus and show the French skeptics what could be achieved. To this effect, French officers are sent there to organize the staff. The 400 refugees in Port Said, as well as the 200 Armenian prisoners-of-war in India that England promises to surrender, will be transferred to Cyprus for this purpose.¹ Apart from all that, Mr. Picot asks how many can we enlist in France and America.

¹ Those were Armenian soldiers enlisted in the Ottoman army. After the defeat of the Ottoman army in Mesopotamia, Ottoman soldiers were taken prisoners and sent to India.

I tell him that in France there are presently volunteers who have been fighting heroically for the last three years in Marne, Verdun, and the Somme, and they are all decorated with the lanyard, the Croix de Guerre, and the Medaille Militaire and other distinctions. I stress the fact that these soldiers have enlisted without any call made to them, nor any encouragement. They were even inducted into the army without enthusiasm and, out of close to one thousand enlisted men, only a hundred remain. Therefore, it is to be expected that they will rush to enroll the day they are encouraged to do so.

Concerning the procedure to follow, given that I must not make any public appeal to avoid reprisals, I suggest that the French government itself, based upon the favorable experience with the volunteers in France, publish a declaration announcing that, because of the excellent performance of these volunteers, the French army will accept new enrollments. After that, the delegation will be able to take the necessary steps to encourage enlistment; particularly if the French government shows the willingness to grant French citizenship to these new volunteers. Mr. Picot approves of this approach and promises to do what he can with respect to securing citizenship. It is understood that naturalization will be granted as a right to all the volunteers after the war.

We propose to Mr. Picot also to enlist Ottoman Armenians who have taken refuge in the Caucasus. For this purpose, the Russian government's help is needed to secure the exit of these refugees from Russia. I believe that the Russian government, which has dissolved the Armenian volunteer units for political reasons, would be glad to see these refugees go, particularly if the French government explained to the Russians that they would be inducted in the French army. I think we could expect a strong contingent from there, apart from the 4,000 to 5,000 Armenian soldiers of the Ottoman army who were taken prisoner by the Russians in the battles on the Armenian front and were sent to Siberia.

Mr. Picot seems to be taken aback by this proposal and promises to study it. Meanwhile, he asks for a list of Armenian volunteers who have fought in France. I promise to supply it to him.

Before leaving, he asks me to give him my opinion about the volunteers in Egypt who would form his model battalion in Cyprus. I tell him that it is impossible for me to give any information, since I do not have the means to communicate with Egypt; I ask him if I could send a cable through his agency. He puts himself totally at my disposal, and we agree that I shall bring him a cable to Arakel in two or three days.

217

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Lord Bryce
1754–1756FA

London, October 26, 1916

I told him about the recent developments and stressed that the area of Cilicia to be given to France had to be as vast as possible to include Sivas, Kharpout, and Diyarbakir. I also referred to the obvious entente between the Allies, especially between England and France, that would permit the latter to have Cilicia and Syria under its jurisdiction.

Lord Bryce reminded me that it did not apply to Palestine.

I agreed with him and clarified that by Syria I meant the country situated east of Palestine.

“East of Saint-Jean-d’Acre [‘Akko],” Lord Bryce corrected me.

I requested that he would support our demand to have Alexandretta annexed to Cilicia, instead of to Syria; France, I said, would not object to it, since both Syria and Cilicia would become French protectorates.

Lord Bryce fully agreed emphasizing that the southern region of Alexandretta was Armenian. He also mentioned Musa Dagħ, in the region, where the French had saved 4,000 Armenians who were now in Port Said.

According to him, the creation of an autonomous Armenia under French protection is beneficial to every one concerned. [It is beneficial] for France because France cannot turn it into a colony due to a lack of population growth and because France will have a country populated by intelligent and enterprising inhabitants who will support the Armenia protected by France. An Armenia which will prosper and rebuild its population by enjoying security. Under these circumstances, thanks to France, Cavour’s words *l’Italia fera de se* will also be quite adequate for Armenia—*l’Armenia fera de se*.¹

Lord Bryce promised to support the question of annexation of Alexandretta to Cilicia.

As for Russia’s political stand regarding the three vilayets, he does not think that it is something definite. According to the information he has received, Russia plans to turn Erzerum and Bitlis, these two vilayets only, into colonies and deport the Armenians from there; it leaves out Van, where the Armenians are permitted to return. He thinks that Armenians have offended Russians by appointing an Armenian governor after they entered the province.² However, he thinks that time will improve this situation.

¹ Armenia will make it, will realize its aspirations.

² When General Nikolayev entered Van on May 7/20, 1915, the Armenians “offered him the keys to the city of Van as a sign of respect and obedience.” In turn, the general appointed Aram Manoukian governor. The formation of a miniature government followed the appointment, with departments of finance, education, agriculture, etc.,

I briefed him on the question of volunteers that France had requested. He fully agreed with the measures of precaution I demanded and pointed out that we could not have refused them and that we must do everything within our possibilities to grant their request.

He was pleased to hear that Lord Grey would receive me today; he considers this [development] rather significant, since the Foreign Office, in the past, had hesitated to meet with me officially.

all comprised of Armenians. Rev. Arsen A. Georgizian, *Mer Azkayin Koyabaykare 1915–1922i Zouloumi Darineroun* (Our National Struggle During the Persecutions of 1915–1922) (Beirut, 1967), 13–17.

218**Meeting with Viscount Grey at the Foreign Office
1757–1758 FF**

London, October 26, 1916

I am accompanied by Sir Mark Sykes, who introduces me to Lord Grey and delivers to him the encyclical of His Holiness the Catholicos, confirming me as his only representative to the Foreign Office. At the same time, I inform him that I have already submitted a similar letter to Mr. Briand, and I have a third one for the Italian government.

Lord Grey makes a note of it and asks them to record it. He addresses me in French and says that he is happy to see me. He apologizes for not being able to express himself correctly in French and adds: “I can speak better English.”

I tell him that he has most appropriately shown in the fine speech that he recently delivered at the banquet of the Foreign Press Association—in which I have read with pleasure the part dealing with the neutral states—the path the neutral states should follow.

Lord Grey replies that, unfortunately, the neutral states are so divided, and their interests are so diverse that it is difficult to reach a consensus among them. Moreover, he points out that they are afraid. I bring to his attention that fear expressed by small neutral states, such as Switzerland, for example, is understandable, particularly in the light of past experiences; but it is different with the United States where the election of a new president could allow the efficient association of the other neutral states for the purpose that he has specified in his speech.

Lord Grey seems skeptical and quotes the proverb which says that the more it changes, the more it becomes the same.

Speaking about Armenia, I emphasize that by presenting him H. H. the Catholicos’ letter, I wish, [in the meantime], to express the desires of His Holiness and of all the Armenians to the Allies. [I point out] that after the final victory, especially for us, we shall entrust the fate of the Armenians of Turkey in the hands of the powers of the Triple Entente, which fight for justice and the liberation of oppressed peoples; [I also underline] our ardent hope that England, together with the Allies, will deliver the Armenians of Turkey from the Turkish yoke and that we hope to be able to restore an autonomous, guaranteed Armenia in Cilicia, the center of our last kingdom in the eleventh century.

Sir Mark Sykes points out that the above-mentioned kingdom lasted until the fourteenth century. I say that is absolutely correct, and the kingdom lasted from the eleventh century until 1375 and the last of the Armenian kings was buried in Paris. Then, Lord Grey adds that it is not possible to make any decisions while the war is still going on since these decisions

depend on the turn of events; but, he also adds that the Armenians can rest assured that his government will give its full attention to the solution of the Armenian Question. I express my thanks, and I point out that, even though nothing can be settled at the moment, I believe it is my duty to get ready and seek solutions that will agree with the interests of the Allies so that we are not overtaken by the events and caught unawares when the time of settlements comes. He fully agrees with me.

He wants to know where I would go after London. I tell him that I am based in Paris until the end of the war, [in fact], until the Armenian Question will be discussed and a solution offered.

Further, I talk about the deportees in Syria and Mesopotamia, and I enumerate everything that we have tried, alas, our abortive efforts to send them food and medicine. It is true, I say, that we are able to send, by the intermediary of the United States Embassy, some money, but there is a shortage of provisions, and thousands of unfortunate people are dying of starvation and disease. He points out that he is aware of everything attempted in that respect, but unfortunately, all efforts have been in vain.

Before leaving, I reiterate that, without ever getting discouraged, I shall keep on trying my utmost for everything dependent on us, with the help of our friends in America, to overcome Turkish resistance.

219**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Sir Mark Sykes***
1759–1761 FA

London, October 27, 1916

Sir Mark Sykes wanted to see us today before our meeting with Mr. Picot in the afternoon in order to make a friendly suggestion that we should insist on the following points:

1. Considering the tough and parsimonious character of the French, we should demand that the Armenian volunteers be paid;

2. We must assure that volunteers would not fight in France but be sent to the fronts that can be beneficial to their interest;

3. Considering that the wounded French are not well treated, we should demand our volunteers to be sent to American Red Cross treatment centers; he cited several unfortunate surgical cases where they had operated on patients without anesthetics;

4. If the French were able to secure the total Armenian collaboration, including of Lord Bryce and of Dashnaks and Hunchaks, etc., they would, probably, be able to receive 30,000 Armenian volunteers until the June or July of next year, and in the meantime, profit from them.

Sir Mark Sykes is convinced that these conditions will not discourage Mr. Picot since the French are in need of people.

According to Sir Mark, we have to set these conditions as of now because the French are quite difficult and there is a danger that the volunteers might be sent to the western front in France. At this point, he reminded us that some time ago, the Portuguese had promised to send a division, provided they would fight within the English sphere side by side with the old Portuguese allies; however, France objected to the condition and now there is the possibility of losing their collaboration.

He also mentioned another example, referring to the incident when the French had refused England to capture Dunkirk, thinking that the English would not leave after; as a result of this situation, no English soldier had been permitted to enter Amiens.

I [pointed out] the discussions I had, a few days ago, with Mr. Picot, regarding the recruiting procedures I had proposed to encourage volunteers to enroll. According to it, the French government would announce in its official gazette that, considering the positive contribution of the Armenian volunteers in France, the government was disposed to recruit new [Armenian] volunteers into the French army. Sir Mark suggested that, instead of such a public announcement, we should request Mr. Picot to convince Mr. Briand to

* This meeting took place at Sir Mark's residence. Messrs. Mosdichian and Malcom also were present.

declare in the National Assembly that at the end of the war France and its Allies will satisfy the Armenian demands, and mention, in the meantime, that the Armenian volunteers in the French army have been distinguished favorably.

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Visit of Boghos Nubar to Mr. Picot, with Messrs. Sykes,
Mosditchian, and Malcolm
1762–1768 FF

(London, October 27, 1916)

I mention my visit to Lord Grey and H. H. the Catholicos' letter accrediting me as his envoy which I had submitted to him. I [also mention that] I submitted a similar letter to Mr. Briand which he had received very warmly, and that I have a third one for Rome, not yet delivered but to be submitted at a proper occasion. Mr. Picot thinks that, at the present, it will be preferable not to discuss our question with Italy since the latter is not directly involved within the sphere of our interests.

In this respect, I inform him that I should see the Russian ambassador and, of course, it is understood, that I ought not mention our discussions. Also, I inform him that I will pretend to ignore the agreement between the Allies regarding Asiatic Turkey and, particularly, Armenia. I will limit my talk to generalities, based on our original plan, asking Russia's help for creating an integral, autonomous Armenia under the protection of the Allies.

Mr. Picot was under the assumption that, according to our initial plan, Armenia will be placed under Russian patronage only. I correct his false opinion. He urges me to stay with generalities, without going into specifics, otherwise the Russians will try to raise questions; however, this does not seem possible since the agreement is signed.

I tell him that I have decided to commit myself to generalities, since up to the present, I have no precise information about what goes on in the villages, and I know nothing about the attitude of Russian authorities toward Armenians. I shall only declare that we always rely on the goodwill and support of the imperial government to secure an autonomy protected by the Allies. But the Armenians will never accept to be placed again under Turkish yoke; they have decided to fight to the last man, rather than be subjected to such a fate.

I remind Mr. Picot the question he had asked the other day concerning the number of volunteers expected in Egypt; I tell him that I have found records in which it is mentioned that we could expect up to 1,000 volunteers, including those within the refugees of Port Said. Adding to these the 200 Armenian prisoners of war in India, we could organize a sample battalion in Cyprus. Mr. Picot seems satisfied.

I add that Colonel Brémont had stated in Alexandria, that apart from the volunteer fighters, they would be willing to accept civilians to train them for administrative duties. Mr. Picot is totally opposed to the idea of letting the military assume civilian duties. Later on, the time will come for such a possibility.

We look for other sources that could provide us with volunteers: Russia and America. With respect to those to come from Russia (prisoners from Siberia and refugees from Caucasia), Mr. Picot and Sir Mark think that their recourse to the Russian government will produce positive results. After scrutiny, they conclude that the only way that those volunteers could be taken to a training camp in the south of France is via the Vladivostok–Canada route.

Those of America will be sent to Canada for training since recruiting cannot be done in a neutral country. The French government will provide for their transportation.

First I ask Mr. Picot if, in order to encourage enlistment, we could promise the volunteers that they will be sufficiently paid to take care of the needs of their families. Mr. Picot sees a great problem there, considering that French soldiers receive five sous per day only; they do not fight for money.

Sir Mark says it must be taken into consideration that American Armenians make at least two dollars a day, and even more; the payments to be made to them are not for their personal expenses but for the livelihood of their families. He mentions that Armenians are thrifty, as are the French, and they would send the money to their families. Besides, money could be given to the wives or families directly. Mr. Picot agrees that looking at the question from that point of view merits serious consideration; even though he is convinced that he will encounter serious difficulties in France, he promises to study the issue and support it.

We talk about the appeal to be published by the French government for Armenian volunteers that Mr. Picot had promised to secure during our last meeting. I believe that this appeal, which I must have in hand to approach my compatriots, should state that the government has decided to incorporate into the French army new Armenian volunteers, since the government has been fully satisfied with the performance of the volunteers in Marne, Verdun, and the Somme.

Mr. Malcolm asks if it would be possible for Mr. Briand to make a brief mention about Armenia, in a speech, at the [National] Assembly. Sir Mark supports this proposal and suggests that Mr. Briand declare that, following the final victory, justice will be done to the Armenians. But Mr. Picot thinks that this would create the inconvenience of raising interpellation and discussions that the government would like to avoid. Proceedings in the French Assembly do not go as in the British Parliament. Mr. Briand could be asked to explain his declaration in one of the commissions of Foreign Affairs and also make a brief reference to it in a communiqué given to the press after the session. Sir Mark Sykes says that soon after he could make a similar declaration in the British Parliament.

Mentioning the possibility of a landing, Mr. Picot says that he had urged it since the beginning of the war, and he had secured the promise of the government that if a decision would be taken concerning a landing in Asiatic

Turkey, he would be heading that expedition. He is still decided to undertake that task in case of an "armed intervention." He is ready to assume full responsibility and sacrifice his life [if need be].

Regarding the military abilities of the Armenians, Sir Mark Sykes says that they are the best soldiers in the world; but with respect to internal organization, they still have a long way to go.

To confirm that statement, I mention the bravery of the Armenian volunteers in France, and Mr. Mosditchian points out the testimony of the Turkish generals and of Enver himself regarding the bravery of Armenian soldiers in the Balkan war.

With respect to holding out against the massacres, Mr. Mosditchian recalls the successful resistance of the Armenians during the first day of the massacres of Adana, in 1909. He mentions that they surrendered their arms after the intervention of the British Consul, who upon the promise of the Turks to stop the massacres provided the Armenians would hand over their arms, advised them in good faith to agree to the conditions. The following day the Turks resumed slaughtering the unarmed Armenians. I also mention the recent case of Zeitun, where the Armenians surrendered their arms upon the treacherous intervention of the German consul; they were promised safety if they complied, otherwise, all the Armenian inhabitants of the villages of that region would be put to death.

I draw Mr. Picot's attention on the second issue, which is the question of Armenians to be used on the battlefield. I believe that not too many volunteers will enlist unless they are given the assurance that they will be fighting their age-old enemy to liberate the ancestral land. It is true that the Armenian volunteers of France have been fighting for two years now on the western front; but it is assumed that in the present situation, those from other countries would not be willing to fight except in Armenia. Mr. Picot considers this attitude quite normal and agrees with it. Nevertheless, in order to avoid all misunderstandings, he asks if a possible landing in Syria, or in Smyrna, even in the Balkans, to beat the Turks, would conform to our conditions. I answer that our goal being the liberation of Armenia, any landing executed, for strategic reasons, in Syria or Asia Minor, would be considered satisfactory. But in case of the Balkans, it would be doubtful. Mr. Picot agrees and adds that his question aims at elucidating that point to dispel all doubts.

After clarifying the previous points, I come to the third issue: autonomy. In order to make the appeal to Armenian volunteers more forceful and expect positive response, I emphasize that I myself have to be sure that at the end of the war, France taking over Cilicia according to the conditions agreed upon during our last meeting, will create an autonomous Armenia on that land, in order to provide the opportunity for the Armenian nation to develop and the Armenian state to be restored under French protectorate.

Mr. Picot agrees with me totally and authorizes me to give this assurance to the volunteers. I express my deepest gratitude, on behalf of all Armenians,

who after such a long wait and unheard of sufferings, will see the fulfillment of their national goals, thanks to France and its ally, England, proving that they are truly fighting for the liberation of oppressed peoples.

Accordingly, it is agreed that I shall send a telegram to Arakel, urging him to take the necessary steps to encourage the enlistment of volunteers. He will inform them about the assurance that, after the final victory of the Allies, Armenian aspirations will be fully accomplished. I shall hand my telegram to Mr. Picot tomorrow, who will send it codified to Mr. DeFrance, and a copy will be given to Sir Mark to transmit it to his residence in Cairo.

Having come to an agreement on all issues that I have just submitted to Mr. Picot, I ask his permission to sum them up as follows:

1– I shall send a telegram to Egypt (the text of which I shall deliver to him) to encourage enlistment according to the conditions I have stipulated.

a) The appeal for enlistment in France will be done by the French government, and Mr. Picot will strive to secure a declaration in this respect by Mr. Briand.

b) Mr. Picot and Sir Mark Sykes will take the necessary steps to secure the release of Armenian prisoners from the Russian government, sent to Siberia, and the authorization for the refugees of the Caucasus to leave Russia and enroll as volunteer fighters.

c) Enlistment from America will be done in Canada, and the French government will assume the transportation of the volunteers.

d) Mr. Picot will endeavor to arrange that they receive a dollar a day for their families.

2– The volunteers will not have to fight in France, nor on any European front, and will be used exclusively for a landing in Asiatic Turkey to fight against their age-old enemy and liberate their ancestral land.

3– France pledges to grant, following the Allied victory, autonomy to Cilicia, annexed to the three provinces that will be placed under its protection.

Mr. Picot and Sir Mark Sykes reaffirm their full agreement on all points.

Upon Mr. Picot's request, it is agreed that when I return to Paris, I shall avoid talking about our meeting and the present agreement at Quai d'Orsay, and, especially, to members of the Parliament, to avoid interpellation in the House [of Lords] before Picot's arrival in Paris in about three weeks.

I tell Mr. Picot that, during my last visit to Mr. Izvolski, I directed his attention to the treatment of the Armenians of the occupied provinces and mentioned that Mr. Izvolski instructed me to submit to him a statement that he would transmit to Petrograd.

I further state that I intend to talk to Mr. Benckendorff, too. Mr. Picot approves of my acts and promises me to seize the first opportunity to draw the attention of the Russian government on the Allies' concern about the treatment of Armenians, which goes contrary to the principles that the Allies

are fighting for. He thinks he will have to go to Petrograd and express a similar concern. I express my deepest thanks to him.

As I take my leave, we agree that I shall return to the embassy tomorrow to submit my telegram to Arakel.

221**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Lord Cromer
1769–1774 FA**

London, October 29, 1916

He is very busy at the moment, as the president of the Dardanelles investigating committee. He devotes all his time to it. First he had opposed the investigation; for obvious reasons, it was preferable to avoid it at the time. There were points that could not be discussed since they might help the enemy, but finally he had to give in, with the condition that they would conduct a thorough inquiry. As he is very busy, he is not quite informed about other political issues.

I told him about what I had heard in Paris regarding the Armenian Question, because the news here was quite confusing; England shows a great deal of reluctance toward issues related to Syria and to any part of Asiatic Turkey that it considers to be within the sphere of French influence.

I told Lord Cromer we had to resign from our initial plan of a complete autonomous Armenia since the day when Russia, after capturing the vilayets of Erzerum, Van, and Bitlis, had manifested its intentions of annexing and russifying them. I brought to the lord's attention the Russian refugee policy published in *Rech*, as well as the interview in the *Manchester Guardian* with General Peshkov and told him about our disillusionment about the fact that the Armenian refugees were not allowed to return to their native lands.

On the other hand, I said, I had heard within the French parliamentary circles that there had been an agreement among the Allies, and according to it, France would stretch its sphere of influence to Syria and Cilicia. Naturally, under these circumstances, we could not do anything else but abandon our initial plan and try to see that France, which would offer us a rather liberal regime, would expand the borders of Cilicia and bestow us a broad autonomy under its protection. In any case, we would like to ask for a separate protectorate for us and not an inclusion in Syria. Those were our desires in a nutshell, and we would like to have his collaboration to be able to fulfill them.

Lord Cromer found this plan wonderful. He has always opposed the idea of England capturing Syria, although the Syrians had requested it from him while he was the general ambassador in Egypt. In fact, on this subject, the French officials in Egypt had their unjustifiable doubts about him and thought that he had his intentions regarding Syria. The lord does not believe that it is a good idea for France to go to Syria. If they ever ask his opinion, he will advise them not to go. But after all this is a matter that concerns France, and since its government wishes to do so, England cannot object to it. Under these conditions, the lord thinks that the solution of an autonomous Armenia consisting of the three vilayets and Cilicia is good for Armenians. However, he does not agree that we should be given independence.

I told him that we had never asked for independence; during the reforms negotiations we had clearly expressed that we wished to remain Ottomans but also enjoy reforms guaranteed by the powers. Our wish had been granted and caused us a great deal of joy; however, it was not our fault that the Sublime Porte, following the German deceleration of war, had put aside the recommendations made by the powers, which it had solemnly accepted. After this final act, it was not possible to trust other commitments, and, therefore, it would not be feasible to let the Armenians live under Turkish rule.

I insisted on this point because I did not wish to hide from him the profound anguish that he had caused me and my compatriots with his recent speech on the Serbians, using the expression “kind and virile Turks.” It would not really matter how much we were assured that it would not cross his mind to leave those barbarians in Armenia after committing such unspeakable crimes.

He answered that I should not have any doubts about it; he had never changed his opinion, and that, during the speech, he had not thought of the Armenians. He promised to support the question of autonomous Armenia under French protection and to talk in favor of the Armenians on the next possible occasion.

I thanked him sincerely and added that I could not have expected anything different from him.

We also exchanged a few words about Turkey. He has always been quite a turcophile—making a distinction between the government and the people, among whom there have always been some good individuals.

I told him that I agree, but since the massacres during the reign of Abdul Hamid and the Young Turks were always ordered by the government, change in government would not modify anything, and, therefore, there was no other acceptable solution but to liberate the Armenian provinces from Turkish yoke.

He fully agreed with me and repeated that this point could not even be questioned. On the other hand he wondered where to place the Turks and make them feel at home!

I said that the Turks could be left alone in their own home, in Konia, Ankara, Brusa, etc., an area approximately equivalent to half the size of France.

The lord agreed. However, he is afraid that certain difficulties might possibly arise because of the Italians, and probably the Greeks, who expect to get their share from Turkey. He added that this had nothing to do with the Armenian Question, which could, according to my plan, be solved successfully.

Before leaving, he promised once again that he would support the plan at an opportune moment.

222**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Count Benckendorff
1775–1776 FA**

London, October 30, 1916

I told the ambassador that it was more than a year that I hadn't been to London, but I would stay very briefly, and that I considered it a duty to see him to express the joy of Armenians as a result of the Russian victories, liberating their vilayets from Turkish rule.

The ambassador interrupted me:

“Yes, but unfortunately the Armenian population in the other parts of Armenia are either massacred or deported.”

We talked about the ongoing efforts to provide medical and food supplies. He asked me if they were successful. I told him about our activities in the United States and Switzerland. I also talked about the abortive attempts made by the Syrian Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Jonnart, with the king of Spain, President Wilson, and even with the Pope. The ambassador said that the difficulties were caused by the fact that, even if the Turks allowed the food supplies to enter the country, they would have been stolen after and nothing would have reached the Armenians and Syrians; the Allies were unable to secure the distribution of supplies.

Then the ambassador discussed the war and the Romanian defeat. He said that the Russians were helping them but up till now they only had two divisions on the Transylvanian front and a single division in Dobruja.

We talked about the mistake the Allies made by delaying assistance to the Serbs and Romanians, as well as in the Dardanelles, where an early landing of a small division would have guaranteed the victory.

As the conversation turned to generalities, I hesitated to make specific remarks about the Armenian Question, and especially, about the treaty signed between the Allies according to the information I had; however, I would pretend not to know anything about it.

223**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V
818–819 FA**

London, October 31, 1916

Your Holiness:

I have the honor of writing this letter to Your Holiness from London where I haven't been for over a year.

I came here as soon as I found the opportunity, convinced that after such a long absence it would be good for me to visit London once again. Profiting from the occasion, I presented to Lord Grey the letter which Your Holiness sent me last year, confirming my mission, together with other similar notes for Paris and Rome. I had not yet had the chance of presenting it to the British government.

Lord Grey received me most cordially, and I am glad to inform Your Holiness that, in London, just like in Paris, I was received favorably and with a lot of sympathy. The unfortunate events experienced by our nation have deepened and solidified their sympathy.

I am returning to Paris in two days, with a healthy and positive impression, which I am happy to convey to Your Holiness.

224

Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Fitzmaurice* 1777–1784 FA

London, October 31, 1916

The meeting started after lunch and lasted for a long time—until five o'clock. I won't try to summarize it but instead give some of the highlights.

According to Mr. Fitzmaurice, the Young Turks decided to massacre the Armenians a long time ago. Their purpose was to annihilate by uprooting them. This plan had been devised for some time. Mr. Fitzmaurice, who was then the first interpreter at the English Embassy in Constantinople, was against the reforms because he had foreseen that the reforms would become an excuse for the massacres.

Mr. Fitzmaurice does not believe that the massacres were organized and put into effect by the Germans who needed the Armenians to materialize their expansion plans in Asia Minor. It is true, however, that Germany did not do what it should have done to stop them.

Mr. Fitzmaurice believes that the best thing for Armenians is to be annexed to Russia, because the latter shall never succeed in russifying them; the 2 million Armenians in the Caucasus have been Russian subjects for a century but they have been able to safeguard their nationality. On the other hand, he accepts that, when Russia gets Constantinople, it won't be able to extent its influence to Cilicia, and consequently, the solution envisaged by the Allies in their last agreement should become a reality.

The people of Salonica, the “deunmes,”† have all the power in Constantinople; they are all Freemasons. The Jewish influence plays a dominant role in their politics. If they cannot reobtain Salonica, they would like that it goes to Austria.

The Turks wanted the war for a long time and they were prepared for it with Germany and they promoted it. They hope to receive their lost territories in Europe as a result of the Balkan wars. They have come to an agreement with Bulgaria to correct the border between Adrianople and Enos, expecting that they will eventually be able to receive the territory given to Bulgaria by exchanging it with something else. The Turks have now realized the importance of their collaboration with Germany, and they do not hide this fact from them. It is because of this reason that Germany is humoring them.

Sir Mark Sykes, as well as Mr. Fitzmaurice, strongly criticize the invasion of Salonica. General Sarraïl is wasting his time by playing politics with the king of Greece. The army in Salonica is insufficient and consists of

* The meeting took place at Sir Mark Sykes' residence during a luncheon.

† Converted to Islam (from another faith); members of a Jewish community who were converted to Islam in the seventeenth century.

troops from different countries, including Essad Pasha's Albanians, Serbians, Annamians, natives from different French colonies, etc., even Englishmen. This army in such a mountainous region, is powerless against the Bulgarians and Germans. Even if Germans were capable of pushing them into the sea, they would hesitate, preferring to immobilize there an army of 200–300,000 troops, incapable of cutting off their communication line with Constantinople.

In order to defeat the Turks and give a heavy blow to the Germans, it was necessary to land troops in Alexandretta. This would cut their railway communication system, and they would soon be defeated with the help of the Russians coming from the east. Perhaps, there might be another occasion when they are forced to withdraw from Salonica. Mr. Fitzmaurice even believes that another campaign in the Dardanelles, where the Turks have an insufficient number of troops and cannons, may very well succeed this time, provided they profit from their previous experiences and be well prepared. In case of a success, this might be of great significance, for the Russians will be able to communicate with the world.

According to Sir Mark Sykes and Mr. Fitzmaurice, the total number of Turkish troops is only 450,000, including the young ranks and those who have paid their *bedels*.[‡] These latter ones are bad soldiers and they desert on the very first occasion. The best course would be to push the Turkish troops to Asia by threatening them out of Egypt and Mesopotamia. In this way, they will be forced to weaken the European fronts, which are, from the Balkans to Galicia and even to Isonzo, covered with Turkish soldiers. In Egypt, instead of waiting for the Turks near the strait, it is better to advance all the way to the border; in other words, to Aqaba, and menace the railway. The train station of Ma'an is hardly 100 kilometers from that point.

Turks still possess Medina, and Mr. Fitzmaurice does not think that the sherif can capture that city. Turks have their cannons and what the sherif has is insufficient. It is true that he has cut off the railway, but the Turks are repairing it and the line is open for transport.

One of the goals of the war is the invasion of Constantinople at the moment. The Russians can reach there by land and sea. However, because of the defeat at the Dardanelles and the weak Russian navy in the Black Sea, the possibility of using the sea route has to be eliminated. There are then two land routes. One of them is via the Balkans; for that it is imperative to obtain Bulgaria's assistance, but it was a great mistake to put that country in the hands of the central empires. The Treaty of Bucharest, besides being a great diplomatic error, has been an unjust decision made against Bulgaria because the Bulgarians in Macedonia outnumber the Turks and Serbians.¹ Had

[‡] Sum paid for exemption from military service.

¹ There are many treaties named after Bucharest. The one mentioned is the treaty of August 17, 1916, between Romania and the Allies. By this treaty, Romania received

Macedonia been given to Bulgaria, the latter would have joined the Allies. However, in order not to sacrifice the Serbs and displease the Greeks, Macedonia was not left to Bulgaria. On the other hand, we realized that the Greeks did not deserve such a kind treatment; as for the Serbs, it was possible to offer them a compensation from the south, from Austria. This was not done and Bulgaria was pushed to join Germany. Since then the Bulgarians proposed three consecutive peace treaties but the Allies (France) refused. The last occasion was (just an intimate information) fifteen days before the Romanians entered the war; the Bulgarians simply demanded Macedonia and wanted Czar Ferdinand to retain its throne. France did not agree.

Therefore, to reach Constantinople there is only the Asian route, along the Black Sea; for this a large number of troops is needed; the grand duke does not receive any auxiliary troops, and in fact, is obliged to return some of the forces to be sent to Romania. However, Russians won't receive Constantinople unless they conquer it. It should not be forgotten that, in Persia, the Turks have captured countries that are, in terms of area, at least equivalent to the three provinces conquered by Russia.

Talking about Lord Grey, Mr. Fitzmaurice did not hide his negative opinion about him. He thinks he is quite mediocre. When he expressed his opinion we were alone; Sir Mark Sykes had already left to go to the Parliament.

Sir Mark and Mr. Fitzmaurice wanted me to inform them about Mr. Caillaux and Mr. Franklin-Bouillon. I told them everything I knew. They had an unfavorable opinion, especially about Mr. Caillaux. With his germanophile politics, and after the assassination of Calmette by his wife, I wonder if he can still play an important role in French politics.² I explained that the reason for it was the election of a radical socialist majority to the National Assembly while Caillaux was the prime minister; today, however, they did not form the majority anymore. If they had new elections, the majority of the National Assembly would have a totally different composition; for it, of course, they had to dissolve the National Assembly and [naturally] they wouldn't dare do such a thing while the war was still on. As for Mr. Franklin-Bouillon, who was the leader of the same group, he was, just like Mr. Malvi, the minister of internal affairs, an instrument of Mr. Caillaux.

(A few days ago the president of the Foreign Press Association, Mr.

back all that it had previously offered in return for a prompt attack on Austria-Hungary, doubling its territory.

² Joseph Caillaux (1863–1944), one-time prime minister of France (1911–1912), while heading the ministry of finance (1913–1914), became subject to criticism of Gaston Calmette (1858–1914), editor of the *Figaro*. Calmette accused the minister of financial irregularities. Soon after he was murdered by Mme. Caillaux, on March 16, 1914. Later, Caillaux was convicted for his correspondence with Germany during the war.

Coudourier de Chassin, who recently chaired the banquet where Lord Grey delivered his speech, also spoke quite negatively about Mr. Caillaux. He stated to me that Mr. Caillaux, while he was the prime minister, had wanted him to assume the mission of making suggestions to Mr. Asquith regarding the Congo and the changes of the map of Africa. Mr. Coudourier, who met Asquith quite frequently, had considered the proposal detrimental to France and had not agreed to it; in fact, after talking quite openly to Mr. Asquith, he had made him refuse Mr. Caillaux's proposals. It is interesting also to note that, during the same meeting, Mr. Coudourier told me about the imminent possibility of German forces to attack England; there were many who believed it to be possible, and it was for this reason that a large number of troops stayed in England instead of sending them to the continent.)

225**Boghos Nubar's Speech Delivered Before the Committee of
France-Armenia
1785–1790 FA**

Paris, November 20, 1916

Gentlemen:

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to talk to you about the plan of our national aspirations. I am especially alerted to the fact that I have to take advantage of this occasion and make the necessary corrections regarding other similar “programs” that are being circulated reflecting the personal desires of several of my compatriots. However, the outline which I am going to present with regard to our plan should not be considered as final.

First of all, I would like to point out that, speaking of Armenia, we mean the Asiatic Turkish provinces only, in other words, the six provinces and Cilicia. People have often asked me if we have included in our plan for Armenia the Russian-Armenian regions of the Caucasus. Certainly not, and there should not be any ambiguities about this. The Armenians in the Caucasus live quite happily, under prosperous conditions; they only wish to stay as faithful Russian subjects. There is no problem for them; for us the real question is the predicament of the Armenians in Turkey who are persecuted and massacred. They can rightfully be classified as one of those oppressed nations that the Allies are fighting to liberate.

One of the characteristics of the Armenian Question is that its solution is not dependent on Armenians but on the Allied nations and on the development of the war. Undoubtedly, after the final victory, the destiny of the Asiatic Turkey will become one of the crucial issues that the governments of the Allied nations will attempt to resolve. And the future of Armenia will highly depend on the decisions taken by these governments. However, no matter what the solution might be, it will be impossible to leave Armenia under Turkish rule at the end of this war. We believe that this reality cannot be denied by anyone. After such atrocious Turkish crimes, the Allies will not allow that these unfortunate Armenians remain in the hands of their oppressors forever. Once again, Mr. Briand, with his kind letter addressed to Senator Louis Marin, has given us assurance in this respect; furthermore, Mr. Asquith has equally been assuring in his speech delivered at the Guildhall during the Lord Mayor's banquet.¹

¹ Every November 9 Britain celebrates the Lord Mayor's Day, with procession of the lord mayor and his retinue from the Guildhall to Westminster. The Guildhall, or Council Hall, of London is famous for both its great hall and for the important speech by the prime minister in the hall on the government's policy.

Having established this point, we have now to examine the future of Armenia. We realize that some have gone as far as asking for its independence; once more, recently we were surprised, reading a letter by an Armenian in a Caucasian newspaper, asking for independence. We have studied all possibilities. During the preparation of our plan we took into consideration, especially, points that were practical and possible to realize and tried not to be carried away by illusions, regardless of their attraction. Considering the present situation, as well as the national conditions and numbers, it is not possible, for the moment, to have an independent Armenia, and by expediting it we may only expedite an assured failure. However, the question of an autonomous protectorate is altogether a different matter; we are demanding exactly this and our present plan is based on this kind of national aspiration. Naturally, we would like for our autonomous protectorate under the Allies to cover all the Armenian lands in Turkey in order to create one and integral Armenia, but this question is exactly one that does not depend on us; it is related to the interests of the Allies and the arrangements they have made, or they are going to make, between them until the end of the war. These factors are indispensable for the solution of the problem. As long as these factors remain unknown, we cannot finalize our plan. If certain present rumors were true, it would have been necessary to resign from the idea of an integral Armenia; according to these rumors the provinces and Cilicia would be divided into two, and consequently, their protection would be given to the two Allies.

Needless to say that, in this case, we hope for the enlargement of France's share as much as possible. We would like to ask France to grant Armenia a unique autonomy under its protection, separate from the other future protectorates of Asia, and to provide a basic law and a largely indigenous administration which will enable us to revive our nation and prosper under the control of a safe and liberal protection. This kind of an Armenia would be an influential factor in the Middle East for French civilization and economy.

In general, [...] under the present circumstances, this is the plan that we may consider. We tried to keep it modest, in order to assure its success; we also tried to adapt it to the Allied viewpoints and thus avoid contradicting their plans and interests.

We hope that the Committee of France-Armenia will adopt and promote it.

Gentlemen, we are fully aware of your feelings regarding our unfortunate nation. It was for its protection that you assembled and created the Committee of France-Armenia. It is for this reason that, with utmost confidence, we entrust you with our cause—we are convinced that if you wish to extend your collaboration to us, your efforts will be crowned with success, and France shall wholeheartedly try, as it was recently announced by Mr. Briand, to secure for us a peaceful and successful existence. And one day

when its protective flag is hoisted over the rebuilt ruins of our provinces, it will become for us, as it has everywhere, the sacred symbol of liberation, justice, and respect for the rights of the weak.

226**The Conditions Set by the Foreign Ministry of France to Enlist the Volunteers**

[Announcement sent by Mr. Gout]

1791–1794 FF

[Paris], December 5, 1916

It is decided to create an “Eastern Legion” in Cyprus. It will comprise auxiliary soldiers of Ottoman origin and be commanded by French officers and high-ranking officials.

Those Armenians and Syrians who wish to enroll should be prepared to serve under the French flag, in Turkey, during the war. They will be grouped into divisions according to their race and religion.

GENERAL PROVISIONS:

1. The Syrian and the Armenian committees will themselves assume the responsibility of enlistment. In order to avoid diplomatic difficulties, it is necessary that enlistment activities be carried out without the participation of any French Embassy or diplomatic representatives. Furthermore, in order not to attract the attention of the enemy and not to subject the remaining Armenians and Syrians in Turkey to any retaliation, it is desirable to proceed with utmost caution, and if possible, without any publicity.

2. The committees will assure the transportation of those volunteers from the United States to France (Bordeaux or Marseilles), as well as of those from Egypt and India to Port Said. The French government will be ready to pay the committees—in case they ask for and submit proofs—the transport expenses of the volunteers, who will be qualifying for military service and sent to combat.

3. Volunteers from the United States will present themselves at the bureaus in Bordeaux and Marseilles.

And if they are in the East, then they will have to go to the embassy in Port Said or to the bureau of the commanding officer of the Eastern Legion in Cyprus.

Those who live in France should produce a certificate of good conduct.

If they are from abroad, they should have a similar certificate given by the French consulate of their place of origin or another certificate signed by the president of an Armenian or Syrian Committee with sufficient authority.

4. These volunteers will be accepted for the entire duration of the war by qualified noncommissioned officers [under-stewards] in Paris and Marseilles

by the French Consul in Port Said and by the commanding officer of the Eastern Legion.

5. The enlisted volunteers will be transported third and fourth class, and their expenses will be paid by my office* to the president of the committee, or in case of his absence, to the interested party.

6. The expenses of those engaged volunteers will be assumed by the government starting from the day of their engagement and they will be transported free to Cyprus.

* The Ministry of External Affairs.

227**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Gout
1795–1800 FF**

Paris, December 5, 1916

He told me about the decision to go ahead with the formation of an Oriental Legion in Cyprus, to be made up of Ottoman soldiers and commanded by French officers. Those Armenians and Syrians who wish to enroll must serve under the French flag for the duration of the war to be allowed to fight in Turkey. They will be assigned to proper units according to their ethnic origin and religion.

Below are given the general conditions for enrollment.

“1) The Syrian and Armenian committees will undertake to encourage enrollments. In order not to arouse problems of diplomatic nature, the recruitment campaign must be carried out by the committees without any interference by French diplomatic and consular officials. Furthermore, it is advisable that the campaign be carried out with extreme caution, and, as much as possible, without any publicity, in order not to draw the attention of our enemies and avoid provoking reprisals against the Armenians and Syrians living in Turkey.

“2) The committees will guarantee the transport of the recruited volunteers from Armenia to France (Bordeaux or Marseilles) or of those coming from Egypt and India going to Port Said. The French government takes upon itself to reimburse the committees, upon the latter’s request, for the travel expenses of those volunteers who will be considered fit for service and eventually enlisted upon the presentation of the required documents.

“3) The volunteers must present themselves

“(a) to the recruitment centers in Bordeaux and Marseilles if they arrive from America;

“(b) to the French consulate in Port Said, or the office of the commanding officer of the Oriental Legion in Cyprus if they come from the East.

“They must supply:

“a certificate of good conduct for those living in France;

“an attestation from the French consulate of their last country of residence if they come from abroad to prove their good character, or, in the absence of such a document, an equivalent certificate from the president of one of the accredited Armenian or Syrian committees.

“4) The volunteers will be enlisted for the duration of the war, either by the acknowledged military deputy commissaries of Paris, Bordeaux, Marseilles, or by the French consul in Port Said, or the commanding officer of the Oriental Legion.

“5) The traveling expenses (3rd or 4th class facilities) of the recruited

volunteers will be refunded by my department to the president of the recruiting committee, or, in the absence of the latter, to the person in charge.

“6) The enlisted volunteers will be provided for by the state from the day of their enlistment and transported free of charge to Cyprus.”

Once these conditions are met, the French government will undertake to organize volunteer units that will become part of an expeditionary force in Syria or Cilicia at the time when the English forces will decide to enter Palestine, probably around spring. A certain agitation is perceived in these regions, which may be propitious for a landing.

I told him that this issue of volunteers was studied at length during my recent trip to London with the French Embassy people and an official of the Foreign Office. But the general conditions and the conclusions arrived at during that meeting were markedly different from those that were presented to me by Mr. Gout. The embassy had acknowledged the immense danger that new enlistment would present to the Armenian survivors of the massacres. Therefore, it had been agreed that, in the first place, the Armenian committees would not be actively involved in encouraging recruitment; that the committees would naturally lend their support to encourage and even urge potential volunteers to enroll but only clandestinely. But the initiative and the call for recruitment should come from the French government in order to avoid reprisals against the hundreds of thousands of hostages that the Turks are holding in Mesopotamia. I strongly stressed the dangers of recruiting volunteers by Armenians, giving a historical background, and mentioned the complaints made by the Turks against the enrollment of Ottoman volunteers at the beginning of the war which they later used to justify the deportations and their crimes. I read that part of the recent interview, given by Halil Bey, foreign affairs minister of Turkey, to the Associated Press, where he declared that he had told in explicit terms to Armenian notables, “We are engaged in a war from which we shall, perhaps emerge defeated. This will give you the opportunity to enter into negotiations with the Allies. But do not forget this: *the Turkish government will resort to the harshest measures against you if you act against us before our final defeat ... and remember that we are not defeated yet and the slightest blunder from your part will be disastrous to all Armenians.*”¹

¹ Turkey's Foreign Minister Halil Bey, in the interview with the Associated Press representatives at Vienna on October 25, 1916, attempted to throw the blame for the massacres upon the Armenians, on the ground that they had risen in revolt when the Russians invaded Turkey. Halil mentioned in his interview that Enver, the leader of the Young Turks, in his turn called in the Armenian Patriarch and told him the same thing. *The New York Times Current History*, December 1916, from Richard D. Kioian, *The Armenian Genocide—News Accounts from the American Press 1915–1922* (New York, 1980), 195.

Faced with such a threat, how could we assume the responsibility of subjecting 300,000 to 400,000 Armenian deportees to grim eventualities by supplying the Turks with a new excuse. We had discussed this question at length in London, and had arrived at the conclusion that the only way to avoid [this threat] was to leave the initiative and call [for the recruitment campaign] to the French government. The latter would rely on the fine services rendered by the volunteers who have performed so well since the beginning of the war at Marne, the Somme and Verdun, and almost all of them have been decorated with the Croix de Guerre, and several of them with the Medaille Militaire with citations. The French government would publish a notice saying that, in the future, the volunteers would be admitted in the regular army and not in the Foreign Legion as it was done before. The Armenian committees would then act to support this call [for recruitment] with discretion, without making any public appeals to encourage and facilitate enrollment. Concerning enrollment, especially from France and America, it would be pointless in that call to mention that volunteers were recruited for a possible military action in the East against the Turks.

Mr. Gout said that by virtue of the law of August 16, 1915, the French government could not enroll in the French army citizens of countries now engaged in war against France and its allies. He added that he could not see any other means to encourage enrollment rather than by the intermediary of Armenian committees.

I told him that under these conditions, the very basis of the agreement that we had reached in London would be changed. I also expressed my fear about the danger that such a maneuver might cause for my compatriots in Turkey. It would thus become necessary to find, at all costs, another solution to this problem. *I added that, in order to have a valid reason that would allow us to encourage enrollment and even exercise some pressure on our compatriots, I had asked the French government in London to authorize me to make a declaration that, after the Allied victory, our national aspirations would be satisfied and a broad autonomy would be granted to that part of Turkish Armenia falling under French jurisdiction. I said that I had been given official guarantee in London to that effect, and based on that agreement I had sent to my son in Cairo, through the French Embassy itself, a telegram, stating emphatically that "having been officially assured that after the Allied victory our national goals will be fulfilled, I delegated him to take measures to encourage and facilitate the enrollment of a maximum number of potential volunteers, subject to the precautionary measures that I had mentioned in my previous letters."*

Mr. Gout told me that he could only repeat what he had told me previously: that the Armenians could count on the total goodwill of the republican government and the minimum that they can hope for is to become French citizens.

I said that this was very different from what I was promised in London.

At that moment, our conversation was interrupted by a telephone call asking Mr. Gout to go and see Mr. Briand. We agreed to meet again shortly.

Mr. Gout asked me to ponder the issue until our next meeting and concluded that if we could not come up with a means of securing volunteers, then they would do without Armenians.

Mr. Shukri Ganem was present at this meeting as the Syrian representative. He expressed similar fears, although somewhat to a lesser degree, since Syrians are not deported like Armenians.

228**Boghos Nubar's Meeting with Mr. Jean Gout***
1801–1812 FA

Paris, December 12, 1916

I told him that I had received letters from Egypt, describing the volunteers' enrollment activities and praising Romieu, the commanding officer, who proceeded with utmost caution, according to the plan which I had proposed. It wouldn't have been possible to choose a better person for this delicate mission.

Mr. Gout also agreed that Commanding Officer Romieu was the best person for the task, and that he had known him as a very worthy man. He wished to know if I had thought about the question of volunteers and what I had to say about it.

I told him that ever since my last visit I had thought of nothing else but that, which was of extreme importance for us. I requested that before discussing the means to be used, I wanted to outline briefly the circumstances under which I had become acquainted with the subject and the negotiations I was invited to participate in. It was in Egypt that Colonel Brémond, a member of the mission to Mecca, had applied for the first time to a group of Armenian notables from Alexandria. However, my compatriots had told him that, as the issue was of national nature, they had to ask for my advice, and consequently, they had sought my instructions. I wrote to them at once, pointing out that it was impossible to leave a call such as this unanswered, and that it was our duty and to our interest to accept it wisely, while taking all the precautionary measures to save our compatriots in Turkey, who had become real hostages, from retaliation. To this respect, I sent a proposal to Egypt, which was handed then to Mr. Defrance and the British High Command, and accepted by both, as well as by Colonel Romieu, the commanding officer. Now it was according to that plan that they were operating in Egypt.

Shortly after, the French Embassy in London had made a similar attempt with the Armenian community of the same city. Our compatriots had replied exactly the same way as they had done in Egypt and cabled me, requesting my presence in London for a crucial issue.

I reminded Mr. Gout that it was because of his kind arrangement that my trip was made easy. I thanked him for it once again. At the time, when I was leaving for London, as I had told him before, I did not exactly know the reason why I was summoned to London; I learned all about it upon my arrival. I was immediately received by the local French Embassy; there, we studied

* This meeting took place at Quai d'Orsay, where Hovannes Khan Massehian was present.

the question for a long time, first with Mr. Picot, and then with Sir Mark Sykes, who was representing the Foreign Office.

I talked to him, in detail, about the negotiations—which I find it redundant to repeat here—and about the conclusion we had reached. (These details are included in my London negotiations records). I read to Mr. Gout the telegram I had sent to Egypt, following Mr. Picot's insistence; I had passed the telegram to Mr. Picot and requested that he should send it codified to my son, Arakel, in Cairo.

I pointed out [to Mr. Gout] that, in the telegram, I had mentioned to my son that I had been assured by various sources about the fulfillment of our national aspirations following the Allied victory. In order to encourage the enlistment of volunteers, I had requested to be allowed to announce to my compatriots the assurance I had obtained from the government of the Republic that their [Armenians] sacrifices would be rewarded by a strong autonomy under French patronage and flag. Although Mr. Picot had found my request in line with the views of the French government and assured me in that respect, he told me that he accepted my telegram *ad referendum*,[†] reserving the right to communicate it to Paris, to the Ministry of External Affairs, which, in its turn, would send it to Egypt only in case it approved. [The ministry] has given its consent, as in one of my son's letters, it is indicated that he has received the telegram. Therefore, I can assume that the ministry has confirmed the assurances which I had been given in London.

Mr. Gout told me that he himself had received the telegram and sent it. He is, in the meantime, ready to affirm that—without outlining in an absolute manner and in detail the solution which will be given to the Armenian Question—for the part of Armenia, which will be put under French protection, we could hope for a vast autonomy and even more freedom.

I wanted to know what he meant by freedom. He said that Armenians under an autonomous regime will enjoy individual freedom and equal justice for all. France already had its colonial experience in many types of autonomy. In Algeria, at the beginning, they had made some mistakes, but gradually the administrative structure had been expanded in favor of the natives. The regime in Tunisia was more autonomous, and there were in Africa, French colonies endowed with much vaster autonomous administrations and governed by small principalities under the patronage of France. There was no doubt that France would not like to convert Armenia into a colony, whose population, he added, was not even sufficient for the country itself. It would demand, however, that Armenians, who were the most intelligent race in the East and much more enduring than the Greeks, become good French subjects, gradually learn the French language, and adopt the French mentality.

Hovhanes Khan and I answered that a large number of Armenian children were already in French missionary schools and that, undoubtedly, the

[†] With the condition of consulting about it.

day that France would offer its protection, the French language would spread in no time among the Armenians. In the meantime, we thanked him for the repeated assurances regarding the future regime of Armenia, stating that we could not have expected anything else from a magnanimous country such as France, which is devoted to liberating the weak and oppressed nations.

With regard to Armenian talent and aptitude, Mr. Gout expressed his views on the differences between the Armenians living in the provinces, Constantinople, and the port cities—regions where the Byzantine influence is still changing the character of people who were settled there for more than a generation or two. This applies as much to the Turks as it does to the Armenians. According to Mr. Gout, the Anatolian Turk, no matter who he is, has certain characteristics, but once he is moved to Constantinople, he becomes exactly like the pasha whom we all know with all his faults. About the Armenians of Constantinople, he added that the Europeans should not judge them according to people, such as Keotcheoghlu,[‡] etc.

We thanked him for his objectivity, from which certain writers like Pierre Loti have departed and judged the whole nation according to a few objectionable individuals they have met in Constantinople.

Hovhanes Khan stated that it was regrettable for Mr. Gout not to be acquainted with the Armenians of the Caucasus, who were more serious, more idealist, and less mercenary.

Mr. Gout agreed, saying that the Russian Armenians were not as oppressed as the ones in Turkey and that the former enjoyed complete freedom. Hovhanes Khan agreed and pointed out that they owed a great deal to Russia, but our national aspirations were always restrained there; Armenians had never been able to teach their language freely in their schools.

Mr. Gout agreed once more and added that the reason for that was the dominant role of religion in Russia.

Subsequently, we began to examine the methods to be used in the United States and Russia to recruit volunteers.

I reminded him that during my last visit he had opposed the question of the Armenian volunteers being recruited in the French army, mentioning that the first article of the August 16, 1915, regulation does not allow the citizens of enemy nations to enroll into the French army. I explained to him that I had examined the regulation and found out that it did not apply to the Foreign Legion. On the other hand, as I had asked Mr. René Pinon for his advice, I was glad to hear from him that Mr. Pinon himself had studied the article, and, in fact, sent a report to the Ministry of War. [I told Mr. Gout that] Mr. Pinon

[‡] Reference is made to a well-known spy, Andon Keotcheoghlu, a member of the Armenian Catholic family, Keotcheoghlu in Constantinople. In 1914, as a result of a terrorist act in Constantinople, he had become lame, but unfortunately without learning his lesson. During the war, he operated as a spy in Switzerland and presently he is travelling in the same capacity in various European countries.

had read to me certain paragraphs from that report. It seems that the purpose of the particular article was to give an end to recruiting foreigners into the Foreign Legion, especially the recruitment of Germans, who used to enlist voluntarily not so much to serve France but to escape from the concentration camps. According to Mr. Pinon, nothing forbids the enrollment of Armenian volunteers, especially when they will be recruited in a special legion.

Mr. Gout has not seen Mr. Pinon's report but he agrees with its conclusions. Accordingly, I may assume that this regulation won't stop the recruitment I had asked to be carried out by the government in London.

Regarding the recruitment of volunteers in the United States, we shall send our delegates there to come to terms with the Armenian committees and prevent all the publications that may appear in the Armenian press. Mr. Gout already knew, from one of Colonel Romieu's letters, the names of the three delegates, who are Tekeyan, Sabah-Gulian, and Hanemian.¹ They will soon be in Paris to accept the directives of the delegation before leaving for the United States.

Mr. Gout requested that our committees in the United States send the enlisted volunteers to Bordeaux where, after a medical examination, they will be recruited by a special bureau. The government will assume the transport expenses of all those who qualify for military service and combat duty. As far as the Armenian slaves in Armenia and the released volunteers are concerned, Mr. Gout is worried about their transport. Naturally, they can only travel by sea, and thus avoid going through Sweden; however, ships coming from Murmansk are cargoed heavily with alcohol, etc., and rail transport facilities are quite limited for the time being.

All the same, we agreed that I write to Petrograd, to our parliamentarian in the Caucasus[§] in order to inform and request from him to find ways of transporting the Armenian volunteers of the Caucasus to Paris. It is quite natural that he should obtain the approval of the Russian government on this matter.

Mr. Gout agreed to send the letter by diplomatic pouch, along with another one on the same subject, which Varandian would like to send to his friends in the Caucasus.²

¹ Although it was originally planned to send these three personalities to the United States, a last-minute change forced the replacement of Vahan Tekeyan with Mihran Damadian.

[§] Mr. Papadjanoff.

² The Armenian National Bureau of Tiflis.

229**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Gout
1813 FA**

Paris, December 14, 1916

I gave him my letter to Mr. Papadjanoff, which he had promised to send by diplomatic pouch. He read it before me from beginning to the end and agreed with what I had written; he only added three words just to make sure that the Armenians to be recruited in Russia had to be Turkish subjects but not Russian subjects.

I was particularly anxious that Mr. Gout would read my letter. His consent would assure me that he had maintained all the conditions, which we had endorsed in a bilateral agreement, and I had repeated them once again in my letter; especially the recommendation I had made at Quai d'Orsay about the strong autonomy that they would grant us following the final victory.

As Mr. Gout agreed with my letter fully, we have now the right to consider the recommendation rather implicit.

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Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V
825-828 AA

Paris, December 15, 1916

His Holiness
the Catholicos and Supreme
Patriarch of All Armenians
Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

I heard with utmost pleasure that Your Holiness accepted to send to Lord Bryce, as a token of gratitude for his devotion, love, and long service to our national cause, your blessed pastoral encyclical. I am deeply convinced that the lord will be extremely pleased, just like me and many others, who know that he deserves Your Holiness' esteem.

On this occasion, I would dare to draw Your Holiness's attention to three other noble armenophiles. One of them is Mr. Leopold Favre, a Swiss, settled in Geneva; he has, on every occasion, proved most enthusiastically and positively his sympathy toward us. As Your Holiness is well aware, he has always contributed most generously to our educational establishments and orphanages in Armenia; he is, at the same time, the president of the Philarmenian Committee in Switzerland. Indefatigably, with his writings and speeches, and even with his personal financial contributions, he has devoted himself to the service of our cause, meriting our deep gratitude, which enhances every passing day. I am convinced that he will be profoundly moved by Your Holiness' official gesture of appreciation, which he undoubtedly deserves.

Likewise, Mr. Anatole France and Victor Bérard merit the same recognition; these two great French armenophiles, especially [Francis Dehault de] Pressensé's successors and trustees, who have been, for a long time, enthusiastic defenders of our cause, on every occasion. It suffices to point out that Anatole France is one of the most renowned members of the French Academy, and his outstanding literary reputation is acclaimed internationally. I would also like to mention that during the recent events no one else showed so much interest in Armenians. He is always ready to play a crucial role at every general demonstration of sympathy, and his name has sufficed to add a rather special meaning to all these demonstrations and magnified their importance.

As Your Holiness is already aware, Victor Bérard was most supportive during my last negotiations, and he still keeps supporting me. He may be included among those first-rate personalities, such as Lord Bryce, Leopold

Favre, and Anatole France, who have championed the Armenian cause. I would also like to mention that Victor Bérard is one of those individuals who have contributed to promoting the Armenians at a time when there were only a few interested in them. Following his efforts, a precious sympathizing atmosphere and a favorable public opinion had been created.

If Your Holiness would accept to send to each one of these great men your blessed encyclical, you will thus bring to a close the task of recognition that started with Lord Bryce. You will, as the Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians, express, on behalf of the nation, our very profound gratitude toward all those who have assumed most devotedly the mission of demanding a just compensation for all our misfortunes.

P. S. If Your Holiness would be kind enough to accept my suggestions, I would appreciate that you send the encyclicals to me; I can officially give them to these people.

231**Meeting of Boghos Nubar with Mr. Georges Picot***
1814–1821 FF

Paris, December 28, 1916

Mr. Georges Picot is in Paris for a few days only; he will leave for London next week, as soon as he arranges an appointment with Mr. Briand, who is in bed with the flu.

Mr. Picot says that there is nothing else that can be done for the Armenian Question at the moment but wait for the events to develop. It is favorable to us that peace is not signed under the present circumstances because the only advantage that Germany would gain from this war should come from the East; consequently, there would be no question of dismemberment of Turkey, as Germany would like to annex it. Therefore, it is to our interest to wish that the war continues until the day when it would be possible to solve the question of Asiatic Turkey in a manner to fulfill our own aspirations.

As for the question of volunteers, there is a much greater necessity today than there was before when I was in London.

As soon as he referred to this point, I mentioned the English advance toward El Arish¹ and asked him whether this necessity had anything to do with it. He answered that it was simply due to the development of events, and that it was impossible to be more precise at the moment. However, it was most important not to waste time and be ready to act whenever necessary. Unfortunately, the results in Egypt were not very successful. The Ministry of War had indicated that so far only 300 volunteers had signed up.

I pointed out that this figure did not include the fugitives from Port Said; according to the information we had, there were 600 enlisted volunteers, in other words, more than what we had anticipated. Moreover, I informed him about Commanding Officer Romieu's activities and praised his efforts. He was quite pleased as he had not received any news about him lately.

He requested that I prepare a list of names of Armenian volunteers who had fought in the Foreign Legion, and another one to indicate the ones who were commissioned. The latter would immediately be sent to Cyprus to join the volunteer officers' group.

I promised to take care of it, despite the difficulties involved in producing a complete list.

* This meeting took place at Mr. Picot's residence, 16 Avenue Gourgot, Paris.

¹ Australian and New Zealand forces, after pushing Turks on the Sinai front to El Arish, took over the town on December 21, 1916. Thus, they were a mere twenty miles from the border of Palestine. Martin Gilbert, *The First World War—a Complete History* (New York, 1994), 304.

I wanted to know why he had not applied to the Ministry of War to obtain these lists. He told me that he had, but the administrative process was so terribly slow that even for a trivial answer one had to wait for months.

We discussed my meeting with Mr. Gout. He knew that I had talked to him about our London agreement. He had mentioned nothing to Mr. Gout; it was only Mr. de Margerie who was familiar with it.

I told him that I knew nothing about this situation, and it was unfortunate that Mr. Gout had not been informed. [On the other hand], I had tried to make an appointment with Mr. de Margerie to meet with him, but as he was busy with more important issues, Mr. de Margerie had not been able to find an opportune moment for me. It was at that point, when Mr. Gout had telephoned to see me at Quai d'Orsay, and it was there that Mr. Gout himself had opened up the subject of the volunteers. I had told him that my first meeting with Mr. Gout had very much disappointed me, noticing that he knew nothing about the assurances I had had in London. Furthermore, I was extremely disenchanted to see that Mr. Gout tried to avoid the question of autonomy and talked mainly about the kind disposition of the French government vis-à-vis the Armenians. This was the precise reason during my second visit with him, I decided to reopen the subject and remind Mr. Gout that we could not be satisfied with shaky promises and that in order to attract volunteers we had to be able to assure them that we had been promised to obtain our autonomy following the final Allied victory.

Mr. Picot reminded me that what Mr. Gout had said was insignificant; it was just the personal manner of his speech and there was no need to take it seriously. It was important to talk to Mr. de Margerie.

I was pleased and expressed my satisfaction. I told him that since it was the case, I would appreciate it if he could ask Mr. de Margerie to get in touch with me whenever it was necessary; I added that I would hesitate to go to him without being invited, because I would not like to give the impression of going over his head. Mr. Picot promised to do so.

I talked to him about Shukri Ganem; Mr. Gout had invited him with me, at the same time. I told him the incident of the Syrian Committee, when Ganem indiscreetly had taken the liberty of talking about my efforts to recruit Armenian volunteers. I reminded him that we had to act with extreme caution and discretion. Therefore, what Ganem had done was most dangerous for our compatriots living in Turkey. We had to stop such careless actions in the future; consequently, it was important that the two operations, in other words, the one by Shukri Ganem for the Syrians and mine for the Armenians, should be separated from each other completely. Mr. Picot promised to discuss this with Quai d'Orsay.

While discussing the Syrians, I reminded him that in London he had promised to push our demand regarding Alexandretta. According to that demand, the port had to be included within the autonomous Armenia and not

Syria. I added that I had met with some objections about this matter from certain senators in Paris.

Mr. Picot gave me his assurance and declared that there was no doubt about Alexandretta's annexation to Armenia. He, furthermore, requested that I should keep working so that we can receive a large territory, except for Cilicia. It is necessary to demand that the territory expands from the Southern Mediterranean all the way to the Cape of Anamur. In other words, excluding the regions to be given to Russia, we should, as much as possible, ask for an integral Armenia, so that, one day, it won't end up like Poland.

He repeated this comparison with Poland twice; we should use it as an argument during all the negotiations and discussions concerning the Armenian territorial allotment. Although he was not precise, I thought this was what he meant, and he also had in mind the Italian ambitions for the whole or part of Cilicia.

I told him that at the last assembly of the France-Armenia Committee, I had discussed exactly the same plan and asked them to support it so that the future autonomous Armenia, under the patronage of France, should include, along with Cilicia, all the Armenian regions, based upon historical and national facts. The committee accepted this plan and decided that at an opportune moment they would offer me their entire collaboration to make it materialize.

Before leaving, I asked Mr. Picot whether the recent ministerial change in England that had taken place after my last trip had affected Sir Mark Sykes' position. Absolutely not, replied Mr. Picot, and he added that Sir Mark Sykes could have even been part of the ministry had he not refused it. He has an exceptional position and his huge wealth helps him. It is his special task to handle the question of Asiatic Turkey; he is perfectly acquainted with it on behalf of the following ministries: External Affairs, War, Marine, Immigration, and the Indian ministries. Everyday he visits these offices one by one and gathers all the necessary information for his mission.

Mr. Picot, having been appointed to a similar post by the French government, is in touch with Sir Mark Sykes on a daily basis. Therefore, our cause shall not suffer because of the change of the British foreign minister.

232**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V
831–832 FA**

Paris, January 6, 1917

His Holiness Kevork V
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians
Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

In a letter I received recently, Very Reverend Archbishop Kevork Utugian has brought to my attention Mr. James Malcolm's merits, thinking that if I suggested to Your Holiness his nomination to the National Delegation, his appointment would be beneficial to our cause.

During my last visit to London, I had the chance to collaborate with Mr. Malcolm who, through his relations with some government officials, helped in easing my contacts [with dignitaries]; therefore, I think that he, because of his contacts, could be beneficial to our cause, especially when the bell of negotiations rings after the war.

The delegation, in order to have a fruitful activity, should be limited in number. Secondly, in order for the members to be helpful to me, they should live in Paris and collaborate with me on a daily basis. Contrary to this, all my colleagues are located either in England, or Russia, and even Egypt, except His Excellency Hovhanes Khan Massehian, who actually helps me and shares my responsibilities. Regardless, I think Mr. Malcolm could be an exception to the above-mentioned qualities. Therefore, by bringing this up to Your Holiness' attention, in accordance with the wishes of Very Reverend Archbishop Kevork Utugian, I ask Your Holiness to accept the suggestion and appoint him as member to the National Delegation if Your Holiness has no objections.

P. S. I thankfully received the calendars which Your Holiness kindly sent to me.

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Catholicoss Kevork V to Boghos Nubar

? AA

Etchmiadzin, January 21, 1917

His Excellency
Boghos Nubar Pasha
Our beloved son:

We were pleased by receiving your letter of January 6 in which you have asked for our approval to invite Mr. James Malcolm, whose collaboration has been very helpful to you during your last trip in London through his contacts with government officials, to participate in the National Delegation.

Taking into consideration that, except for His Excellency Hovhanes Khan Massehian, your colleagues in the National Delegation have minimal participation in the affairs of the delegation in terms of easing your task, and that you personally recommend Mr. James Malcolm, who could bring a significant contribution to our cause, as also stated by Very Reverend Archbishop Kevork Utugian, I hereby allow you to invite him to participate in the National Delegation as a collaborator, always recognizing you as our only representative in front of the powers and their governments.

Asking the Lord to grant strength to Mr. James Malcolm, the man of merit who has been a friend of the Armenian cause as we know him, I ask the blessing of our Lord for you [personally], for him, and for all of [the National Delegation members] for the success of our magnanimous task.

234**Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar
834–136 AA**

Etchmiadzin, March 28, 1917

His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha
Our beloved:

The continuous advance of the brave British army fills us with hope that my spiritual sons who have found refuge in Mesopotamia, or have been exiled there by the tyrant and merciless Turkish government, will be able to find a strong protector in the noble sons of England. Our hope increases with the movement of the brave Russian army toward the south, which hopefully will meet [the British army] soon and conquer Mesopotamia for good.

We have been recently informed through official and personal reports that there are a lot of local and refugee Armenians in and around Baghdad who need protection and assistance.

The Committee for Brotherly Assistance, which functions under our auspices, agreed to allocate prompt and substantial assistance to those Armenians, but Mesopotamia is quite far from us, our means are very limited in front of the enormous need, and the military conditions are an obstacle with regard to a prompt organization for assistance.

Regardless of all these difficulties, we are determined to send our religious representative to the region to assist the Armenians according to our means.

Considering the immense difficulties which we would encounter during distribution, especially in military zones, it might even be impossible to reach the desired destinations. Therefore, we deemed it necessary to bring the matter to Your Excellency's attention, suggesting that you intervene at the British government as our plenipotentiary representative to secure their protection for our local and refugee people and their assistance, as much as possible, in providing jobs, food, clothing, medical care, etc., in order to rescue them from demolition.

Counting on the sympathy which the British government has demonstrated up until now toward our cause, we hope that the current government will not hesitate to extend its humanitarian aid to the remnant of our people, according to its means, especially since our means are limited.

Hoping to receive a positive response from Your Excellency on this matter that disturbs us, we bless and encourage you.

235**Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar
837-838 AA**

Etchmiadzin, February 2/15, 1917

Our beloved son
His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha:

On the 16th of last December, we had received a telegram of complaint against the primate of the Armenians in America. It was followed on December 28 by Your Excellency's telegram of complaint on the same issue.

It is our conviction, as yours, that in such crucial moments there should be no room for internal discord. Therefore, we instructed the primate through a telegram a full cooperation and coordination with Mr. Mihran Sevasli in political matters.

Furthermore, we sent Very Rev. Father Arsen [Vehouni] more elaborated instructions through a letter by our chancery, number 177, dated January 29, advising him once again to consult with Mr. Sevasli in political matters.

The letters and reports we have received in favor of Mr. Sevasli allow us to think that he might be the most appropriate individual amongst the American Armenians to be considered the person to whom we should entrust responsibilities in such a delicate time.

But having in mind the importance of the matter, and the fact that Your Excellency knows Mr. Mihran Sevasli in person, we would like to know your authoritative opinion on the matter.

If your opinion is positive of Mr. Sevasli, you may arrange to inform us about your steps, if this pleases you; otherwise, let us know as soon as possible your opinion on making the arrangements ourselves.

Enclosed Your Excellency will find the copy of a letter from Dr. M. Housepian, a resident of the United States. We know him in person and trust him. He has offered free medical assistance to the refugees for almost two years, serving in our hospitals. He went back to the United States most recently.

Praying to the Almighty for the longevity of Your Excellency's wife, Mrs. Pasha, we bless you and your wife.

[Annex]
Copy of Dr. M[oise] Housepian's Letter
839-840 AA

His Holiness
Kevork V
Catholicos of All Armenians

Your Holiness:

Upon my arrival in Tiflis, I received letters and separate information from America and became convinced that it is important to have someone there who could officially represent Your Holiness in front of American political circles, acting under Boghos Nubar Pasha's supervision and with his consent. If Your Holiness deems appropriate to consider this request, I, as Your Holiness' humble servant and who knows well the American Armenian community, dare to suggest Mr. Mihran Sevaslian as the most adequate [person] to that post. Mr. Sevaslian has a rich experience in political matters, he masters the [English] language, and knows the pasha and Lord James Bryce in person.

Bringing this matter to Your Holiness' attention, I humbly kiss Your Holiness' holy right, etc.

Dr. M. Housepian

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Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V

[Telegram]

844 FA

Paris, April 10, 1917

The Catholicos
Etchmiadzin

I received the following cable from America: "Your delegates accomplished their mission successfully. The Armenian National Union of America, composed of all political parties [and] organizations, is finally founded.¹ I undoubtedly trust the Armenian [National] Delegation and put myself under your disposal for the final victory of our national cause. [signed] President, Sevasli." I am extremely happy for having been able to achieve this unity which will effectively help us to secure new sympathies for the victory of our cause.

¹ The Armenian National Union of America was officially founded on March 26, 1917, upon an agreement between four Armenian political parties, but its final formation was declared on April 4, 1917, after involving other Armenian organizations, too. Mihran Damadian, *Im Housheres* (From My Memoirs) (Beirut, 1985), 113.

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Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V
845–850 FA

Paris, April 11, 1917

Your Holiness:

I received the letter of February 25 in which Your Holiness has advised me to appoint Mr. Sevasli as representative of the National Delegation in America for political and diplomatic matters in order to overcome the discord among our compatriots of the United States, and has allowed me to write him at once and entrust him with the duty in case I agreed.

Although I have Your Holiness' letter in hand for a few days now, I wrote only today to Boston, because I wanted first to find out the result of the negotiations between our compatriots of the United States for an accord. As Your Holiness was informed, we had sent, for the same purpose, Messers Damadian, Sabah-Gulian, and Hanemian to the United States. We were encouraged at that time by the result achieved in Egypt, where all political parties fortunately put an end to their discord and are working now in perfect harmony.

I have not had any news from our delegates ever since they have reached New York, but I was waiting in confidence, knowing that their task, regardless of all obstacles, thanks to the patriotism of our compatriots in America, would be eased. A new telegram informs me that the unity has been achieved. Extremely pleased with this, I hastened to send a copy of the telegram signed by Mr. Sevasly in his capacity as president for Your Holiness' information. Our compatriots of America, then, have elected him to preside over the American division of the National Union. Therefore, with no more reason to wait, I immediately sent to him a letter—a copy of which is enclosed—according to Your Holiness' permission.

Ever since the United States entered the war,¹ the need for an intermediary has become a necessity because of many important matters which will require negotiations with the government in Washington. I am confident that Mr. Sevasli, with his background and his position in the United States, will be able to render us valuable services, functioning under the guidance of the National Delegation and according to its directives. His nomination for the presidency [of the National Union] by the community is an additional evidence that Your Holiness has made a choice to which everybody agrees.

The Americans have demonstrated a magnificent attitude toward our compatriots who were victims of Turkish barbarity. They raised, and are

¹ The United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917. Turkey severed its diplomatic relations with the United States as from that date, officially acknowledging the fact on April 20, 1917.

every day still raising, millions of dollars through individual initiatives, enjoying the support of President Wilson and his government for their beautiful gesture. Now that America is in the war, its operations, besides humanitarian assistance, will include the political arena, too. Therefore, having an intermediary for the National Delegation in America has become more important, especially due to the fact that President Wilson will have a most influential role during the future Peace Conference.

Recent developments in Russia, and the new democratic government whose sympathy toward the Armenians of Turkey is well known to us, have rid us from all concerns which were caused by the former government and its policy in the occupied Armenian provinces of Turkey. The course of the Armenian Question is changed, and we could hope that the Armenian provinces occupied by Russia would be granted a regime which will totally satisfy our national aspirations. Your Excellency is aware, like myself, of the views and sentiments of Mr. Miliukov toward the Armenians of Turkey, for whom he had demanded autonomy in his speeches and his newspaper, *Rech*. Your Holiness is also aware of the valuable services he rendered to me before the war, during the reforms negotiation. I recall here his announcement of last year in Paris, during the banquet of the Association of France-Armenia which I had thrown for the parliamentary delegation of the Duma. In his answer to Mr. Anatole France, [Mr. Miliukov] announced that the goal of the current war could be summarized as follows: "Salvation of victimized nations, Poland and Armenia." Then he added, word by word: "Needless to say that Mr. Anatole France has raised here issues which are close to our heart—autonomy for revived and united Poland, [and] autonomy for Armenia rescued from the bloody claws of its villains."

Immediately after his taking office, the minister (Miliukov) realized for Poland the plan he had revealed in his aforementioned speech, and no one can doubt that he will not be willing to do the same for the Armenian provinces of Turkey in time. It is with this feeling that, in my joy in seeing him in office, I sent him a congratulatory telegram. In his response he included the following sentence: "I will do everything I can for Armenia." I have no doubts about that, because I know his liberal thoughts and his high morality, and I am convinced that today, as a minister, he [still] thinks exactly the way he had thought when he was the leader of one of the liberal parties of the Duma.² There is no doubt that the temporary government also thinks like him. It has placed on top of its agenda "the liberation of all persecuted nations and realization of the legal aspirations of all peoples." One of the most famous members [of the government], Mr. Kerenski, in a most recent interview, announced that Russia will grant autonomy to the Armenian provinces of Turkey.

² The Cadet Party.

Therefore, today, thanks to the change of regime, we find in Russia the same thoughts and intentions I found in its allies, from whom, as I have informed Your Holiness, I received clear assurances that our national aspirations will be totally satisfied on these Armenian lands which would remain under their jurisdiction upon dismemberment of Asiatic Turkey. And I believe that nothing will prevent the Russian government from following the course of its allies and giving us clear assurances that are being awaited by all Armenians impatiently. I am confident that Your Holiness shares the same feelings and has already appealed in this regard. Today, more than in any other place, the fate of Ottoman Armenia will be studied and resolved in Russia and in the lap of its liberal government.

238**Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar
851–854 AA**

Etchmiadzin, April 27, 1917

His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha
Our Plenipotentiary Representative and beloved spiritual son
greeting and blessing

Recently, the participation of the American republic in the war, and the great peaceful revolution in Russia, has created a positive situation in favor of the Armenian cause.

In order to comprehend these new developments and to take advantage of them in time; furthermore, in order to decide the principles and the means by which we could have gains, it is important that we seek new ways, in order to ease the solution of the Armenian cause.

With this in mind, it is possible that we will organize a meeting of politically experienced personalities and representatives from different organizations in order to have the necessary discussions. We will inform you of the results in due time to make you aware of the situation.

In case of discussions [in Europe], too, about the new circumstances, whether with your participation or independently, it will please us to be informed of conclusions and resolutions.

We would like to share with Your Excellency our views about the new situation. The active participation of the American Republic in the war, according to us, will give [the Republic] the right to have a strong position during a future conference which will discuss and decide peace terms. Your Excellency is well aware that America, represented by its president, has declared itself a protector of the political rights of oppressed and small nations; therefore, it will have a significant role in improving the future of the Armenian people. This fact becomes more obvious when we take into consideration the huge economic undertakings which have been designed in the Republic's administrative circles and which will have favorable impact on the improvement of the economic conditions of our country once positive political conditions are achieved in our homeland.

Thus, it is important to establish closer ties with American circles on different levels and to create a public opinion at the time of signing the peace. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to entrust a special American mission to Mr. K. Pastermadjian, former member of the Ottoman Parliament, who, according to the assurances of the National Bureau of Tiflis, could be helpful for the task because of his education, knowledge of the conditions of the country, and his relationships.

We learned with pleasure from Your Excellency's telegram, which we

received recently, that through deliberate efforts you have finally succeeded in establishing accord among the National Union for Defense and other organizations. We view this as a guarantee for the fulfillment of our national cause. Having this new development in mind, we have instructed Mr. Pasternadjian to pass through Europe on his way to the United States, in order to meet you in person and acquaint you with the intentions of our government. This would have given Your Excellency, as our only plenipotentiary representative and president of the National Delegation, the chance to give him guidance and directives for his mission. But, unfortunately, some military obstacles prevented him from doing so. Someone was urgently needed in America who could create a favorable ground and public opinion for our cause prior to peace.

Having in mind these difficulties and circumstances which are beyond our control, Mr. Pasternadjian left for Petrograd few days ago. There he will become acquainted with the new government's views and intentions which are very favorable toward the Armenians and will leave for America after meeting with Zavriev.

Mr. Pasternadjian has been instructed by us to be in close touch with Your Excellency, to periodically report to you on his activities, in order to enable Your Excellency, as the overall leader of the Armenian cause, to create harmony and keep all the pieces together.

239**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V***
855–869 FA

Paris, June 1, 1917

His Holiness Kevork V
Catholicos of All Armenians
Etchmiadzin

Your Holiness:

I am taking advantage of a safe opportunity to send this letter to Your Holiness. The opportunity is provided to me by a friend, Mr. Sokolov, who as the head of the Zionist movement is interested in the Armenian cause. We had the chance to assist each other during our negotiations, and by the occasion of his leaving for Petrograd he agreed to carry this letter to Your Holiness. Simultaneously, he will meet with our compatriots in Russia and inform them about the activities of the [National] Delegation.

Therefore, I take advantage of this chance to write to Your Holiness with total freedom, in order to brief you on the diplomatic phases through which the delegation passed. A briefing that I have not been able to do yet.

Your Holiness is aware of an agreement signed in the summer of 1916 between the French, British, and Russian governments with regard to Asiatic Turkey. According to that agreement, Russia was going to have Constantinople and the three Armenian provinces of Erzerum, Bitlis, and Van as its share. Mesopotamia was left to England, and France was going to receive Syria, Cilicia, and the three other Armenian provinces of Diyarbakir, Mamuret el-Aziz, and Sivas. Palestine's fate was still unclear, but the general tendency was its internationalization.

When I was invited to London in October of last year, I was informally told about the agreement, and I was asked, at the same time, to secure the assistance of Armenian volunteers in case of an Allied landing in Cilicia.

Even though we were not pleased with the agreement which was based on dividing Armenia, since the delegation was in front of a done deal by the agreement signed between the Allies, we had nothing to do but to try to gain the maximum [for the Armenian cause]. With this aim in mind, we exposed the dangers which would have happened to the 100,000 Armenian deportees in Mesopotamia who were hostages in the hands of the Turks. We also informed them that the delegation in no way could undertake in assisting

* The Armenian original does not exist. It was sent to the Catholicos by Mr. Sokolov. Another copy, revised, was given to Mr. Mikael Varantian on the occasion of his departure for Rome.

with such a serious plan without having guarantees that our national aspirations would be totally fulfilled.

Accordingly, for the first issue we demanded that all precautions be taken in order not to alert the Turks and not to provide them with a new pretext for revenge. The means which we have suggested were too many, and it is not possible to present them one by one in this letter. We would like to only mention that we demanded for the enlistment (of the volunteers) to be implemented by the French authorities, through the French army, without the direct involvement of the delegation, and that in case of a landing in Asia Minor, the Armenian volunteers be part of the Allied troops but not a separate division.

As for the second issue, the French government, upon our demand, promised that Cilicia, together with the three provinces, will be a protectorate separate from Syria, with full guarantees that France will not turn it into a colony, as it did with Algeria and Tunisia, and will grant it a broadest autonomy.

These promises were made both by the Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay. Only after securing these promises did the delegation try to accomplish, first in Egypt and then in America, full accord among Armenians belonging to different political parties. The union, which the delegation succeeded to create by appealing to the patriotic feelings of all [Armenians], was imperative in order to be able to work in an utmost secrecy and prudence under most dangerous circumstances.

It is under such circumstances that we worked until the moment the Russian Revolution erupted and brought to power people with liberal thoughts and high ideals. These people condemned all expansionist policies and declared, as a priority, that they want neither territorial annexations nor indemnity.

The situation is abruptly changed with these developments because Russia does not want to annex anymore the three Armenian provinces.

Your Holiness is also aware that Mr. Ribot,* in his part during the meeting of May 22 of the National Assembly on behalf of the government which he heads, announced that France, too, refrains from expansionist plans; the case of Alsace-Lorraine should be viewed merely as a return.

Under these circumstances, there is no doubt that last year's agreement between the Allies will be revised and most probably is about to be revised.

The delegation has no choice but to go back to its old plan, which was based on a neutralized autonomous Armenia, comprised of the six provinces and Cilicia, together with the ports of Mersin and Alexandretta, under the protection of the Allies.

We think that after the announcements made by the governments, after the new policies adopted in France and in Russia, and after the participation

* The French Prime Minister.

of the United States in the war, there can't be an issue of placing Armenia under one protector, whether it be France, England, or Russia, and more so, there can't be an issue of leaving Armenia under Turkish domination. The protection, therefore, can only be collective.

I have frequently mentioned the advantages of this plan for the Allies. I will only single out that a neutral and autonomous Armenia which enjoys equal rights with all powers and is protected by the Allies would be an open field in front of the commercial and economic activities of the powers. It also would secure peace, being a buffer between the future Turkish state of Anatolia, Russia, Persia, Mesopotamia, and Syria. Last but not least, it is worthy of consideration that the Baghdad railway—there is no doubt that the powers would reach an agreement about it—would have two neutral terminals in Mersin and Alexandretta which would facilitate free trade for all protectors with Persia.

We are aware that powers usually hesitate to accept a collective protection which might create a conflict of interest. Therefore, we think that the future peace conference when adopting the principle of collective protection, in order to make it positive, should prefer to give a mandate to one power which would undertake the reconstruction of future autonomous Armenia until it becomes self-sufficient. The conditions that would prevail in Armenian lands after the war obviously will not allow the formation of a native government due to the massacres inflicted upon Armenians, since it would not be possible to leave out the Turks and Kurds who comprise a majority there. Therefore, it is imperative that a ten- to fifteen-year period of transition, administrative organization, and political education be considered under the protection of a selfless power which would undertake the protection aimed at peace on a humanitarian basis during that [transitional] period. Armenian refugees and survivors of the deportations, who would have undoubtedly returned to their homeland together with many compatriots scattered in numerous countries, thanks to their gifts, talents, and superiority over neighboring races, would form a majority able to govern itself in total independence.

It seems to us—this should remain confidential between us—that the United States, who has demonstrated plenty of sympathy and assistance toward the Armenians, would be the fittest for that kind of protection and that the powers would not make any objection because the selflessness [of the United States] is beyond any doubt.

Your Holiness must have noticed that in our plan we have mentioned only the six Armenian provinces of Turkey and Cilicia. We have never mentioned Russian Armenia which is beyond the jurisdiction of the National Delegation.

Indeed, the Armenians of the Caucasus are subjects of a free country; they enjoy rights equal to all Russians. If they have rights to be protected, they are of an internal nature. Their demands, like the demands of other

Russian nationalities, should be satisfied by their own government; the allies cannot interfere in any way. As for Turkish Armenia, the matter is essentially a humanitarian one because of the Turks themselves, and it falls in the sphere of the war goals of the Allies who fight for the principle of nationalities and liberation of the oppressed people. Neither Russia—regardless of its abandoning [the policy of territorial annexation]—nor its allies, and especially the United States, would abandon to its fate the [Armenian] people who suffered more than any other nation during the war; they would not leave them under Ottoman yoke or under even a nominal [Turkish] rule. The task of the National Delegation rests in this, and we have been careful to expose this fact in all our memoranda, in order to eliminate all doubts from the minds of governments and to avoid any mishap.

We are confident that Your Holiness, too, in accord with all Armenian organizations, has already appealed to the Russian government and will continue to exert efforts to make sure that Russia will not abandon the cause of our brethren in Turkey, and for that purpose will initiate an effective military action against the Turks as soon as possible.

This is the general outline of the plan which has been adopted by the National Delegation under new international political circumstances, and we would like to submit it to Your Holiness' approval. My colleague His Excellency Hovhanes Khan and I have thoroughly studied it and firmly believe that it would best fit the national inspirations and would enable Armenia to gradually, and without conflicts and dangers, reach the dreamed-of independence, thanks to its neutralization and the protection of the powers.

My colleague and I would be grateful to Your Holiness if you kindly inform us of your thoughts and the opinion of our compatriots in Russia with regard to the outlined plan. Your Holiness could reply through Mr. Sokolov who will not stay more than four to six weeks in Russia and who will bring [your reply] to me with pleasure.

I received the letter which Your Holiness sent me about the Armenian refugees of the Baghdad region. In accordance with Your Holiness' wish, I immediately passed it over to the British government, asking it to assist and protect the unfortunate people through the commander-in-chief of the British army in Mesopotamia. I will cable to Your Holiness as soon as I receive a response. I hope Your Holiness receives it before this letter.

P. S. I have not received yet the encyclicals which Your Holiness had mentioned. I hope to receive them soon, because Mr. Leopold Favre is very sick and has succumbed to his age. If disaster will be inevitable for him, at least I would have liked him to have the condolence [of receiving the encyclical].

I take advantage of this occasion to caution Your Holiness against a project of a national conference in Paris. It is Tchobanian that, thirsty for

advertisement, has come up with this new plan in order to fulfill his desire to be seen [on stage]. The National Delegation has tried many times to channel his activities in favor of our national interests. It was for the same purpose that we entrusted him with the paid position of propaganda, but we soon realized that he has turned that position into means for self-propagation, to the degree of presenting himself as our “national poet” in French media. Furthermore, he has been trying to inspire in our publicists ideas contradictory to ours and to those of the National Delegation. Finally, we put an end to our collaboration with him, taking into consideration his ambition to impose his will upon us and his disrespect to any leadership and discipline.

Now, when the Armenians in the Caucasus, as in all other countries, have set aside all discords and, driven by patriotism, have gathered around a sacred unity to work for the victory of our cause, and when even the once hostile [Armenian] organizations of Egypt and America are in full cooperation with the National Delegation and are following its directions, Tchobanian declares that the National Delegation represents only Your Holiness, not the nation, and that Your Holiness does not have the right to appoint a plenipotent National Delegation. Even though he defends this thesis publicly and everywhere, he will not admit that he demands a national conference for the very reason, waiting to raise the question during the meeting. Even if we pretend for a while that there is the need for such a conference, there is no doubt that difficulties with regard to its formation will arise from the first moment. How and by whom will the delegates be nominated? On what basis will it be possible to reach an initial agreement in order for all Armenian communities around the world to be represented there, and by what proportions? Even if these issues were solved—which is impossible during war—the project would have remained infeasible; first, because practically and legally it would have been impossible to represent the Armenians of Caucasia, Turkey, and other countries, and second, it would have been dangerous. Our cause would have not gained anything from public discussions and discords which would have been unavoidable.

Under these circumstances, a conference would have been illegal and subject to inevitable failure, endangering our cause immensely. This is the reason for the disapproval of the delegation to such a project. On the contrary, the National Delegation would find it natural and helpful to strengthen the delegation through the addition of new members, limited in number, when the time for peace negotiations approaches. We would be pleased to involve capable and honorable people in order to share our responsibility in our undertakings, expecting that they would bring their honest and helpful collaboration, contrary to people like the mentioned poet who create difficulties for the delegation. The National Delegation, confident that Your Holiness will appoint only the kind of people that comply with the above conditions, would readily accept them. I would like to add that such an arrangement will be needed when the bell rings.

As for the conference, I deemed necessary to mention it here, so that Your Holiness and our compatriots in the Caucasus reply to the invitations they will receive in full consciousness.

240**Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V**

[Telegram]

870 FA

Paris, June 15, 1917

His Holiness the Catholicos
Etchmiadzin

Having passed Your Holiness' letter about the refugees of Baghdad over to the British government, I am pleased to inform you that I received a very satisfactory reply—the civil and military authorities of Baghdad have received urgent instructions to protect [the refugees] in full prudence. Aid has been sent already by the London Committee.

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Boghos Nubar to Catholicos Kevork V*

Telegram

879 FA

Paris, July 20, 1918

His Holiness the Catholicos
Etchmiadzin

A Frankfurt newspaper announces that Your Holiness has decided that, due to new political developments, there is no need anymore for the [National] Delegation to continue its role. I ask Your Holiness to cable through the British Embassy of Tehran whether the news is correct or not so that my colleagues and I submit to your will. In any case, I consider it a duty to inform Your Holiness that I personally will not be able to continue my services because of a serious illness.

* The telegram was sent to the Foreign Office in London, to be transferred to Etchmiadzin.

242**Catholicos Kevork V to Boghos Nubar
880–881 AA**

Etchmiadzin, December 4, 1918

His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha
Plenipotentiary Representative of the Catholicos of All Armenians
and the President of the Armenian National Delegation
Paris

Your Excellency:

The government of the Caucasian Armenian Republic¹ is sending a delegation headed by Mr. A[vetis] Aharonian in order to protect the just cause of the Armenian people to its full extent and to secure its final solution together with Your Excellency in front of the Allied nations and the United States and during the International Congress, in accordance with the noble and just principles of the liberation of nations declared by those mentioned powers.²

Informing Your Excellency that the Delegation of Caucasian Armenia enjoys our approval, we are pleased that the expediting of this delegation is in accord with Your Excellency's wish.

Since the ultimate goal of the Armenian people is one and inseparable, we are confident that Your Excellency, Mr. A. Aharonian, and the rest of the delegation will effectively defend the just cause of the tortured Armenian nation in full and harmonious cooperation, and that with the legal and political

¹ The Republic of Armenia was officially announced on May 28, 1918, in Tiflis, Georgia, upon the breakup of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic comprised of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. Its boundaries were recognized by Turkey on June 4, 1918, according to the Treaty of Batoum. The government of the Republic of Armenia soon decided to form a special delegation, headed by Avetis Aharonian, president of the Parliament, to negotiate with the powers during the Paris Peace Conference.

² The Paris Peace Conference began on January 19, 1919. The two Armenian delegations, one under Boghos Nubar and the other under Avetis Aharonian, after overcoming some obstacles, acted jointly and appealed together to the powers on February 12, 1919, asking, among other things, for the recognition of an independent Armenian state, formed by the union of "seven vilayets and of Cilicia with the territories of the Armenian Republic of the Caucasus." They further asked for a collective guarantee from the Allies and the United States, or the League of Nations, as well as a special mandate by the Peace Conference to any one power. W. Henry Cooke and Edith P. Stickney (eds.), *Readings in European International Relations Since 1879* (New York, 1931), 665–674.

solution [of the cause] a new era of happiness will be achieved for the liberated Armenian homeland and my beloved sons.

Since we have not heard from Your Excellency for quite a while, and since we, too, have not been able, because of political conditions, to communicate our state of affairs, we instructed Mr. A. Aharonian to inform you whatever is necessary.

Sending Your Excellency our abundant and affectionate blessings, we warmly ask the Lord of all good things to guide your prudent spirit, as well as the spirits of the delegates for the public good.

Post War Chronology

1920

- February France begins to abandon Cilicia to Turkey—an operation that would end in October 1921. New massacres of Armenians follow resulting in the exodus of Armenians to mainly Syria and Lebanon.
- August 10 The Treaty of Sèvres *de jure* recognizes the Republic of Armenia. Turkey recognizes Armenia as a free and independent state, and the signatories agree to let President Wilson determine the boundaries between Turkey and the Republic of Armenia.
- September 23 Turkey wages war against the Republic of Armenia.
- November 22 President Wilson announces the new boundaries. 42,000 square kilometers from Ottoman Armenian lands were to be annexed to the Republic of Armenia.
- December 2 Armenian communists take over the government in the Republic of Armenia.
- December 3 The prime minister of the resigned Armenian government signs with Turkey the Treaty of Alexandrapole. The treaty places more Armenian territories under Turkish dominion.

1921

- October 13 The Treaty of Kars sets the western borders of Soviet Armenia. The Nakhitchevan district ends up under Azeri control.

1923

- July 7 Stalin places Mountainous Karabakh under Azeri control.
- July 24 The Treaty of Lausanne reduces the Armenian rights over their lands under Turkish dominion into a matter of minority rights.

1939

- October After three years of agitation Turkey finally annexes the sandjak of Alexandretta. Last mass exodus of Armenians to Lebanon and Syria. Cilicia becomes totally emptied of Armenians.

1990

- August 23 The Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia declares independence of the republic.
- September 21 Voters in Armenia approve independence in a national referendum.

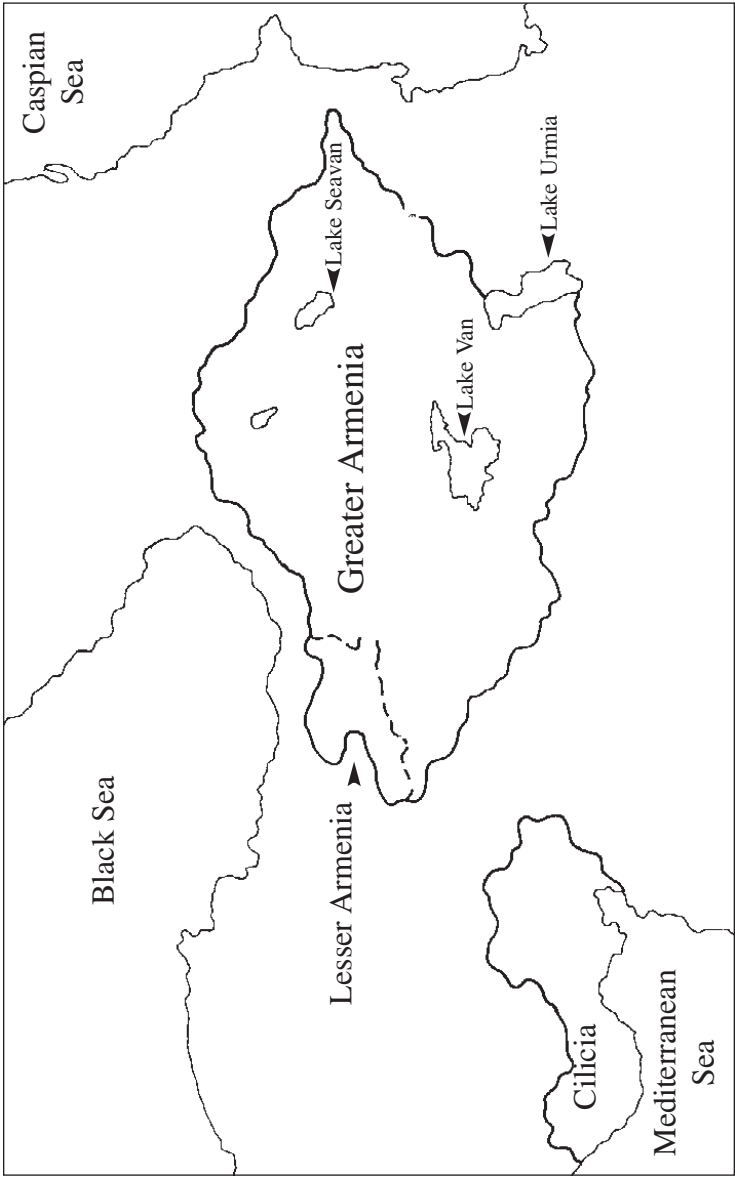
1991

- September 2 Proclamation of the Republic of Mountainous Karabakh.

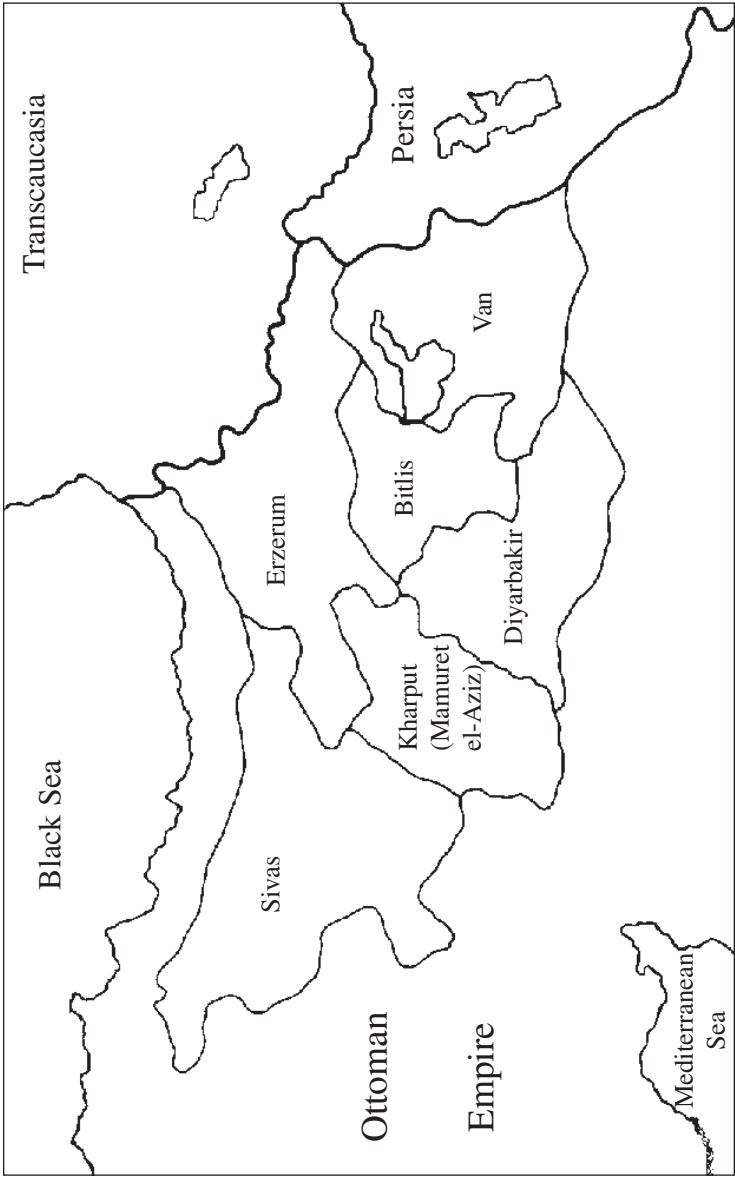
1996

- The Republic of Armenia comprise only one tenth of Historic Armenia. Turkey still controls the six Armenian provinces and Cilicia. Nakhitchevan remains under Azeri rule. Close to 8 million Armenians all over the world wait for justice.

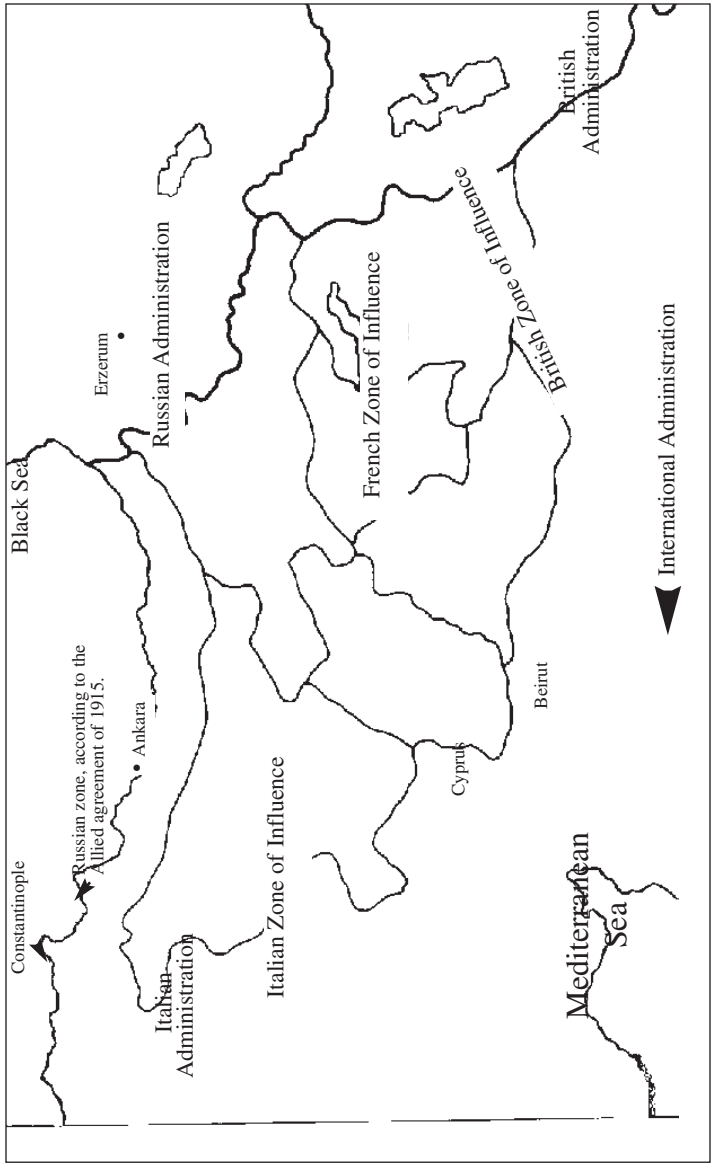
Maps



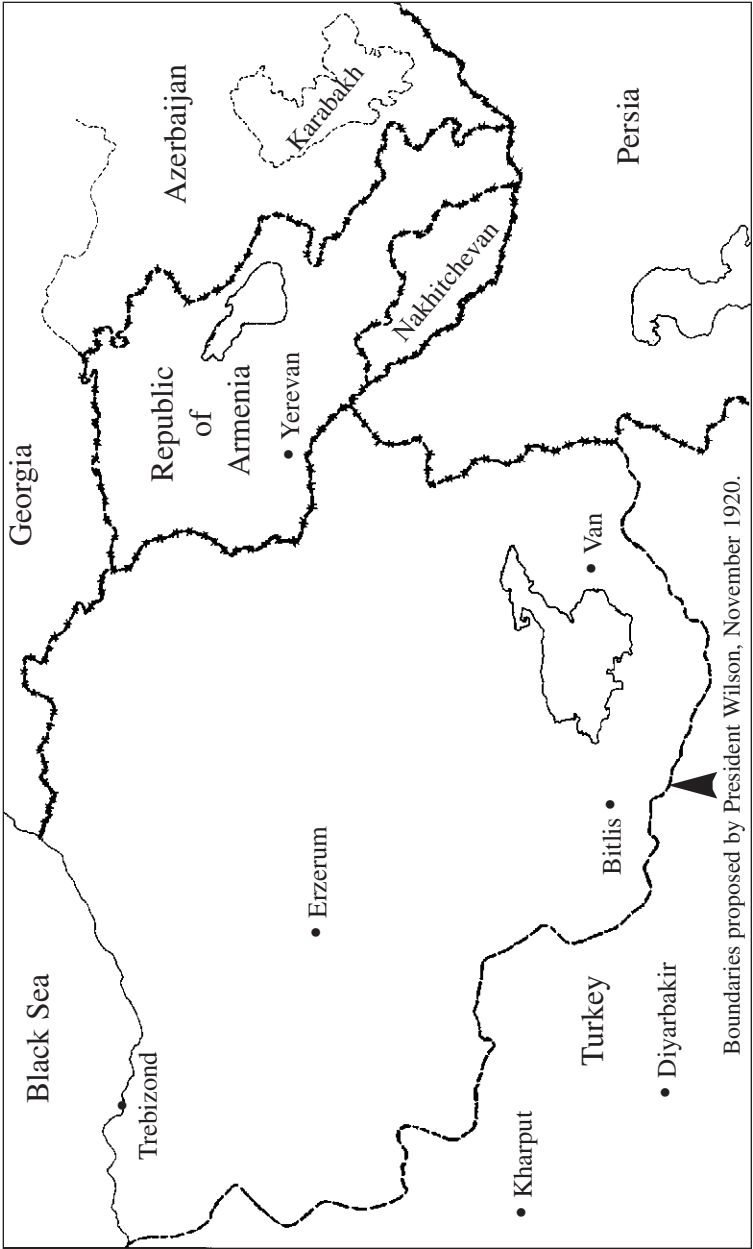
Greater and Lesser Armenia in ancient and mediavel times.



The six Armenian provinces (vilayets) of the Ottoman Empire.



The partition of the Ottoman Empire as planned by the Allies.



Republic of Armenia, Karabakh, Nakhitchevan, and President Wilson's proposed boundaries.

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