

## THE HARBORD MISSION REPORTS ON ARMENIA, 1919 IN THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE ARCHIVES

**Makhmourian G.G.**

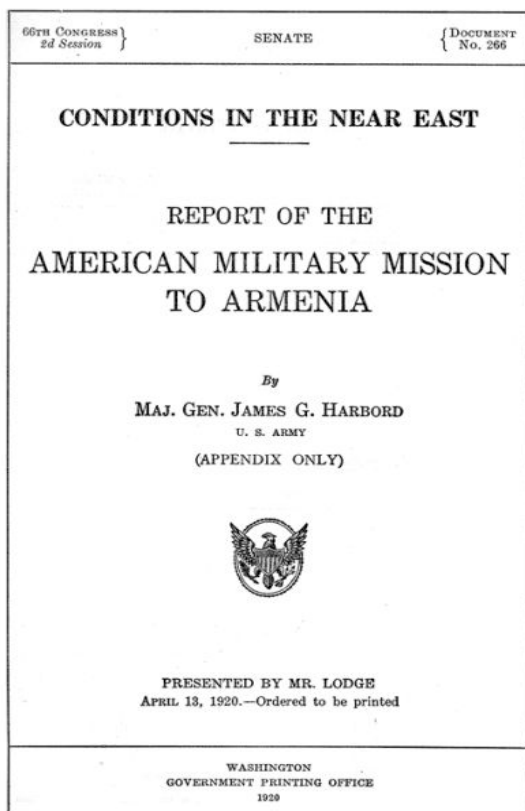
*Doctor of Sciences (History)*

In June and August of 1919 the Paris Peace Conference discussed a lot of problems related to the Ottoman politics and the U.S. mandate for Western Armenia. European powers, namely Great Britain and France did not reject a possibility to establish the vast American zone of influence, encompassing Eastern and Western Armenia, Cilicia, as well as Constantinople with the Straits.

The U.S. President Woodrow Wilson assented that his country should allot regiments and money to establish a new semi-independent unit of multiethnic pattern. Besides, he always mentioned that his point of view would pass the



Major General James Guthrie Harbord



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Senate Committee debates. And though we do know that the American administration, not to mention European leaders, had all the necessary information at its disposal, the U.S. President was inclined to send a military finding mission to make a report as to a possibility of American mandates and their material needs. If Wilson preferred Major General James Harbord as possible Governor, then the chief of the Allied relief in Europe and the U.S. president-to-be Herbert C. Hoover stressed that any kind of U.S. relief should be separated from repatriation or political matters. He had his own candidate, Colonel William N. Haskell, who should become the Allied representative in Armenia.

If we go into details, then during the last week of June, 1919 Wilson envisaged that his nominee would live in Yerevan and thus would give advice to the local Government on administrative issues, dealing with repatriation and relief matters both in Eastern and Western Armenia. Hoover did compose a scheme along these lines and confirmed

Harbord's candidacy<sup>1</sup>. On June 28, the Supreme Council of the Paris Peace conference narrowed this plan. It appointed a Commissioner with full authority for the Republic of Armenia exclusively<sup>2</sup>. In the evening, British secretary of the Conference mentioned additional "difficulty in giving effect to the decision"<sup>3</sup>; and Hoover made another move on June 30, 1919. Now, with Western Armenia beyond their reach, he proposed to divide relief, with his own nominee Colonel Haskell, from the matters of repatriation.

The American delegation consented; and international Council of Five at Paris appointed Harbord's rival on July 5, 1919, as a Commissioner, limited by the matters of relief and confined by the borders of the Republic of Armenia<sup>4</sup>. When comparing the two persons, we confess, that Major General Harbord was of heavier political weight and less manageable by Hoover, than a fresh Commissioner Haskell.

This collision ended with a decision to send Harbord on a business trip from Adana, through Mardin, Kharberd, Diarbekir (Amid), Sebastia, Karin-Erzurum<sup>5</sup>, to Erevan, Tiflis, Baku and Batum. His experts would concentrate on measures necessary to prevent massacre of Armenians, on geographical and administrative features<sup>6</sup>. They would report on refugees, in common with general military and economic problems<sup>7</sup>. The American delegation declared that the General was sent to investigate conditions "and to report as to the total number of troops which would be required to repatriate the Armenian population and keep the country in order."<sup>8</sup> It mentioned the inevitable and "involuntary" peace of propaganda, but totally omitted any reference to an American mandate.

Before their departure, chief of the Mission and his Brigadier General G. Van Horn Moseley met with Armenian Generals H. Bagratuni and G. Korganian, as well as with chairmen of two delegations Boghos Nubar and A. Aharonian. Their Armenian chairmen asked to dispatch 30,000 foreign troops to protect the Armenian population for three years.

As follows from the documents mentioned below there was a threat of Turkish aggression against the Republic of Armenia. It was apparent that the Turkish side, continuing its policy of genocide against Western Armenians, activated its aggressive policy against Eastern Armenia too. In the beginning of August, 1919, the Chairman of the Peace conference and Major General Harbord were informed of the widespread

<sup>1</sup> Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. 1919, The Paris Peace Conference, in 12 vols., vol.VI. Wash., US GPO, 1946, p. 744 (following: Papers Relating); H.Morgenthau. All in a Life-Time. NY, Garden City, 1922, pp. 337-338.

<sup>2</sup> Papers Relating, vol.VI, p. 741.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. VI, p. 756.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., vol.VII, p. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Native Karin-Erzurum (Artsn/Arzn ar-Rum>Arzrum/Erzrum by the Armenian linguistic origin) had been an outpost of Western Armenia and a place where the Headquarters of the occupation forces of the Kemalists was located.

<sup>6</sup> See Document 10 of this publication.

<sup>7</sup> Papers Relating, vol. VII, p.43.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., vol.XI, Wash., GPO, 1945, p.264.

Turco-Tatar movement in the Arax valley, aimed against the Republic of Armenian (document 3). Headed by commander of the 15<sup>th</sup> Army Corps Colonel Kiazim Karabekir and saturated with Turkish officers, it was a purely political undertaking, decidedly conducted from Baku and Erzerum. One of the most notorious leaders of the Young Turks, Enver pasha followed by his staff had quartered in the Transcaucasia; with Turkish regular units quartered in the Eastern Armenia's regions of Olty and Sarikamish.

They were backed by the 12<sup>th</sup> Turkish Division concentrated between Khorasan and Zivin with its General Staff at Khorasan to the west of the frontier. One division more had been drilled at Sgherd; with Turkish agitators waging anti-Armenian activity among Kurds and Caucasian Tartars all around Transcaucasia. Erevan, its Foreign Ministry with General Staff of the Armenian Army warned about the wide-scale attack by the Turkish forces, so much encouraged by the British retreat. The Young Turks who transformed into Kemalists had become a real menace for the Republic of Armenia and established threatening relations with Bolsheviks.

Armenian officials were quite exact in their assertion that activity of the Turkish officers reached the Northern Caucasus; and thus their conspiracy resulted in flagrant violation of the Mudros Armistice. Chief of British Military mission to Allied Armies of Orient at Constantinople, General G.Bridges was of the same opinion. He envisaged large-scale fighting in the Caucasus and Transcaucasia the moment his contingent would withdraw. That's why the gravity of the Transcaucasian situation could not be overstated. Turks, Persians, Georgians and Tartars were planning to assail Armenia at the very first possibility. The British Divisions had been controlling a vast area where no Mudros Armistice was valid. The latter one had been actually rejected on July 25, 1919, when the surplus of Turkish ammunition was kept outside of Allied control and banned to be removed<sup>9</sup>. At the moment, when Foreign Minister A. Khatisian sent his report to the leaders of Armenian United delegation in Paris, his country was left without a single Allied officer. All appeals to the British Command to supersede troops by new detachments were of no avail. Thus, the American military mission was sent at a moment when Armenia desperately needed new contingents and ammunition; nevertheless political leaders at Paris were preoccupied with general matters and borders.

Western politicians were quite exact to differ the Armenian Highland from Asia Minor. So, in the letter of instruction for the members of his Mission, Chief of its Staff, Brigadier General F.R. McCoy clearly divided one from another. Anatolia or Asia Minor was portrayed as an area to the west of the Anti-Taurus Range, protracted to the north till the Cape Jason. Armenia was always perceived as the Armenian Highland with

<sup>9</sup> See in detail: National Archives of Armenia, Yerevan, fund 200, reg.1, file 155, folio 84 (following: NAA); Turkish Army Moves to Destroy Armenians. "The New York Times," NY, 31.07.1919; "The Times," Lnd., 5.08.1919, p.10; R.Hovannisian. The Competition for Erzerum, 1914-1921. In: Armenia Karin/Erzerum. Costa Mesa, Ca., 2003, pp.379-380; G.Makhmourian. From the Brest Litovsk Treaty to the Armistice of Mudros: History of Non-Compliance with Conventions. "Herald of the Social Sciences," Yerevan, 2013, № 1 (637), pp.24, 32-33.

political borders of Western Armenian provinces, occupied and delimited in the Ottoman Empire. "Ethnological Map by the Peace Conference" and memorandum "La Question arménienne devant la Conférence de la Paix" of February 12, 1919,<sup>10</sup> drew up on the same lines by two heads of the Armenian united delegation, representing the whole nation - Western branch and the Republic of Armenia, did not arise any controversy. The republics of Georgia and Azerbaijan were acknowledged as units which should not interfere with Armenia's borders (document 8). Besides, official denomination "Azerbaijan" had been used only since the middle of 1918<sup>11</sup>. Historically, there had never been a territory or political unit under the name "Azerbaijan" out of the Iranian north-western area known to the ancient Greeks as *Media Atropatene* or simply *Atropatene*<sup>12</sup> (Armenian *Atrpatakan*), "Parthian and Middle Persian *Āturpātakān*, later *Ādurbādagān*, NPers. *Ādarbāyjān*."<sup>13</sup> This, genuine Iranian Atropatene-Azerbaijan is situated to the south-east of the Armenian Highland. The Eastern Transcaucasian "namesake" was artificially formed with the centre in Baku, pursuing the pan-Turkic purposes<sup>14</sup>.

In the real politics, both President Wilson and Harbord Mission did prefer not to entangle in the Transcaucasian border disputes. They saw them to be settled by three Republics themselves or by the Paris Peace Conference as a joint authority.

Such an interpretation was widespread but not exceptional. Americans did regulate the border issues, when it was possible, for example - in Nakhijevan. That's why they were not welcomed by Turkish, Kurdish and Tartar bands. A gang, led by the chief Shamil and a Turkish officer from Sivas (Sebastia), fired at the American auto caravan on September 28, 1919, near Koghb and kept the travelers as prisoners (document 12). Supported by the Armenian regular detachment, composed of volunteers from Bitlis (Baghesh), Harbord changed his language of negotiations from Turkish into Russian and managed to free his team-mates.<sup>15</sup> Koghb was the town of

<sup>10</sup> NAA, 200/1/557, vol. I, pt.2/394-408; fund k.1021/2/1005/1-10.

<sup>11</sup> In detail: R.Hovannisian. *Armenia on the Road to Independence 1918*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, Berkeley University Press, 1967, pp.189, 304: Ավետիսյան Հ.Ա., Հայկական հարցը 1918 թվականին, Երևան, 1997, էջ 285: Մախմուրյան Գ., Հայաստանի Հանրապետության անկախությունը Հայոց Ազգային խորհրդի նիստերի արձանագրություններում. - "Պատմաբանասիրական հանդես" (ՊԲՀ), Երևան, 2014, № 1, էջ 216.

<sup>12</sup> According to Strabo, "Media is divided into two parts. One part of it is called Greater Media, of which the metropolis is Ecbatana... The other part is Atropatene Media, which got its name from the commander Atropates, who prevented also this country, which was a part of Greater Media, from becoming subject to the Macedonians. Furthermore, after he was proclaimed king, he organized this country into a separate state by itself, and his succession of descendants is preserved to this day, and his successors have contracted marriages with the kings of the Armenians and Syrians and, in later times, with the kings of the Parthians" (Strabo. ed. H. L. Jones, *The Geography of Strabo*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London, 1924, 11.13.1).

<sup>13</sup> M. L. Chaumont, *Atropates*, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1989, pp.17-18, originally publ. 1987 <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/atropates-atrpat-lit>

<sup>14</sup> Galichian R., *The Invention of History*. London -Yerevan, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2010, pp. 6-7; Danielyan E., *Turkish-Azerbaijani Falsifications of the Armenian Toponyms as an Indication of the Genocidal Policy*. "Journal of Armenian Studies," Yerevan, 2013, № 1, p.161.

<sup>15</sup> See in detail: Խաչատրեան Յ., Ամերիկեան գինուորական առաքելությունը դէպի Հայաստան, "Հայրենիք" ամսագիր, Պոսթըն, 1941 յունուար, թիւ 3 (219), էջ 135-138:

four thousand Armenian dwellers, situated only 90 km from Erevan and constituted a part of its Province. It was famous for salt-mines, fruit gardens, pretty buildings, with the 5<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Eznik and remnants of the medieval city. That's why the combined attack by Turkish, Kurdish and Tartar brigands was a message - Americans should not reach this place without problems. Moreover, Harbord had reported that Koghb itself was seized and destroyed to ashes with inhabitants killed, expelled and women held captives by those brigands only ten days ago.

Relating to Nakhijevan, General Harbord had confessed in his final reports of October 6, 1919 from Tiflis, a criminal and anti-Armistice cooperation of Turkish officers, led there by Colonel Halil bey<sup>16</sup>, with Tartar bands in this district and in Sharur. As far as British Command<sup>17</sup>, Harbord and the Allied Commissioner Haskell readily recognized the Armenian region of Nakhijevan under sovereignty of the Armenian Republic and within its borders, Turko-Tartar forces strived to depopulate this district of its native dwellers with the aim to construct "an all-Moslem" railroad towards Turkey (document 13, § 2). W. Haskell had appointed an Allied Governor to Nakhijevan, an American, and insisted on bilateral convention to establish this area as a neutral one. Instead of a contract, official Baku had acceded not to resist and adopt this project, approved in these hard conditions by the Armenian Government and Harbord himself (document 14)<sup>18</sup>. As a general approach, the Harbord Mission and American delegation to the Peace Conference had preferred to settle the Nakhijevan controversy in Paris.

At the same time the head of the Mission manifested unacceptable simple-mindedness and told his Armenian counterparts they were not in actual danger in the Ottoman Empire or in the Transcaucasia, except a few, aforementioned districts. However, his Lieutenant Harutiun Khachadoorian (Khachaturian) reminded in a memorandum on Armenians' conditions in Turkey as none of them ventured to talk in the presence of Turkish officials (document 15). One young men, who had tried to get in

<sup>16</sup> See a report by A.Khatisian of August 22, 1919: NAA, 200/1/370/2. This Halil bey was assigned to Nakhijevan with 30 Turkish officers, whose number grew up to 2.000; and he operated there in 1919-1920. Their activity was described in memoranda by the U.S. Diplomats H.Doolittle and B.Moore from Tiflis and in the report by Haskell for the Secretary of State R.Lansing. Colonel Halil openly called Wilson an ass and threatened the U.S. officers with massacres (Армения в документах Государственного департамента США 1917-1920 гг. Ереван, Ин-т истории НАН Армении, 2012, с.169, 355-356, 384). Besides, Halil bey bore a sinister name of his senior associate Halil pasha Kut, who passed Nakhijevan in September, operated in Karabagh and led an important role at Baku in 1919-1920. So, Halil bey waged both real and propaganda warfare in Nakhijevan, where he reminded of his name-sake, a Commander of the 6<sup>th</sup> Ottoman Army and one of the key-figures in the Special Organization, founded for the genocidal annihilation of Armenians. Halil pasha Kut was guilty of killings in Alexandropol in May, 1918, of 30,000 souls in September of the same year in Baku; then of burning Shushi on March 23-26, 1920. Besides, we know their precursor, Halil pasha, who invaded south-eastern Armenia in the direction of the Atrpatakan region in 1618 and drove 30,000 Armenian peasants into Van and Amid as captives (Հայ ժողովրդի պատմություն, Երևան, Հայաստանի ԳԱ, 1972, հատ. IV, էջ 105).

<sup>17</sup> NAA, 200/1/92, pt.4/235 rev.; file 175, pt.3/297; file 212/194 printed in: Նախիջևան-Շարուրը 1918-1921 թթ., - Փաստաթղթեր և նյութեր, "Բանբեր Հայաստանի արխիվների", Երևան, 1993, № 1-2, էջ 102-104; 200/1/427, pt.1/204 rev.; 206/1/364/74; f. k.1021/2/1012/3; file 1021/6; and many others.

<sup>18</sup> NAA, 200/1/357, pt.4/315; file 427, pt.1/210-210 rev.

contact, had been interrogated by police. The other ACRNE employee<sup>19</sup> had informed H. Khachaturian in Malatia, that Armenians were openly threatened by armed Kemalists. Then, one of two main sources imparted in the presence of Turkish officials at Andreas<sup>20</sup>, orphans and young girls still suffered in local harems. He had also conveyed that it was almost impossible to return property of their fellow countrymen.

The U.S. politicians or strategists had usually esteemed political independence as a mainstream and remedy for inflicted nations. Besides, at the end of the mission, American specialists were inclined to recommend one common mandate over an area, including the European part of Turkey, Anatolia (Asia Minor), Western and Eastern Armenia with the whole Transcaucasia. Not a single member of the Mission seemed to be afraid of such extension, large investments or of numerous military contingents to be deployed. So, an expert on transport and communications W.B.Poland believed it was the sole way to save Armenian people (document 16). Otherwise they were exposed to the risk of new massacres and even to complete annihilation in the Western part of the Homeland, including Cilicia.

When in Erevan, General Harbord urged the Prime Minister to strengthen the statehood of the Republic and to conclude a peace with the Kemalist government<sup>21</sup>. A.Khatisian testified that "General J.Harbord advised to commence these negotiations. We had not followed this advise, since we believed that our problem would be settled in Paris. However, if we even entered these negotiations, we would not probably get any practical and desirable results"<sup>22</sup>. Thus, the head of the Government of the Republic of Armenia did reject the American suggestion to negotiate and sign a separate treaty with Turks. The Prime Minister had also correctly deducted, that the U.S. sought a single mandate for a vast area from Asia Minor, Western Armenia to Eastern Armenia and other republics of Transcaucasia with different national units, amalgamated under a common patronage (document 13, § 5). A. Khatisian stressed that the USA were especially interested in the railway communication, stretched from Erevan to Cilicia. Such a network would make them less vulnerable against any possible blockade of the Straits.<sup>23</sup>

In his turn, when Harbord had visited Tiflis and Baku on October 2 and 4, he particularly noted that Azerbaijan was least prepared of the three republics for political independence and considerably overestimated its own political significance or ability for regional leadership. Harbord's intention to separate the political efficacy of Azerbaijan

<sup>19</sup> There were doctor Khosrov Hekimian, employed by American Committee for Relief in the Near East, and doctor Levon Sewney. See: US NA, RG 256, Records of the American commission to negotiate peace, class 184.021/document 96, M820 General records of the American commission to negotiate peace, 1918-1931, American delegation, Field mission of the American delegation, Harbord military mission to Armenia, Reel 230, vol.204, NAA, MR 2.

<sup>20</sup> This person was K. Surmahan or A.Julphayan.

<sup>21</sup> See: Խաչատրեան Յ.Յ., նշվ.աշխ., 1941 յոնուար, թիւ 3 (219), էջ 140:

<sup>22</sup> Խատիսեան Ա., Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան ծագումն ու զարգացումը, Բ հրատ. Պեյրուք, Համագգային, 1968, էջ 191-192:

<sup>23</sup> Նույն տեղում, էջ 191:

from the oil factor is quite remarkable. The American military mission collected on the long road 53 volumes of memoranda and reports. These massive archives were gathered from the US diplomats and missionaries at the spot by the members of mission themselves, as also from Armenian Government and Kemalist leaders. Reports and essays by the officers of the Harbord Mission bear imprint of their time and conditions, which had prevailed at the Republic of Armenia.

We think it is important to include in the collection itinerary of the trip, as also a number of memoranda about meetings and discussions, held by the American travellers during their voyage. However, we do not involve in this publication the final Report of the mission prepared for the U.S. President and Congress and entitled, as "Conditions in the Near East," because every book on the Republic of Armenia and Harbord's mission bears vast citations from this document.<sup>24</sup> The other papers are less employed. They are so picturesque and full in content, that we have not much to comment on. It may be added, that the final Report by the Harbord's mission, cabled to R.Lansing on October 16, 1919, and handed to American delegation at Paris on October 25, did not get much publicity and was kept out of the reach of Congress for half a year, till April 3, 1920. So the Senators had every reason to become suspicious if the conclusion was favourable for mandate. At the final end, they evaluated the whole project as too expensive and hardly feasible.

To be correct, the whole mission had been managed to gain (or to lose) time, because neither Americans, nor Europeans needed any supplemental information on the subject. Such a delay was not perceived by Armenian leaders as a necessity to look for more potent alternatives. Here we present a number of first-hand accounts, prepared by a group of experts, who ranked from two Brigadier Generals, Frank R.McCoy and George Van Horn Moseley to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant H. Khachadoorian.

Their essays are kept in the U.S. National Archives at Washington (following: US NA), collection M820 General records of the American commission to negotiate peace, 1918-1931, American delegation, Field mission of the American delegation, Harbord military mission to Armenia. Microfilm publications, National Archives and Records Service, General Service Administration, 1970, reel 230, vol. 204, and reel 232, together with National Archives of Armenia at Yerevan (following: NAA), collection of microfilms reels 2 and 4 (following: MR). We represent below a number of these files.

### *Document 1*

Telegram from the U.S. Acting Secretary of State F.Polk - to the honorary chairman of the American committee for the independence of Armenia Ch. E. Hughes (New York)  
Washington, July 12, 1919

<sup>24</sup> See: Hovannisian R., *The Republic of Armenia*, in 4 vols., vol. II *From Versailles to London, 1919-1920*. Berkeley & Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1982, pp.356-365; "Starving Armenians:" *America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915*. Cambridge & NY, Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 271-273; Ованнисян Р., *Международные отношения Республики Армения 1918-1920 гг.* Ереван, Тигран Мец, 2007, с.246-254; *Армения в документах Государственного департамента*, с. 305-336.

US NA, Record Group 59 General Records of the Department of State, class 860J.01/document 13 (following: RG); from T1192, Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Armenia, 1910-1929, Wash., Microfilm publications, National Archives and Records Service, General Service Administration, 1975; Reel 1, kept in: NAA, MR 49.

...The Department has received through the American Peace Mission copy of a telegram which Messrs. Hoover and Henry Morgenthau sent to the President, the substance of which, at the suggestion of the Mission, is transmitted below for the information of yourself and the above named members of your Committee<sup>25</sup>. Messrs. Hoover and Morgenthau state that after being acquainted with General Harbord's views and after they had discussed the matter with the Mission, they concluded that it was advisable to separate the temporary measures necessary to strengthen relief and administration in Armenia, from problems that are involved in the repatriation of Armenian refugees and the expulsion of the present trespassers, as well as the permanent pacification of the territory. Therefore Messrs. Hoover and Morgenthau have recommended that Colonel William N. Haskell, now in charge of relief measures in Roumania, be appointed a temporary Commissioner, as they had proposed to the Commission and which proposal was, in principle, accepted by the heads of State, and they trusted that the Department of War would not recall the Colonel. They state that the broader question of repatriation, etc., requires an examination as regards the force and the measures which would be necessary in order to cope successfully with the problem, and will require congressional action granting sufficient forces as well as funds. Messrs. Hoover and Morgenthau therefore recommend that a Mission be at once sent to Armenia headed by General Harbord, the latter to choose his own assistants, to investigate this question as well as the general economic and political problems which are involved in setting up the new Armenian State. Messrs. Hoover and Morgenthau state that, in their own minds, such investigation is necessary as a basis of determination of policy even before the repatriation of refugees can be begun. I shall be pleased to see that any reply you may desire to send, shall receive proper course. ...

#### *Document 2*

Telegram from the second assistant of the U.S. Secretary of State Allvey A. Addee – to the American mission at Paris (Paris)

Washington, July 31, 1919 (received on August 1)

US NA, RG 59, 860J.01/20; T1192, Reel 1, NAA, MR 49; published in Russian in: Армения в документах Государственного департамента США 1917-1920 гг., с.176

...President approves of Hoover, Morgenthau recommendation that a Mission of Investigation headed by General Harbord be sent to Armenia.

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<sup>25</sup> Root E., Lodge H.C., Williams J.Sh., Smith A.E., Penfield J.W., Eliot Ch.W., Gerard G.W. were the members.

*Document 3*

Letter from the heads of the delegation of the United Armenia, by A.Aharonian and Boghos Nubar - to the chairman of the Paris Peace conference G. Clemenceau, copy to chief of the American military mission to Armenia Major General J. Harbord (Paris)

Paris, August 6, 1919

US NA, RG 256 Records of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace, class 184.021/document 118, M820, Reel 230, vol.204, NAA, MR 2.

...We have the honor to bring to your knowledge, in connection with a dispatch we have just received from Mr. A.Khatisian, Chairman pro tem of the Council [of Ministers] of the Armenian Republic, the alarming news that a vast Turco-Tartar movement has been organized in the Arax valley, against the Armenian Republic. At the head of this movement is Colonel Kiazim bey and many Turkish officers Mr. A. Khatisian notes, among other things:

This movement is purely political and is conducted by Azerbaijan and Turkey; we are in possession of numerous documents indicating that everything was prepared by Azerbaijan, which has just received three thousand shahsevens (Persian tribe)<sup>26</sup> to assist. There remains no an Allied officer in Armenia. All our efforts made to the British Command for the sending of troops remain without result.

Insist that the Conference immediately dispatch English detachments to Armenia. Our situation is extremely critical. The Allies should at least aid us militar[il]y by sending us munitions. ...From another source we learn that Enver pasha and several of his officers are supposed to be in Transcaucasia, and that even before these events the intelligence department of the General Staff of the Armenian army was able to incontestably establish that, units of the regular Turkish army were located in the regions of Olty<sup>27</sup> and Sarikamish. The presence in the Caucasus of Turkish officers and

<sup>26</sup> According to L.Khanlarian (see: Аракел Даврижеци. Книга историй. Пер.Л.А.Ханларян. М., Наука, 1973, с.589 прил.) and R.Tapper (Frontier Nomads of Iran: a Political and Social History of the Shahsevan. Cambridge, NY, Melbourne, Cambridge University press, 1997, pp.53-55, 57, 67) *shahsevens* were more shah's striking force or his reserve militia, than a tribal unity. Formed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, this confederacy preserved its mixture in 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries, too. Emerged from Qizilbashs (with Talesh, Kurdish, Circassian, Turkoman, Avshar elements) shahsevens were a religious and military brotherhood, especially devoted to Shiism and Persian Shahs. The Qizilbashs had been sinister infamous for devastating Armenia, including Van-Vasporakan, Kars, Kaghzvan, Yerevan (June of 1606, 1636) and Nakhijevan in 1603-1629 and later (see: Аракел Даврижеци, с. 54, 57-65, 70-71; Հայ ժողովրդի պատմություն, հատ.IV, էջ 97-99). As Evlya Çelebi had testified, in 1647 at Baku "a frontier fortress opposed to Russia was garrisoned with excellent troops called Shahseven" (Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa in the Seventeenth Century. Transl.by R.J.von Hammer. Lnd., Oriental Translation Fund, 1850, vol.II, p.162).

<sup>27</sup> Olty (Voghtik, Vokaghe) is located in the north-west of the Armenian Highland. This fortress was built in the Armenian region of Tayk (the 14<sup>th</sup> Province of Great Armenia) and in ancient and medieval times defended it. Tayk was the native land of the mighty Armenian princely family Mamikonians, who were hereditary Commanders-in-Chief of the Armenian national Army and brought forth the Armenian Catholicos Nerses III the Builder, as well. Tayk consequently belonged to the Armenian Mamikonian-Tornikian and Bagratuni families. (See: Xenophon. Anabasis. Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1998, IV, 4:18; 7:1-2, 5, 13-14; V, 5:16; Փալստոսի Բիւզանդացոյ

organized forces constitute flagrant violation of the Armistice Conditions. ...

On the other side of the frontier also the 12<sup>th</sup> Turkish Division is concentrated in the region of Khorasan-Zivin, the General Staff being located at Khorasan. Still another division is at Sgherd. Turkish commissaries actively propagate anti-Armenia sentiments among the Tartaro-Kurd populations throughout all Transcaucasia.

Encouraged by the retreat of the English troops, the agitators, expecting a general attack by the Turkish forces, are trying to establish relations with the Russian Bolshevists. ...

The Young Turks who... have now recovered... are attempting a bold stroke, to hinder the possibility of creating an independent Armenia. ...

The probable retreat of the British troops, entirely contrary to our hopes, would be fatal to us; but if this resolution is final, it would at least be desirable to give the Armenians some means of defense, ...by furnishing them with arms, munitions and supplies. ...

#### *Document 4*

Telegram from the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army General Peyton C. March – to the Commander-in-chief of the American expeditionary forces in Europe General J. Pershing (Paris)

Washington, August 8, 1919

US NA, RG 59, 860J.01/39/Encl.; T1192, Reel 1, NAA, MR 49

...The President has approved mission of investigation headed by General J. Harbord to be sent to Armenia. Issue orders to General J. Harbord to consult with the American Mission in Paris and permit him to choose such personnel as he may see fit provided they can be detailed from the American Expeditionary Force, with motor cars and office supplies. The size of the party to accompany General J. Harbord is understood to be about 14 officers and civilians, 16 chauffeurs, clerks and orderlies, and 4 motor cars.

#### *Document 5*

Communication by special correspondent of "The New York Herald" Carlisle MacDonald - The U.S. Mission for Caucasus, British appeal for help. General J. Harbord and Staff sent by President to investigate situation.

New York, August 8, 1919

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Պատմություն Հայոց, Երևան, 1987, էջ 200; Ղազար Փարպեցի, Պատմություն Հայոց, Երևան, 1982, էջ 352-354, 360, 266; Հ.Մանանդյան, Երկեր, Երևան, 1977, հ.Ա, էջ 73, 121-122; Դանիելյան Է.Լ., Տարոնի և Սասունի Մամիկոնյաններ-Թոռնիկյանները (XI-XII դդ.). – ՊԲՀ, 1979, № 2, էջ 146-147, 151; Հակոբյան Թ.Խ., Մելիք-Բախչյան Ստ.Տ., Բարսեղյան Հ.Խ., Հայաստանի եվ հարակից շրջանների տեղանունների բառարան, Երևան, ԵՊՀ, 2001, հ. 5, էջ 462-463). After the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878 Olty constituted a part of the Kars Oblast (Region) and became an administrative centre of the same name county. On April 19, 1919, it had been recognized as a legal part of the Kars Military Governorship of the Republic of Armenia, and was completely liberated from the Turkish forces by July 4 of the same year (NAA, f.k.1021/2/962/116; 200/1/92, pt.5/347; file 576, pt.1/174, 178-178 rev.).

“The New York Herald,” NY, 8.08.1919, p.2

President Wilson has accepted the recommendation of Herbert C. Hoover to send Major General James G. Harbord with staff of military, financial, political and railroad experts to the Caucasus to make a complete report on the situation there. This step follows an appeal to the United States by General G. Bridges,<sup>28</sup> commander of the British army in the Caucasus, to send a force of 80,000 men to police the area and protect the Armenians.

General G. Bridges arrived in Paris last night and today discussed the situation with allied officials. He said the seriousness of the situation in the Caucasus cannot be exaggerated and that a general conflagration will occur among the Turks, Persians, Georgians and Azerbaijan's the moment the British forces are withdrawn.

These nationalities, which comprise four differing republics, are planning to attack Armenia. The British government has held two divisions in this territory for the past eight months in an endeavor to maintain order there. It was announced by the British government they would withdraw these forces by June 1 last, but at Mr. Hoover's earnest request Great Britain agreed to keep them until August 15.

The British government now considers it the duty of the United States to step into the breach of the impending crisis in the Caucasus, since America is least exhausted from the war, and police the country.

The assumption that the United States will at least accept the mandate for Armenia probably prompts this attitude, but I was informed in official American circles in Paris that the United States will never agree to send men to the Caucasus.

The American relief administration practically has governed Armenia during the past few months through Colonel William N. Haskell, who was appointed High Commissioner for that country in behalf of all the allied governments.

The Allies now are exerting great pressure to have the United States take over Armenia and send a large force there to maintain peace among the belligerent tribes. This insistent pressure probably explains why General Harbord is being sent to the Caucasus. He will leave here about August 15. He is regarded as one of the soundest thinkers in the United States Army and his findings, it is believed, will carry much weight with the administration, whose confidence he is thought to have. He is now selecting his staff already obtained the service of W.B. Poland, Captain Frank McKnight and Major H.W. Clark, of Mr. Hoover's organization. Colonel Haskell will co-operate with General Harbord whose report on the situation is expected about September 15.

Some persons here see in the sending of General Harbord to the Caucasus the first concrete indication that the United States finally will take the Armenian mandate.

The British troops will be withdrawn from the Caucasus on August 15. There is no

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<sup>28</sup> In 1918 Lieutenant General George Tom Molesworth Bridges had been a chief of the British mission at the USA. As we have already mentioned, in 1919 he led the British mission to Allied Armies of Orient, quartered in Constantinople.

provision for keeping order there in the interim, the Italians having decided not to undertake the occupation of the Caucasus. Meantime the British are sure there will be trouble between the tribes mentioned that may lead to a general war in that region.

#### Document 6

Strictly confidential letter from the U.S. Secretary of State R.Lansing - to the chairman of the of the American committee for the independence of Armenia James W.Gerard (New York)

Washington, August 21, 1919

NAA, fund 200, register 1, file 351, folios 23-24

...I beg to state that the Armenian situation continues to receive the most careful attention of the President and of the Department.

The Department has taken up the matter with the British Government and is in constant touch with the American Mission in Paris and the Embassy in London. It trusts that General Harbord and his party, who are expected shortly to proceed to the Near East on an American vessel, will, besides accomplishing the purposes of their mission, have a beneficent moral effect. Moreover the Department has taken steps with a view to giving a serious warning to the Turkish authorities.

But, as your Committee is already aware, reports received on the subject indicate the gravity of the situation, and it is deemed desirable that friend of Armenia should know that, in the opinion of the Allied military experts familiar with conditions in those regions, it is only through an Allied or American military force that adequate and effective protection can be extended to Armenia. The above is only for the confidential information of the members of your Committee. ...

#### Document 7

Memorandum by Chief of Staff of the American mission to Armenia, Brigadier General F.R.McCoy – for the members of the Mission

on board U.S.S. "Martha Washington," August 26, 1919

US NA, RG 256, 184.021/140/Encl.3, M820, Reel 230, vol.204, NAA, MR 2



Brigadier General Frank Ross McCoy

...3. Group covering the Armenian Government, which has been assigned Colonel J. Brinton for study, will be designated № 1; Group 2 covering Population and maintenance of population (Colonel J.P.Jackson); Group 3, Armenian Army, the military problem of a mandatory, constabulary (General G.Moseley); Group 4 Transportation, communications (Mr.W.B.Poland).



Brigadier General George Van Horn Moseley

*Document 8*

Letter by Chief of Staff of the American mission to Armenia, Brigadier General F.R.McCoy – for the members of the Mission

on board U.S.S. "Martha Washington," August 30, 1919

US NA, RG 256, 184.021/140/Encl.8, M820, Reel 230, vol.204, NAA, MR 2

...It is desirable where practicable for each member in preparing his report to marshal his facts generally as follows: ...

2. The whole area will be divided into five areas in order from west to east, and this general order should be followed when necessary for more particular and detailed treatment.

1. Turkey in Europe, including Constantinople.

2. Anatolia. All Asia Minor to the west of the Anti-Taurus Range and a line extending north to Cape Yasun<sup>29</sup>.

3. Armenia. Area included in boundaries tentatively set forth on Ethnological map by Peace conference.

4. Georgia. Transcaucasia as claimed by the Georgian Republic except where it interferes with the boundaries of 3.

5. Azerbaijan. Transcaucasia as claimed by the Azerbaijan Republic except where it interferes with the boundaries of 3 and 4.

Note: For purposes of discussion and to have all members of the Mission uniform in their major geographical terms throughout the report, please when using the above sub-division, use them in the sense indicated unless specific exception is made.

*Document 9*

Confidential telegram from the U.S. Commissioner G.B.Ravndal and High Commissioner at Constantinople Rear Admiral M.Bristol – to the Secretary of State R.Lansing (Washington)

Constantinople, September 8, 1919 (received on September 9)

US NA, RG 59, 860J.01/72; T1192, Reel 1, NAA, MR 49

...I went to the Anatolian<sup>30</sup> Railroad station yesterday morning to bid goodbye to General Harbord and his Mission who departed for Mardin from which place they will proceed by motor car to Diarbekir<sup>31</sup> and Sivas<sup>32</sup> and Erzerum<sup>33</sup> and Kars and Erevan and Tiflis. They expect to be in Sivas September 24<sup>th</sup>. If the roads are very bad the party may go out via Samsun and take boat to Trebizond and then enter the interior again via Erzerum. At my suggestion Hussein Bey, Professor of Turkish at Robert College, was taken along as interpreter. He will render valuable service in the interior. Major [Hayg]

<sup>29</sup> I. e. Cape Jason.

<sup>30</sup> This railroad crosses Asia Minor.

<sup>31</sup> Amid.

<sup>32</sup> Sebastia.

<sup>33</sup> Karin.

Shekerjian, an American officer of Armenian [stock], also went along. He has travelled quite extensively in Transcaucasia within recent months. I have placed [Hagop Gabriel] Keropian of my staff at the disposal of United States Trade Commissioner [Eliot Grinnell] Mears who has been attached to the Harbord Commission, and will join the latter in Tiflis.

#### *Document 10*

Memorandum by Chief of the Geographical Section at Military Intelligence, US Army, Major Lawrence Martin - for the Chief of Staff of the American military mission to Armenia Brigadier General F.R. McCoy

Paris, September 11, 1919

US NA, RG 256, 184.021/141, M820, Reel 230, vol.204; NAA, MR 2

...1. I submit for your consideration a tentative draft of a letter of instruction to General Harbord, from the American commission to negotiate peace, as follows:

Sir: In behalf of the American Commissioners I inform you that you have been designated by the Chairman as Chief of a Mission to Armenia. You will visit Constantinople, Batum, Tiflis, Trebizond, Smyrna, Alexandretta, Athens, and such other cities of Turkish Armenia<sup>34</sup> and Russian Transcaucasia as you see fit in order to study Armenia, its relations to Georgia, Azerbaijan, Persia, Turkey, Syria, Mesopotamia, Greece and adjacent countries. You will report specifically on:

(a) Measures necessary to prevent massacre of Armenians following the withdrawal of British and other troops;

(b) Military, geographical, administrative, economic, and other features, in view of a possible American mandate in Armenia;

(c) Together with such other matters as you think necessary.

The field work should be completed during 6 weeks to 2 months absence from Paris.

#### *Document 11*

Itinerary of the land expedition of the American military mission to Armenia

Batum, September 27 - October 8, 1919

US NA, RG 256, 184.021/323, M820, Reel 232, NAA, MR 4; published in: Армения в документах Государственного департамента США 1917-1920 гг., с. 268-279

September 27, 1919: Left camp at 7-45 A.M., and arrived at Sarikamish about 9-00 A.M., where reception was given to Mission and members there took special train to Kars. The cars were sent on ahead to Kars, arriving there shortly before noon. At Sarikamish there were several arches placed across the road bearing the words "You are welcome." At this city there were many well built buildings, constructed principally of stone. There was also a very fine Russian church.

<sup>34</sup> Western Armenia.

Party arrived at Kars at 1-30 P.M., being met at the station by many local notables. Upon the station platform where General Harbord had to walk in order to reach the car were spread many beautiful rugs. About the platform were gathered many school children in costume and a guard of honor of mounted Armenian troops. As General J. Harbord descended the steps these children strewed small branches of shrubs and trees in his path and all shouted and cheered. The station and buildings surrounding it were well constructed of stone and had been recently painted. The town itself was mainly ruins and the condition of the inhabitants is well understood when it is considered that 28,000 of a population of a little over 30,000 are being fed by the American relief Committee.

From the train the party was conducted to the commander's house where a banquet was served which was a collation of fine viands greatly in contrast with the impoverished condition of the city. At the banquet many speeches were made and toasts proposed. Music was furnished by a local band and the principal pieces rendered were Russian.

After the banquet the party visited several of the orphanages and home for women refugees, and then started out on the road again, being conducted to the outskirts of the city by the local commander and staff.

Kars was the old Russian stronghold<sup>35</sup> and has great natural defenses as well as many forts on every side. There are ruins of an old fortress on a hill high above the city dating from the 9<sup>th</sup> century. During the visit of General Harbord several salutes were fired.

Mission left the city about 5-00 P.M. en route to Erevan. Not many miles out, a terrific thunderstorm which had been threatening for some hours, broke and the rain fell in torrents. The route was through the mountains and there were many curves which made driving dangerous. General Harbord's machine became disabled and had to be towed for many miles through the mountains to the camp for the night. During the run the lights of General G. Moseley's limousine gave out temporarily and a sudden stop was. This happened to be in the vicinity of a band of Kurds encamped by the roadside, who lost no time in firing four shots, evidently with the intent of frightening away any foes who might be lurking about their camp.

We arrived at Kaghzvan at 11-00 P.M. and were conducted to the headquarters of the Armenian troops at that place where party was served light supper and accommodated for the night.

<sup>35</sup> Armenian city-castle Kars, capital of the Armenian Kars-Vanand kingdom (963-1065) in ancient Ayrarat province, had been conquered by the Russian Empire in 1878 and the Kars Oblast (Region) had been formed immediately on the south-eastern border of the Russian Empire. It consisted of four counties Kars, Ardahan, Olty and Kaghzvan, and functioned till the Turkish occupation of April 25, 1918. On April 19, 1919, the whole Kars Region was transformed into the Military Governorship of the Republic of Armenia. This military-administrative unit was reorganized as *Vanand Province* in May, 1920, and exercised its administrative authority till October 30, of the same year. See: NAA, 200/2/81/6-7; 200/2/93/1; f.k.1457/1/183/2; Hovannisian R., *The Republic of Armenia*, vol. I, p. 222; Поросян А.М., *Карсская область в составе России*. Ереван, Айастан, 1983, с.13; Գալղյան Գ.Ա., *Հայաստանը և Մեծ Տերությունները 1917-1923 թթ.*, Երևան, Գիտություն, 1999, էջ 328:

September 28, 1919: Left Kaghzvan at 9-30 A.M. after the General's car had been repaired. One of the other touring car was stripped of all baggage and sent back on the road to locate the Ford which had not arrived from Kars up to this time. About four miles out the limousine again broke down and after being towed a distance of several miles, General J. Harbord decided to go forward in one of the other cars, leaving the disabled machine to be repaired and to rejoin the other cars later in the day. Subsequently, however, General J. Harbord joined General G. Moseley in the latter's limousine.

About 30 miles further out this car and one of the touring cars passed the truck plugging along and had not gotten far beyond it when shots were heard. Without warning someone had opened fire from the neighboring hillside upon the truck. After firing about fifteen shots, the firing ceased as suddenly as it had commenced. The driver, upon discerning he was the object of attack, immediately stopped his truck. None of the bullets hit the car so he made preparations to start off again. At this time General J. Harbord, who had come back to investigate, reached the truck, ascertained that no damage had been done, and ordered the driver to proceed. For the time being, the truck took the lead. Several miles beyond a point was reached where a large bridge was out, necessitating fording the river at this place. While attempting to do this, one of the cars became stuck and some time was lost before it was gotten through. In the meantime, some friendly Kurds offered to guide the party around this place by making a detour along the river bed to a more favorable crossing; and both the truck and the General's car took this route. General G. Moseley wrote a note and gave it to these men to be given to any of the other cars when they reached this point, stating in it that the Kurds were friendly and would guide all the party by the best route to make the crossing. Motor trouble soon caused the truck to fall behind the other machines, which went ahead without any interception until they reached the river. ...There was a large bridge across the river at this point but the wooden flooring had been burned so that to cross it was impossible. Accordingly, camp was made on its banks and the arrival of the rest of the party awaited.

In passing the town Koghb<sup>36</sup> about 20 miles back from the camping place it was necessary to climb quite a long grade. When about half-way up the grade several score Tartars suddenly appeared and blocked the truck's progress, forming a cordon around it and raising their hands in signal to stop. This was promptly done. The roadway was then blocked with timber and stones to prevent any further progress and a guard placed over it. Driver and other men on the truck got off to answer inquiries which were made as to their nationality and reasons for being in this particular locality. Corporal Kopp, Russian interpreter, conversed with the tribesmen and told them they were Americans. The tribesmen insisted, however, that they were Armenians attempting to masquerade as Americans,<sup>37</sup> and stated that this subterfuge had been practiced upon them before, and they were not to be tricked that way again. They finally decided they would do

<sup>36</sup> Ancient Armenian town of Koghb was situated on the bank of the Arax's tributary Vardamarg. Koghb was famous with salt mines.

<sup>37</sup> Brigands, who captured several employees of the Harbord mission, hardly understood that ethnic Armenians in the U.S. military uniform were utterly rightful and eligible citizens of the United States.

nothing until the arrival of their principal chief. The chief arrived in the course of an hour accompanied by his elders. During this period more and more of the Tartars had collected in the vicinity until several hundred could be counted. The chief lost no time in interrogating the men, and after conversing with them seemed satisfied that they were not Armenians, for whom he expressed bitter hatred. He finally said, however, that he would hold the truck until the General returned or sent someone to investigate, and in the meantime would have the truck carefully guarded and be responsible for the safety of its contents. The men, he said, would be treated with every courtesy and as his guests. Later he decided to permit the truck to proceed and instructed the driver to get ready to start. At this time, word was received that an attack was about to begin so the men were placed under guard and hurried away up the hillside. They had not gone far, however, before the lights of an automobile were seen. This was one of the touring cars which contained Major H. Clark, Professor Husein Bey, Mr.W.B. Poland and Mr.W. Hiatt who had come back to investigate matters. This party was immediately ordered to dismount and were made prisoners, though every courtesy was shown them. The Chief finally decided to send some of his men to parley with General Harbord and the touring car was sent back with Professor Husein Bey as interpreter along with several of the Kurds. The others, the chief explained, would be held as hostages in the meantime.

The car containing Captain J.E. Boush and party who had gone in search of Ford finally located it at Kars where a broken spring had just been replaced. No time was lost in proceeding with it to Kaghzvan where the party had camped the night before. After stopping at this point long enough to get directions as to the route the other cars had taken, this party started off again about 10 or 12 miles out reached the General's car taking the lead. Before many miles, however, the rapid rate of speed of this car placed it in advance of the others which had to proceed slowly due to bad condition of Dodge truck which had two broken springs, about 10 miles separating the two parties. While paralleling the river a sharp turn was encountered. The General's driver slowed considerably here, and, as the roadway then ran straight ahead from some little distance, started to increase his speed. Just then the light of a campfire was seen to the left, shouts were heard, and all thought the camping place for the night had been reached. Instantly, however, it became apparent that the voices spoke in a foreign tongue, so the chauffeur was instructed to drive on. The shouting suddenly became louder and several signal whistles were heard. This was thought at first to be a crowd of Armenians cheering the party on. Suddenly, however, a fusillade of shots rang out and Captain D.Loring who was riding in the car shouted to the driver to speed up. The latter did this amid the sharp cracking of many rifles. This continued for a good mile when the car apparently got beyond range and firing ceased. The car continued at a high rate of speed narrowly escaping disaster several times. Suddenly, when about four or five miles from where the firing had commenced, another party of Kurds opened fire. Again the gauntlet was run, but not without a narrow escape, for, dashing around a sharp curve at an excessive rate of speed, the car came to a point where a ditch of considerable size crossed the roadway. There was nothing to do but to go on. The machine struck the ditch, lurched sickeningly, crashed into the bottom, throwing the

occupants against the roof of the car, suddenly righted itself and then sped on. Several miles further after crossing another deep gully the engine suddenly stopped and all got out to see what the trouble was. The light of a camp fire could be seen about a mile away, the barking of dogs and whistling was heard in its vicinity and another attack was feared. The driver made frantic efforts to start his engine but without result. In a few minutes, voices were heard at intervals, each time seeming nearer and nearer. Finally, footfalls were heard and then the dim silhouettes of a number of men could be seen approaching the machine. Captain G.Villaret then cried out and was answered by the coming Kurds. He laid aside his rifle and advanced unarmed toward them shouting all the while "Americanish" and "Americansky." The men came up to him, rifles lowered, saw he was not Armenian and then approached the machine. Discovering all its occupants were not Armenians and were apparently Americans, one of them drew a folded paper from his garments and handed it to Captain G. Villaret. This proved to be General G.Moseley's note and the bearer explained by gestures that he would guide the party, but that they must first go back and then turn off the main road. The engine was still stalled and the efforts of the chauffeur were apparently unavailing. At this time a chieftain appeared who seemed to doubt the nationality of the party and took pains to explain to them that if they did prove to be Armenians he would cut their throats. After much parleying and explaining on all sides he seemed satisfied and consented to let them go. Finally, after some anxious waiting engine started and with guides hanging all over the car it was brought around and made the detour in safety. During the melee it had been struck four times by bullets, but no one was injured. About eight miles further on the guides left the machine and it proceeded without further mishap until it was stopped at Koghb and took position along with the cars.

Captain J.E. Boush's car and the Dodge and Ford were making about 15 miles an hour while passing through a small village when the cries of many children were heard. Their cries could not be understood, and, not wishing to be delayed, the Captain ordered the chauffeur on the car in which he was riding to speed up. The car sped around a curve at about 25 miles an hour when another cry was heard. It was then perceived that the roadway was blocked. The car was stopped within 50 yards at a point not more than 15 feet from the blockade. No sooner did the car stop when about 15 shots were fired directly at it from close range from both sides and in front of the machine. Four bullets passed through the windshield, the chauffeur receiving a shower of glass particles of which entered one of his eyes. All the men immediately surrendered themselves and it was then founded that the party of bandits numbered between one and two hundreds, all armed with rifle, pistol, and knife, and ranging in ages from about twelve to forty five. Their intentions were to rob the party, take the automobiles and do way with the men, but fortunately their chieftain who had been about two miles away when the firing began, had heard it and hurried up to ascertain matters, would have none of it and finally beat some of his men over the head and shoulders before they finally consented not to molest the party. He was quite friendly and placed six of his men to act as guides on the cars and then let the party proceed. These men accompanied the party to a point within a mile of Koghb and then dropped back. The cars proceeded onward and at the point where the other machines were being held, they, too, fell into the hands of the Kurds.

By the time these last cars had come up, the touring car which had conveyed the party of Kurds on the General's camp, had returned and the Chief seemed satisfied to let the whole party go. At this point another group of Kurds appeared on the scene who were not of his tribe. His efforts to persuade them not to molest the party were unavailing, and he communicated to the party that his men had agreed not to molest anyone, but that he could not guarantee it was safe to proceed further during the night as these other elements would surely attack. It was finally decided to remain with the Kurds for the night and make an early start in the morning. Tea was made, the chief supplied a large quantity of roast lamb and the party made themselves as comfortable as they could for the night.

September 29, 1919: the party left the camp of Tartars at 6-20 A.M. accompanied by escort of Tartars<sup>38</sup>, including their Chief. About nine miles out from their camp these guards halted and told the party to go ahead alone, at the same time the Chief requested a conference with General Harbord. Upon arrival at place where the General



Bishop Mesrop Ter-Movsesian  
& Games Guthrie Harbord at Etchmiadzin

had spent the night, the party halted while he went back to parley as requested, Colonel H. Beewkes accompanying him. The General returned about 10 o'clock and the entire party headed for Erevan. There were Armenian soldiers to be seen as along the route. In all the towns and villages passed there were troops who



October 1, 1919  
Prime Minister A.Khatisian & General James G.Harbord at Erevan

We arrived at Etchmiadzin, the home of the Armenian Catholicos [Gevorg V] or

<sup>38</sup> These denominations "Tartars" were crossed out and substituted by terms "Kurdish" and "Kurds".

Patriarch, about 11-45 A.M. Here there was a reception and members were guests of the Catholicos at a splendid luncheon. The usual crowd greeted the party and many Armenian soldiers rendered usual courtesy. The townspeople had hung all their fine rugs over their doorways and had made various other attempts at decoration. After short stay, the Mission proceeded to Erevan, 12 miles distant, where they were met at the outskirts of the city by officials and notables. Here an arch of welcome had been erected and the floor of the bridge leading up to the city walls was covered with branches of trees. Inside the city the main street was lined with many troops and hundreds of orphans in costume. There was also a crowd of several thousand of the townspeople assembled to greet the visitors. Shortly after the arrival a banquet was tendered the party. Members of the Mission were accommodated at Colonel Haskell's local headquarters during their stay in the city.

September 30, 1919: At Erevan. Many visits paid and received. State banquet at which all officials of the Armenian Republic were present, was given in the evening. General Harbord met all American Relief Workers in the city.<sup>39</sup> General Moseley and Captain Villaret went on short side trip to Nakhijevan and will return tomorrow evening. A car set out to pick up General F.McCoy and Colonel E.Bowditch returned late without these officers, having been unable to proceed further than a few miles owing to terrible condition of road. Professor Hussein Bey and Captain Loring went on to Tiflis by train to make arrangements for the housing of the party while in Tiflis.

October 1, 1919: - At Erevan. Conferences and meetings occupied the entire day. In afternoon General J.Harbord had tea with the Prime Minister [A.Khatisian]. General McCoy and Colonel Bowditch returned about midnight as also General Moseley and Captain Villaret. Preparations made for early start for Tiflis in the morning, it being planned to make the trip in one day with the automobiles. Trucks and Ford were started out at 3-00 this afternoon. It is intended to meet the truck en route and gas up tanks of the cars inadequate to carry gasoline for the entire distance, nearly 200 miles.

Erevan is the capital of the Armenian Republic and is well situated in a raised portion of a broad and fertile valley. Its streets are wide and apparently well kept. Many poplar and other trees line the main thoroughfares lending them an attractive appearance. There were numerous shops in the city and quite an extensive bazaar, but there was a noticeable lack of purchasers. The stocks for the most part were scant and meager. Though there were many evidences of poverty to be seen, yet the place bore evidences of care and cleanliness. The main street was sprinkled by hand both morning and evening. The present population of Erevan is about 110,000. Its pre-war population was about 33,000, the enormous increase being due to the influx of refugees<sup>40</sup> seeking shelter and sustenance there. The altitude is 3,230 feet. The bulk of its population have always been Armenians, though there are also many Tartars.

<sup>39</sup> The noted meeting had been held with Major Dale F.McDonald and 15 employees of the Near East Relief, who resided in the Republic of Armenia.

<sup>40</sup> These refugees arrived from Western Armenia as a result of the Armenian Genocide.

October 2, 1919: Party left Erevan at 6-50 A.M. and headed for Tiflis. Good time was made as surface of road was quite good although it was necessary to slow down frequently in order to pass many ox carts which were bearing products to nearby markets. About 30 miles out cars gassed up at track which had broken down the night before, and then General Harbord pushed on, driving on through to Tiflis without a mishap, arriving there about 7-00 P.M. where usual welcome was accorded... Scenery was interesting all the way. The shores of Lake Sevan, situated in the mountains at an altitude of 6,315 feet and having an area of some 500 sq. miles, were skirted for several miles, after which a long climb took us to the summit where a rapid descent covering nine miles was encountered. This led into several valleys surrounded by well forested slopes. The leaves had begun to turn their autumn colors and the scene presented was a striking one. Several villages were located in these valleys and at several welcome was received. At Dilijan there were several arches of honor for the party and a luncheon had been prepared, but owing to the long run to be made, there was no stop at any place at route. Leaving Dilijan the roadway led through several canyons along the bed of a river which it was necessary to ford in several places. In this section of the country, the houses were better constructed and many of the people passed were Russians. The lowlands and higher slopes even though steep were well cultivated. Here, too, were many acres planted to potatoes which were being harvested in several places. The last forty miles of the run, it was impossible to utilize the main road due to its bad condition. Instead a dirt road paralleling the other was used. Several crossings of the Kura River were made both by bridge and ford. Members accommodated in various hotels and homes in the city.

October 3, 1919: Many courtesies received by members of the Mission. Conferences held with local representative Americans as well as with members of the Georgian Government. State banquet and lavish entertainment given in evening attended by many notables.

Tiflis was a welcome sight with its many fine buildings and European atmosphere after the trip through sparsely inhabited country. Here was evidence of prosperity on every hand, although that is generally attributable to the enormous plunder of goods taken after the Russian collapse. There were many well-paved streets and a number of street car lines. At the outskirts of the city was located a huge wireless tower said to have been erected by the Germans. On one side of the city were located extensive barracks where in former days the headquarters of two Army Corps of the Russian Army were located. The Kura River cuts the city in two and furnishes the water supply, the water, however, being but little used for drinking purposes. It is raised from the river which lies in a deep cut by means of many large wheels located along its banks. Large sections of the city are built upon the surrounding hillsides and here the streets are steep and narrow. There were many large stone buildings used for Governmental purposes and several handsome school buildings. The population which approximates 300,000, is of mixed character.

Late in afternoon both Cadillac touring cars which had been unable to make the run in one day, due to being directed on a different route than the one taken and then having to retrace the distance they had gone on their route, arrived.

At Tiflis. Conferences and visits occupied the day until about 4-00 when a party consisting of Generals Harbord, McCoy and Moseley and several staff officers and enlisted personnel left on special train for the run to Baku...



Major Haig Shekerjian

Late in evening Colonel J.P. Jackson, Major H. Shekerjian and Major L. Martin arrived from Erevan.

October 4, 1919: The party arrived at Baku about 11-30 A.M. The party consisting of officials of the Government and high military commanders extended welcome at station which was decorated in honor of their visit. The platform bore a covering of splendid rugs over which the party passed. Luncheon was served at the home of one of the residents. General Harbord had an extensive interview with the Prime Minister of the Republic. The party left Baku en route to Batum about 8-

00 P.M. on special train.

October 5, 1919: The party arrived early in afternoon at Tiflis and after final conferences boarded the train shortly before eight o'clock. The Station was well decorated and a crowd of notables were gathered there to bid farewell. A military band played the Georgian national anthem as the General crossed the platform. After inspecting the troops placed at the Station as a guard of honor, the General boarded his private car, said to have been one of the private cars of the late Czar and the train pulled out. Up to time of leaving the truck, Dodge, repair truck and one touring car had not reached Tiflis, and it was decided to wait at Batum.



Commandant of Erevan Arshavir Shahatuni &amp; Lieutenant Harutiun Khachadoorian

October 6, 1919: Arrived at Batum shortly before 8 o'clock in the morning. Party immediately boarded ship where breakfast was served. Shortly after, conference of members of Mission was held at which General Harbord outlined plans for the final report of the Mission and discussed other matters pertinent to the completion of the work of the Mission. In the evening a telegram was received stating that other machines had arrived in Tiflis and would arrive in the morning.

October 7, 1919: At 8 o'clock train arrived with the balance of personnel of the Mission and all haste was then made to make an early start on the return journey.

Colonel and Mrs. Haskell also arrived and will accompany the Mission as far as Constantinople. Several hundred Armenian and Russian refugees were also taken aboard and will be taken to Constantinople where they will disembark.

Anchor weighed at 10-30 A.M. and vessel headed along the coast for Trebizond which was reached at about 7 o'clock. Coast very picturesque there being heavy vegetation on the lower mountains at the water's edge and then as far back as one could see range after range of peaks, many of which bore traces of snow.

### *Document 12*

Telegram from the chief of American military mission to Armenia Major General J. Harbord

Batum, on board U.S.S. "Martha Washington," October 5, 1919  
US NA, RG 256, 184.021/305, M820, Reel 232, NAA, MR 4



...Quote for Associated Paris, date September 30. Erevan few miles from Mount Ararat Harbord mission Auto Caravan attacked, held prisoners for few hours Sunday night by mixed bands [of] Kurds, Tartars, Turks with Autos upshot [and] various officers, soldiers narrowly escaping death from dozens volleys riffles. Captain David Loring, Oregon, received slight head wound also Auto driver [Grady] Abernathy, Florida, slight eye wound from splintered glass windshield. Attack came while caravan proceeding from Kars to Erevan through valley river Araxes. Fortunately cars [of] Generals Harbord and G. Moseley had reached unmolested lane leading to Erevan before attack, otherwise this conjured attempt being made hold them for ransom. Original reason for attack appears to be bands who warring with Armenians doubted nationality [of] Americans. After Chiefs [of] bands assured themselves [that] caravan [was] Americans, they released Autos [and] returned most [of] property. Declared they did desire peace as well as other peoples but that only some outside power using strong hand capable doing so, that otherwise they [and] many others die of starvation this winter due unsettled conditions. What happened [to] mission caravan daily occurrence section with

raiding bands constantly destroying prosperous villages both Armenian [and] Moslem. Right where correspondent six autos detained was village named Koghb, until ten days ago was charming place [with] fine gardens pretty villas, good buildings, church, inhabited by Armenians, but which captured by Moslem bands, then wrecked with inhabitants outdriven or murdered, with women held captives. Mission proceeding Tiflis, Baku, Batum, Constantinople, however Harbord stated he unexpected further attacks.

### *Document 13*

Telegram from the chief of American military mission to Armenia Major General J.Harbord - to the head of American mission at Paris F.L.Polk (Paris)

also transmitted as telegram № 4658 by the U.S. High Commissioner at Constantinople Rear Admiral M.L.Bristol – to the Secretary of State R.Lansing (Washington)

Tiflis, October 6, 1919 and Constantinople, October 14, 1919

US NA, RG 59, 184.02/307, M820, Reel 232, NAA, MR 4; and 860J.01/116, T1192, Reel 1, NAA, MR 49

... § 1. Report arrival Batum after successful journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan. Mission travelled Baghdad Railway Constantinople, Mardin, with two days Adana and vicinity. By motor-car Mardin, Diarbekir, Kharberd, Malatia, Sivas, Erzerum, Kars, Erevan, Tiflis. By rail Tiflis to Baku and Batum. Also covered route parallel Turkish frontier Trebizond to Bayazet. Representative also visited scene hostilities between Azerbaijan and Armenia near Persian border. I have had long conferences [with] Ministers of Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and at Sivas had long conference [with] chiefs [of] Nationalist movement.<sup>41</sup>

§ 2. Purpose [of] Nationalist movement [is] to try to preserve integrity [of] Ottoman Empire under mandatory of whole, preferably by American Government. They are under great fear [of] territorial encroachments by great powers. We believe Turkish officials are carrying out terms of the Armistice and the army demobilized to skeleton. Find appalling loss of population in Turkey due to war and disease. Estimated not more than 20 per cent of men went to war have returned and absence of men 20 to 35 years very noticeable. Found survivors Armenian deportations slowly returning, expressing no fear for their safety. Turkish officials state the Armenian refugees in Trans-Caucasus, who fled before war or with Russian retreat, would be permitted in Turkey now if properly documented to prevent entrance with them of Russian Armenians whom Turkey believes [to be] revolutionary. We saw nothing on whole journey to indicate [that the] purpose [of] Turkey was to cross [the] frontier and massacre Armenians as anticipated

<sup>41</sup> On September 20, 1919, J.Harbord met in Sivas (Sebastia) with Mustafa Kemal, local Governor Reshid pasha, commander of the 12<sup>th</sup> Army Corps Colonel Salahaddin bey, ex-Minister of Marine Husein Rauf bey Orbay, future first Foreign Minister of Kemalists Bekir Sami Kunduh, ex-Ambassador at Washington Alfred Rustem bey de Bilinski, and many others. See: US NA, RG 256, 184.021/96, M820/230/vol.204, NAA, MR 2; Խաչատրեան Յ.Յ., նշվ. աշխ., 1940 դեկտեմբեր, թիվ 2 (218), էջ 75:

in cablegrams from Trans-Caucasus prior to our departure from Paris and no such iniquities reported by Armenian authorities. Believe Turkey has neither disposition nor ability to carry out such purpose and that present officials appreciate fatal defect of policy [of] former Government<sup>42</sup>.

...Some unorganized border war are along southern frontier [of] Russian Armenia, apparently result [of] old animosity between Kurds and Tartars and Armenians, unrestrained by weak Governments. Undoubtedly some former Turkish officers and soldiers, out of employment account demobilization, have sought service with forces [of] Azerbaijan. Latter, at nominal peace with Armenia, is prosecuting border operations near Persian frontier in vicinity [of] Nakhijevan and Sharur, in which small salient with Armenian villages separates two groups [of] Tartar population and across which Azerbaijan hopes to build an all-Moslem railroad into Turkey. These districts lie within temporary Armenian borders, as fixed by British and approved by W.Haskell. These minor operations in process temporary settlement through neutral zone proposed by W. Haskell, which I have supported in interviews with local Governments<sup>43</sup>. Pending action [of] Peace Conference, do not believe Armenians, either in Turkey or Trans-Caucasus, are in danger except in these local affairs.

§ 3. Actual attitude [of] Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia towards each other very discouraging for future peace [in] region, except under strong hand... Principal cause [of] friction is disputed boundaries. Greatest obstacle to tranquility is uncertainty as to whether a mandatory will be given for Trans-Caucasus and the fear that A.Denikin may come to the region.

§ 4. Great scarcity [of] food in Turkish as well as Russian Armenia<sup>44</sup>, but conditions are improving. Russian Armenia cannot become self-sustaining before Autumn [of] 1920. Haskell requires minimum 7,000 tons wheat flour or equivalent monthly for 10 months, to begin arriving Batum December 1<sup>st</sup>. Winter season will witness many deaths unless adequate food, medical supplies and clothing are received from outside sources. Railroads of Trans-Caucasus cannot be consolidated for rehabilitation and operation without foreign control. Foreign credit badly needed for purchase [of] farming implements, clothing, medicines, manufactured articles. Caucasus Branch, Near East Relief, rapidly reorganizing, expanding and increasing activities to meet conditions to administer any quantity relief provided. Unquestionably administration of Colonel W. Haskell has greatly improved conditions throughout Trans-Caucasus.

§ 5. This problem is one which includes inseparably Turkey, Armenia and

<sup>42</sup> We have already dealt with this fault conclusion in our preface. Besides, the last sentences of the document 13 confront the information of the documents 12, 15, 16, which clearly indicate continued genocidal actions of Turks and their Kurdish and Tartar accomplices.

<sup>43</sup> In the text, which had been edited by M.Bristol and sent from Constantinople on October 14, 1919, we did not detect any mention of Sharur and Nakhijevan, nor the Harbord's assertion, that he approved the neutral zone.

<sup>44</sup> Western and Eastern Armenia.

Transcaucasia because of inextricable mingling of races, religions and interests<sup>45</sup>. Whole this region is familiar with principles [of] self-determination and generally expresses faith in disinterested mandatory under League [of] Nations as only solution for desperate situation.

§ 6. Mission leaves Batum for Constantinople [on] October 7<sup>th</sup>, via Trebizond and Samsun, and will probably sail from there about October 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### *Document 14*

Telegram from the chief of American military mission to Armenia Major General J. Harbord - to the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan N. Usubbekov<sup>46</sup> (Baku)

Tiflis, October 6, 1919

US NA, RG 256, 184.021/309, M820, Reel 232, NAA, MR 4; published in: Армения в документах Государственного департамента США 1917-1920 гг., с. 260

...Just prior to my departure for Paris Colonel W. Haskell informed me of your agreement to establishment of a neutral zone in Nakhijevan District. Congratulate you on such a wise decision, which will make very favorable impression.

#### *Document 15*

Memorandum by the member of American military mission to Armenia Lieutenant Harutiun Khachadoorian "Armenians' conditions in Turkish Armenia" - to the chief of the mission Major General J. Harbord

Batum, on board U.S.S. "Martha Washington," October 8, 1919

US NA, RG 59, 184.02/324, M820, Reel 232, NAA, MR 4

1. In Malatia, September 18, no Armenian dared to talk to me while I was with the Turkish officials. The young Armenian who twice tried to see me without being observed was called by the chief of police in each case and cross examined why he should want to see me and what he was going to tell.

While in the market place, I talked to an Armenian (American citizen) employed by ACRNE. He informed me that the Armenians were openly threatened by the Malatia Turks who had been armed in the nationalistic Movement. When the Turkish officials heard American Mission coming, they suppressed the open threats.

2. In Andreas<sup>47</sup>, September 22, the Armenian representative, in presence of Turkish officials, told me that only in a few cases the Armenians received back their property. The process was very slow. All Armenian orphans and young girls were still kept in Turkish harems.

<sup>45</sup> When we compare this telegram with its Constantinople version, it is noteworthy, that tangle of races and interests was attributed by M. Bristol only to Armenia and Transcaucasia, without any mention of Turkey.

<sup>46</sup> The name of the Prime Minister N. Usubbekov was confused with that of Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijan Republic M. Jafarov, who had been entitled as a head of Government.

<sup>47</sup> Marked in the document as Su Shehri; by 1914 there were 6,000 Armenian population in it.

*Document 16*

Note on a mandatory to cover Asia Minor and Transcaucasia, by the member of the American Military Mission to Armenia W.B.Poland – for the chief of the Mission Major General J.Harbord (Constantinople)

Constantinople, board U.S.S. "Martha Washington," October 13, 1919  
US NA, RG 256, FW 184.021/329 FW, M820, Reel 232, NAA, MR 4

While the general instructions given to the members of the American Military Mission to Armenia were to consider conditions in the whole territory from Constantinople to the Caucasus, it was generally understood that we were to concern ourselves particularly with the possibilities of a mandatory over a territory somewhat loosely defined as Turkish Armenia<sup>48</sup>; and the more definite region of Russian<sup>49</sup> Armenia – the inspiration of the Mission being the protection of the remaining Armenians from national annihilation and to provide for them an opportunity to build up an Armenian State.

After our rapid, but extensive, trip over a large portion of this territory, interviews with its people of many different nationalities, classes and religious beliefs, I believe every member of the Mission has become convinced that the only practicable course is to extent such a mandatory over the entire territory, including Turkey in Europe, Anatolia<sup>50</sup>, Turkish Armenia<sup>51</sup> and Transcaucasia.

It is my belief that this is the only way in which the Armenian people can be saved. The conditions are such that an attempt at this time to carry out a mandatory over an Armenian territory having definite limits, without being in control of the boundary states would precipitate fierce border warfare on all sides, the immediate effect on the Armenians being that unofficial massacre of the relatively few remaining Armenians in Turkish Armenia<sup>52</sup> would be resumed to an extent which would endanger their complete extermination...

The division of the territory into even two mandatories would result with practical certainty in the failure of both.

It appears that the most satisfactory, if not the only nation, able to undertake such a work and fulfill these conditions, is the United States.

No enlightened state could accept such a responsibility without being prepared to remedy the defects due to the criminal inefficiency of the Turkish administration for generations past. Sanitary reforms must be initiated, schools established, railways and highways built, industries encouraged, and the great national debt amortized. To do this will require at least temporary advances of great amounts of money for many years to

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<sup>48</sup> Western Armenia.

<sup>49</sup> Eastern Armenia.

<sup>50</sup> Asia Minor.

<sup>51</sup> Western Armenia

<sup>52</sup> See notes 34, 44, 48.

come. An army must be provided - probably small, but with the possibility of its having to be greatly increased.

For the United States, it would mean being still more deeply involved in European affairs, a situation to which our people have a great antipathy; it would mean the jealousy and possible secret opposition of European Powers, and probably the opposition of the masses of the Turkish people, stirred up as they would be by disgruntled politicians and displaced office holders; it would mean the danger of reversal of policy by our unstable democracy; but it would mean also one of the greatest opportunities ever given to a nation, to remove a great danger to world peace; it would mean giving to a desperately suffering and distressed people good government, decency and the hope of happiness - and to the world at large the proof of our national willingness to make sacrifices for high ideals and the uplift of less fortunate people. The example of altruistic action by a free democracy may be of value to the civilized world in these days of unrest and Bolshevism.

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Thus we complete our selection of the Harbord Mission reports, though all its dispatches compile several dozens of volumes, not to remind its photos and films. We do believe that this first-hand sources are really useful for any research devoted to so intricate and dramatic period of Political History of the First Republic of Armenia.

[http://www.fundamentalarmenology.am/Article/9/164/THE-HARBORD-MISSION-REPORTS-ON-ARMENIA,-1919-IN-THE-U.S.-DEPARTMENT-OF-STATE-ARCHIVES-\(a-video\).html](http://www.fundamentalarmenology.am/Article/9/164/THE-HARBORD-MISSION-REPORTS-ON-ARMENIA,-1919-IN-THE-U.S.-DEPARTMENT-OF-STATE-ARCHIVES-(a-video).html)