IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI ACCORDS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

ONE HUNDRED SECOND CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CRISIS: PROSPECTS FOR RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 23, 1991

Printed for the use of the
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

[CSCE 102-1-8]

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

48-999 ⇆ WASHINGTON : 1992

For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402
ISBN 0-16-038345-5

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

STENY H. HOYER, Maryland, *Chairman*
DENNIS DeCONCINI, Arizona, *Co-Chairman*

DANTE B. FASCELL, Florida
EDWARD J. MARKEY, Massachusetts
BILL RICHARDSON, New Mexico
EDWARD FEIGHAN, Ohio
DON RITTER, Pennsylvania
CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey
JOHN EDWARD PORTER, Illinois
FRANK R. WOLF, Virginia
FRANK LAUTENBERG, New Jersey
TIMOTHY WIRTH, Colorado
WYCHE FOWLER, Georgia
HARRY REID, Nevada
ALFONSE M. D'AMATO, New York
JAMES McCLURE, Idaho
MALCOLM WALLOP, Wyoming
Vacant

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

RICHARD SCHIFTER, *Department of State*
STEPHEN J. HADLEY, *Department of Defense*
WILLIAM D. FRITTS, JR., *Department of Commerce*

SAMUEL G. WISE, *Staff Director*
MARY SUE HAFNER, *Deputy Staff Director and General Counsel*
JANE S. FISHER, *Deputy Staff Director*
DAVID M. EVANS, *Senior Advisor for Soviet and East European Affairs*
R. SPENCER OLIVER, *Consultant*
MIKE AMITAY, *Staff Assistant*
PATRICIA CARLEY, *Staff Assistant*
BRENDA G. COLLIER, *Receptionist*
OREST DEYCHAKIWSKY, *Staff Assistant*
JOHN FINERTY, *Staff Assistant*
ROBERT HAND, *Staff Assistant*
HEATHER F. HURLBURT, *Staff Assistant*
JESSE JACOBS, *Staff Assistant*
RONALD McNAMARA, *Staff Assistant*
JEAN A. McNAUGHTON, *Staff Assistant*
TOM MURPHY, *Technical Editor*
MICHAEL OCHS, *Staff Assistant*
JAMES S. RIDGE, *Press Secretary*
ERIKA SCHLAGER, *Staff Assistant*
TOM WARNER, *Printing Clerk*
CORINNE R. ZACCAGNINI, *Administrative Assistant*

CONTENTS

WITNESSES

	Page
Baroness Caroline Cox, Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords	10
Dr. Bonner, President of the Andrei Sakharov Foundation	14
Anatoly Shabad, Member of the Russian Supreme Soviet	15
Fyodor Shelov-Kovedyaev, Member of the Russian Supreme Soviet	17
Alexander Arzoumanian, Plenipotentiary Representative of Armenia to the United States	25
Dr. David Nissman, Expert on Azerbaijan	27
Nadir Mekhtiyev, Member of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet	29

APPENDIX

Hon. Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman, opening statement	38
Hon. Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman, opening statement	39
Hon. Barbara Boxer, a Representative in Congress From the State of California, opening statement	40
Hon. Joseph P. Kennedy III, a Representative in Congress From the State of Massachusetts, opening statement	41
Baroness Caroline Cox, Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords	43
Alexander Arzoumanian, Plenipotentiary Representative of Armenia to the United States, statement	47
Dr. David Nissman, Expert on Azerbaijan	125
Nadir Mekhtiyev, Member of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet	130
Dr. Bonner, President of the Andrei Sakharov Foundation	136
Robert A. Kaloosdian, Armenian Assembly of America, statement	140

THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CRISIS: PROSPECTS FOR RESOLUTION

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1991.

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
Washington, DC.

The Commission met, pursuant to notice, at 2 p.m. in room 562, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC, Hon. Steny H. Hoyer (Chairman) presiding.

Present: Representative Steny H. Hoyer and Senator Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman.

Also present: Representatives Boxer, Kennedy, Lehman, Levine, and Owens.

Chairman HOYER. The hearing will come to order.

Let me welcome you to this hearing on a subject of great importance and equally powerful emotion. Most of us who follow the U.S.S.R. realize the explosive impact of national consciousness under Perestroika and its implications when we read about rallies by hundreds of thousands of Armenians in Yerevan in late 1987. They were demanding that Nagorno-Karabakh, an autonomous region in Azerbaijan largely inhabited by Armenians, be joined with Armenia.

This demand, not surprisingly, did not go down well with Azerbaijan, and the ensuing years have witnessed the consequences of irreconcilable priorities: hundreds of deaths and mass population transfers, with hundreds of thousands fleeing republics where they had lived for years, if not generations. The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict was the first of many national clashes that have rocked the U.S.S.R. in recent years, and it has been as intractable as any of them.

The battle has been fought not only with weapons but with language taken from the Helsinki Accords. The Armenians claim that their case is based on human rights and the right of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh to self- determination, pursuant to Principle VIII of the Accords. The Azerbaijanis counter that the crucial issue is the sanctity of recognized borders, pursuant to Principle III of the Final Act.

These two seemingly contradictory imperatives have long, as it were, lurked in the dark corners of the Helsinki process, and events in Yugoslavia demonstrate the dangers of exploring too deeply the relationship between them. Still, it is important to recall that Principle I of the Final Act envisions peaceful change of frontiers in accordance with international law.

Today, after several years of bloodshed and the downfall, for all practical purposes, of central Soviet institutions, the prospects of reaching another sort of compromise through direct inter-republic negotiations appear better than before. If so, the ramifications would extend well beyond Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The Helsinki Commission recently visited Armenia, as I'm sure most of you know, where we met with President Ter-Petrossyan. He indicated that an agreement brokered by Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev offered promise. Since then, the agreement has been signed.

One reason for convening this hearing is to examine whether there are still reasons for cautious optimism about a negotiated settlement. For that purpose, we have invited an unusual group of expert witnesses.

Before introducing each one of them and going through our first panel, let me recognize the Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, Senator Dennis DeConcini, for any statement that he might want to make.

Co-Chairman DECONCINI. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join Chairman Hoyer in welcoming our distinguished panel and witnesses.

It has been about four years since the words "Nagorno-Karabakh" became well known to people other than the Armenians and the Azeris. These words, unfortunately, have come to be associated in this country and throughout the world with nationalist violence and struggle over disputed territories.

Each side in this conflict has appealed to history. Both Armenians and Azeris claim that Karabakh has belonged to them for centuries. Both sides have dismissed an disparaged the historical cases brought by the other side, and that applies both to ancient and to recent history. Both claim, with respect to the conflict that began in late 1987, that the other side initiated those hostilities.

Some observers say the key to this clash is religion: How can Christian Armenia and Muslim, Turkic Azerbaijan possibly settle the differences over Nagorno-Karabakh? Many claim that the Kremlin has done everything possible to play off one side against the other. In April 1991, however, the Soviet Army openly took sides and organized assaults with Azerbaijani forces against Armenian villages in and around Karabakh, killing and deporting Armenians and repopulating the area with Azeris.

This conflict over territory seems unsolvable, and for those of us who are neither of Armenian or Azeri descent, it is unclear how justice could be done to both sides; but what is absolutely imperative is the necessity of strict observance of the human rights of Armenians and Azeris in this region.

Almost all of today's borders between republics in the former U.S.S.R. are in dispute. It would be disastrous to have a dozen Nagorno-Karabakhs. The only way to avoid this, regardless of who controls the territory, is, as the Chairman has pointed out so distinctly, adherence to the Helsinki commitments on the rights of individuals and national minorities.

So, again, I welcome you, and I compliment the Chairman and the staff for putting together this effort and all those who have helped bring about these distinguished panels and witnesses today.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. I would like to now recognize three very distinguished members of the House who, although not members of the Helsinki Commission, are very active in issues that the Helsinki Commission deals with.

First of all, I would like to recognize Representative Barbara Boxer from the state of California. As I'm sure all of you know, she has visited Armenia and has made a real impact there, and we are pleased to have her with us today. Barbara Boxer.

Ms. BOXER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and Senator DeConcini for this opportunity to sit with you. I did have the privilege and honor of traveling to Armenia and to Moscow in August as part of a human rights factfinding delegation sponsored by the Andrei Sakharov Foundation, and I am especially excited to see the President of that organization, my friend, Elena Bonner, here with us today. This is a woman of great wisdom, and I think she will provide some answers to this problem.

I want to take a second to introduce you to David Leopold who is an American attorney. If you could stand, I think both Chairmen should see you. David went into Nagorno-Karabakh at great personal risk at a moment when the guns and the bullets were flying, and it was wonderful to see an American citizen at great risk going in there to do some good.

I met with many brave residents of Nagorno-Karabakh, men and women who had lost their homes in horrible raids, in pogroms. The violence has ravaged families as hundreds have died and tens of thousands have lost their homes.

Mr. Chairman, one woman told me her story, and I'm quoting directly from her. She said, "Thirty men stormed into my home with masks on and guns pointed. My three children and my in-laws were there, and we were terrified. They told us to get out of their country. They trashed everything in my home. We fled with nothing, and will never be back."

I was saddened and appalled by the violence which has, frankly, been condoned, even perpetuated, by the Soviet government at that time. It seemed there was only one answer that I came up with, and it was with the help of Elena Bonner that I came up with that answer, an outside neutral force which would stem the violence and participate in negotiations toward peace. So I proposed, as you know, Mr. Chairman, because we have discussed it, a United Nations presence in the region. As one man, one Armenian, said to me, "May God hear your words."

The response of my Armenian host was one of great enthusiasm, and upon returning to the United States sixty-four of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle joined with me in calling on President Bush to press for a U.N. force for the region.

Events have changed rapidly, as you have pointed out. Russian President Yeltsin has brokered a peace accord, but it is sad to say the violence continues. Between thirty and forty Karabakh Armenians have been killed, and people's homes and livelihoods destroyed since the Accord was signed.

So more than ever, Mr. Chairman, an outside force such as the U.N. is necessary for the region to prevent violence and promote

the message of peace. I certainly hope today's witnesses will share with us their thoughts on the prospects for such a U.N. plan.

Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Congresswoman Boxer. Again, I want to congratulate you on the work that you've been doing.

Next I'd like to recognize Congressman Rick Lehman, also from the state of California.

Mr. LEHMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator DeConcini, members of the Commission. I want to thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing. I look forward to the testimony from our very distinguished panel.

I'm pleased that we are taking the time to examine the prospects for a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis. As we know, it has resulted in close to 1,000 deaths in the last three years.

This region, which is located in Muslim Azerbaijan but is populated mostly by Christian Armenians, has had a very violent century. I think the troubles there began about 1905 and, as I said, I think thousands have been killed over that period of time.

Thousands of Armenians have also been forcefully deported from their homes in Azerbaijan and involuntarily resettled in Armenia where hundreds of thousands are already homeless after the earthquake of 1988. Furthermore, one cannot ignore the reports of Armenians that have been illegally detained, beaten and tortured.

I'm greatly encouraged by the fact that Armenia and the Azerbaijan have begun a dialogue to end the fighting and establish peace in the region. The fact that rival republics have agreed to terms for negotiations is, in my view, a major breakthrough. However, we must fully realize the difficulty and challenge of achieving such a goal.

This dispute is extremely complex, in that it dates back more than 100 years. There will be setbacks, including the recent violations of the agreed upon cease fire, and the violence and killing continue.

I, too, was recently in Armenia. I was there as an observer for the Referendum on Independence last month. At a meeting with three other members of this Congress and President Ter-Petrossyan, I asked the President about the prospects for settlement in the Karabakh region. I was pessimistic going into that meeting, but I came out somewhat optimistic. I think his response was a very positive one.

He said that he hoped for a peaceful, negotiated settlement. He said that Armenia does not covet any property beyond its borders, and that they want dignity and self-determination for Armenians living in the Karabakh region.

It is clear, I think, here that several points have to be observed. First, we must work to end the violence as quickly as possible. Second, the economic blockades that have been strangling Karabakh and Armenia have to be halted. Third, international observers have to be able to freely enter the area to monitor exactly what is going on and not on a restricted basis. Finally, there must be respect for human rights in the area.

The new world order faces serious challenges today on many fronts. Daily, we witness the horror in Yugoslavia. Finding a peace-

ful and just solution in the Karabakh region must be a high priority if we are to succeed in building a stable and enduring peace in the region.

I think this will be a key test of whether this part of the world can enter the new world order on a just and peaceful basis or whether we are going to see it and ultimately perhaps the whole world deteriorate into the type of horror we witness today in the Balkans.

Again, I look forward to the testimony from the panel, and I am happy you have invited me here.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Lehman, for your statement.

Next, I'd like to recognize and introduce for such comments as he would like to make somebody who carries on the tradition of a family that has been without equal in many respects in its voice for those who have no voice, a voice for those who are subjected to discrimination and to terror, Congressman Joe Kennedy.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you very much, Steny. I appreciate your comments. I want to thank Chairman Hoyer as well as Chairman DeConcini for convening this timely and vitally important hearing. I also want to thank all of the witnesses that have come far, some, I hope, just from Boston as well, to——

Chairman HOYER. That's pretty far.

Mr. KENNEDY. Not so far, Steny. Boston does all right here in Washington.

I know that many of you have spoken out very, very strongly and with great concern over the issues of Armenia and the plight of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, and I want to thank not only Dr. Bonner but her son who I have met with, as well as other members of the Armenian community back in Watertown, Massachusetts, which is one of the largest Armenian communities here in the United States.

I want to particularly thank all the people who are interested and who continue to bring this issue before the people of our country. As someone who represents a very large Armenian community, I know that many of the people in my community are vitally concerned not only for themselves but for members of their family that still reside back in Armenia and in Nagorno-Karabakh; and they are directly affected by the outrageous human rights violations that are occurring right now in that region of the world.

Now that our attention is turned on the ever changing events in the Soviet Union, we should be grateful to the Helsinki Commission and to our Chairman for refocusing our attention on the unchanged and unresolved conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh. The artificial boundaries of Stalin's Soviet Union have splintered before our eyes, but the lines drawn around Nagorno-Karabakh remain in place.

These arbitrary lines have institutionalized a policy of effective discrimination against Armenians, to go beyond simple economic and cultural isolation. It has fueled a conflict that has led to some of the worst human rights practices in the world. Forced deportations, baseless detention, unwarranted killings bring to light the frustrations and illegitimacy of 70 years of Azerbaijani rule.

Today, the examples of still prevalent. Recently, it was reported that over 10,000 Armenians have been forced from the Karabakh

region. Men, women and children were dragged from their homes and told not to return.

In January of 1990, Azeri forces, security forces in Baku, attached and killed over 100 Armenians, and as late as May in 1991 Soviet and Azeri forces collaborated and surrounded two little towns, jailed hundreds, and were responsible for the deaths of over sixty innocent Armenians.

The failed coup in the Soviet Union has marked a watershed moment for Moscow, but this historic moment may have passed without action over the Armenians inside Nagorno- Karabakh. Moscow has an opportunity to bring about a peace that ensures the rights of Armenians inside Nagorno-Karabakh. President Yeltsin has shown us the way, but his efforts have fallen short.

The strife and hatred cannot be resolved by a simple visit by a popular leader. There has been a bare minimum effort. Concrete mechanisms must be put in place that promote the self- determination of Armenians in the Nagorno Karabakh region.

An official mediator, I believe, can offer the best possible assurances. As members of the United Nations Security Council, Moscow and the United States, in conjunction with the international community, can work together to create this opportunity. Whether by the hand of President Yeltsin or President Gorbachev, Moscow can use its influence in the international arena to resolve this conflict.

In the Western Sahara the U.N. is now facilitating a referendum that allows a minority population to decide its own fate. The same could easily be done for Nagorno-Karabakh. For our own part, the United States has a responsibility to help end this conflict.

As home for the second largest Armenian population in the world, it is our duty to lend help and assistance. We have demonstrated experience in intervening on the side of peace. We have done it in Cambodia. We have done it in Cyprus, and we have done it in Namibia. It is time we work with the Soviets to help bring about peace and justice in this troubled region.

Today, 700,000 American Armenians are looking to President Bush to again enter the foreign policy arena and show leadership on this very issue. I hope today's hearing will send a message to the White House, to the Kremlin and to Baku that we in the Congress are concerned about the status quo of Nagorno-Karabakh, that we support the aims and objectives of Armenians and that we look forward to the coordinated efforts to bring about peace in this historically troubled region.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. I Thank Mr. Kennedy for his remarks.

Next, I'd like to introduce Congressman Mel Levine, from Los Angeles, also a very active member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and himself a strong voice for human rights in all regions of the world.

Mr. LEVINE. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I want to begin by joining my colleagues in commending you, Mr. Chairman, as well as Senator DeConcini for holding this hearing today and for continuing to keep the critical issues of human rights both in Armenia and around the globe before the attention of the Congress and the country.

I want to associate myself with Joe Kennedy's comments as to the extraordinary importance of bringing these issues, particularly the issues pertaining to Armenia, more to the forefront of the American people. The more the American people understand what's been occurring in Armenia, the more response we will get belatedly from the administration and the more response we will see around the country.

Under the leadership of both Chairman Hoyer and Chairman DeConcini, the Helsinki Commission has played consistently a very important role in the dramatic changes that have taken place in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to be associated with these efforts, and I encourage—I want to commend the Commission for its work and encourage the Commission to continue its important work.

I have also been very pleased to work closely with my friend and colleague, Rick Lehman, for the better part of a decade on issues pertaining to Armenia, the Armenian genocide resolution, and so many other critical issues. I am pleased to see Rick here today, as he always is in the forefront of these issues.

I also want to comment the witnesses. I had the privilege of having lunch with them and hearing both Dr. Bonner and Baroness Cox at lunch a while ago, and I know that we will all eagerly anticipate hearing the extraordinarily important words that they have.

Mr. Chairman, the conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis is tragic, and clearly deserves more attention both from American policy makers and from the American people. As my colleagues have indicated already, the costs of this conflict have been intolerably high. More than 800 men, women and children have been killed. Thousands have been wounded and maimed. Property damage is estimated to be in the tens of millions of dollars, if not much greater. Families have been separated, and human rights observances are, at best, a secondary consideration, as evidenced by the forced expulsion of thousands of Armenians from the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

While I commend President Yeltsin and President Nazarbayev on their efforts to negotiate an end to the violence, the killing and the human rights abuses continue. While excesses have been carried out by both sides, I am deeply concerned about the security and safety of the Armenian population in Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding area.

The Armenians in these areas are a distinct minority who are surrounded by and subject to hostile Azerian-Soviet rule. They are exposed to daily humiliations, human rights abuses, intimidation and, most of all, Mr. Chairman, as you well know, physical attacks and violence.

Just a few months ago, the Armenian villages of Mekshetan and Karachinak located twenty-five kilometers from the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave were attached by Azerbaijani military detachments and Soviet Army troops. When the assault ended, thirty-seven people, including women and children, were dead, and over 100 were wounded.

This just one example of the indiscriminate brutality carried out by Soviet troops against unprotected Armenian civilians. It is disgraceful and must cease immediately.

I am also greatly disturbed by the mass expulsions of Armenians from the area surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh. Since the end of April 1991, less than six months ago, more than 10,000 Armenians have been forcibly extracted from their homes. Strong evidence suggests that the perpetrators of these inhuman acts belong to the Azerbaijani special police forces and the Soviet central government's Ministry of Internal Affairs.

I hope that some of today's panelists will be able to provide some insights for the Commission into what the possible fate of these deportees may be and the prospects that the Azeri and Soviet authorities will discontinue this repugnant practice.

There are other issues regarding the security of the minority Armenian population that I am deeply concerned about and which, I hope, our experts will address today. What rule can international organizations and observers play in bringing an end to the violence in Nagorno-Karabakh? How is the Azeri economic blockage of Armenia affecting the Armenian population? What consequences will this have for the Armenian people, in light of the food shortage expected this winter, and is it reasonable for Armenians to believe that the predominantly Azeri-Soviet 7th Army unit positioned in Nagorno-Karabakh will act in good faith to keep the peace, as called for in the Yeltsin Nazarbayev peace proposal?

Once again, I want to commend Congressman Hoyer and Senator DeConcini for convening this extremely important hearing today, and I hope that this hearing will produce some answers that will lead to peace and stability on the volatile Armenian-Azerbaijan border.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Mr. Levine.

With the indulgence of the panel, who must be wondering whether they are ever going to get an opportunity to say anything, I will recognize one additional Member; and if more Members come in, they are going to have to wait. Congressman Owens is now here. He is also a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, a very distinguished Member of the House, former member of the staff of Senator Edward Kennedy, and one of our outstanding members.

Congressman Owens.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hesitating to further impose upon this very distinguished panel, I'm very delighted to have them here and look forward to their testimony, I do have two points that I would like to make and, in opening, would like to ask that my statement be printed——

Chairman HOYER. Without objection, it will be done.

Congressman OWENS [continuing]. In full following the few remarks that I will make.

I would like to make two points. I am, first of all, very grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, Chairman DeConcini, for these hearings and for the outstanding work that you are doing on the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Your presence is needed in a very real way in Armenia.

I have had the opportunity over the last year and a half to visit three times to Armenia, the first a year and a half ago. It was then my shock, really, to see the brutality of Azeris inflicted upon Armenians as I visited in Moscow in the Armenian Ministry where I saw 400-500 people on floor, on quilts, brutally beaten. I saw their wounds, heard their testimony, spent four or five hours talking with them, and then followed that up the next day by traveling to Yerevan and there talking with other refugees from Azerbaijani brutality visited upon them in Baku and Nagorno-Karabakh and other areas. I can say firsthand that I have seen the results and studied what has happened in Armenia. We need to focus on the history, now very, very relevant, especially, I suppose, in the face of the agreement worked out just last month with the leadership of President Yeltsin and with the very strong assistance and leadership of President Ter-Petrossyan. President Ter-Petrossyan, a man of uncommon courage and foresight who, even during what then appeared then to be a tough Presidential election, undertook to solve the major problem facing his country but which could have had significantly deleterious political impact upon his candidacy.

His bravado, in undertaking to solve this problem, because the pain and the suffering were so real and to opt for a long term normalization of that situation in relationship contrary to previous policy of the people of Armenia, I thought, was notable.

While we were there, my colleague from California and I and two other members who were there as delegates, observers of the Armenian independence referendum on the 22d of September—we had a chance to see these four Presidents, including Yeltsin and Ter-Petrossyan, in action, and were there when they concluded or as they prepared to conclude their historic cease fire and movement toward normalization.

That's been broken, obviously, a little bit but is, I hope, still in some form intact. It is insightful, and it is, I think, going to be genuinely hopeful to see that normalization. I look forward to hearing this testimony today.

The other point that I was going to make is that it was impressive to see the resolution of those people of Armenia as they spoke overwhelmingly, 95 percent plus, for independence and to be a witness to the democratic process which led to that clear expression of their will, and to testify that they are, I think, more than any other of the republics, prepared for nationhood.

They have seventy percent, eighty percent of their land in private hands already, the market system intact with some fifteen to twenty thousand private businesses. They alone of all the republics follow the constitutional processes of a six-month notice for a referendum, and have followed very carefully the legal processes.

They have amazingly mature political leadership in Armenia. In a republic where there is a potential for serious bloodshed, that's been averted by very thoughtful, careful, foresightful leadership.

I do hope that the Congress, if I may say, will strongly encourage President Bush to recognize them. They are, in a sense, even more meritorious than the three Baltic republics in deserving that recognition.

I thank you for this opportunity to offer these remarks, Mr. Chairman, and for all that you are doing.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congressman Owens.

Now for the reason we are here. Obviously, you can see that Members of Congress feel strongly about this matter and have taken the time to educate, not only themselves but the rest of the Members of Congress.

Our first witness will be Baroness Caroline Cox, who is Deputy Speaker of Britain's House of Lords. Baroness, we are in the U.S. House of Lords now. All of us are members of Commons across the way, but the Lords have allowed us to use their room today.

Our first witness has been Deputy Speaker since May 1991, and has been to Armenia and Azerbaijan four times and twice to Nagorno- Karabakh on factfinding missions organized by the Sakharov Foundation.

Baroness Cox has issued reports on her investigations of the human rights situation in the region. She returned to London from her latest visit only 2 days ago, and we certainly thank you for, after a very difficult trip, coming here to be with us and testify. The Commission is honored with your presence today and welcomes your testimony.

TESTIMONY OF BARONESS CAROLINE COX, DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

Baroness Cox. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Distinguished members of the Commission, good afternoon.

I appreciate very much this opportunity to give evidence here today. In anticipation of so doing, as you have mentioned, Mr. Chairman, I made a third visit to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh last week in order to obtain the most up-to-date evidence.

The principal purpose of that visit was to obtain access to the Shaumyan Region of Azerbaijan and to Nagorno-Karabakh to follow up the two previous delegations by the Sakharov Foundation in May and July of this year. Our brief, in particular, was to assess the level of human rights violations since the signing of the Communique on September 23 of this year.

May I just emphasize by way of prefacing my remarks that all of us who went to that area had no preconceptions and no prejudices. Any concern we have reflects the evidence of what we have seen and heard.

Our first visit was primary to Armenia where we heard the reports of the suffering of deportees and also those who have been in detention. We did try to gain access to Azerbaijan, but with great difficulty on that occasion.

So the second time we went primarily to Azerbaijan to hear the Azerbaijani viewpoint. We did request access to the areas of Shaumyan and other trouble spots, but were not granted permission to go there.

So this third visit was intended to enable us to visit the Shaumyan Region and other areas where the suffering is particularly acute. So if I may, I would like to present the report of this final visit in terms of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

First of all, Mr. Chairman, on October 16 we flew by helicopter from Yerevan to Shaumyan. We visited the villages of Karachinar, Buzluk and Verishen. We spent a night in Karachinar.

Due to the closure of Stepanakert Airport to traffic from Yerevan, the only access to the region is by helicopter flights, flying over Azerbaijani air space. It is claimed that 11 helicopters have been shot down in recent months. Flights are, therefore, uncertain, irregular and dangerous, leaving the area virtually cut off from the outside world, with desperate shortages of food and medical supplies.

In Karachinar we find a village under repeated attacks. For example, 36 people have been killed there in the last month. Four died in one truck on October 3. There is daily shelling. Numbers range from two to 280 a day; 280 fell on the 28th and 29th of September. Many houses are damaged.

Four to five days prior to our visit an OMON helicopter ha landed. Two people were killed and three wounded, including a child.

We visited the village of Buzluk where an enforced deportation had occurred during the period of the 13th to the 15th of July. That village is now virtually a ghost village. We visited the graveyard. The tombs are desecrated. Marble slabs were removed and/or defaced.

One grave of a newly buried man killed on the first night of the attack had been exhumed by the Azerbaijanis who removed the new clothes in which the corpse was buried and removed also his gold teeth. We spoke to his grief stricken father who sowed us his home which had been virtually stripped of all his belongings.

That village was retaken by the Armenians on September 14. We saw one family returning with their belongings, but life will be extremely difficult for those deportees as they have lost virtually everything and have been unable to harvest any of their crops.

We then visited the village of Verishen, attacked by the Azeris on July 14th, retaken by the Armenians on September 14, and now being restored. In this district, five Armenian villages have suffered deportations. Two have since been retaken by the Armenians.

On the morning of Thursday, October 17, we made further visits to homes in Karachinar damaged by artillery shelling. We visited one house devastated by shelling as recently as October 10. On that night four people died from shelling; and according to government statistics, at least seventy- eight Armenian houses have been hit and damaged by shells.

We then flew by helicopter to Stepanakert where we spent two nights. We visited the hospital and saw patients, civilians, suffering from wounds inflicted from attacks.

If I may, if it is permitted, I would like to send up some photographs of two of the cases which I will be describing.

There were three young men who were driving a tractor back from collecting wood. They were stopped by a car which they thought was manned by OMON. They ran away. One was shot in the spine, the other in the thigh. The surgeon told us both wounds could have been fatal.

We saw a woman who was 8 months pregnant. On the night of October 1 and 2, the OMON attacked her village. Six men were killed, houses burnt and many people wounded.

This woman fled into the forest and hid for 3 days. When she returned, she was very ill, admitted to hospital. Her baby was dead. She herself developed brain damage. She needed brain surgery desperately, but it was impossible to fly in a neurosurgeon to undertake this brain surgery, because the Stepanakert Airport is closed.

We also saw a boy, aged 12, whose photograph will be coming up, shot through the chest at school number 9 in Stepanakert on October 9.

On Friday, October 19, we visited the adjacent Azeri/Armenian villages at Kirkejan. These villages are subjected to frequent shooting. On the Azeri side, we wanted to meet as many as Azeris as we could. We talked to the militia major who told us about the Azeri love of peace. He gave no allegations or evidence of specific attacks by Armenians.

On the Armenia side, we spoke to an elderly man who pointed to a tree eighty yards away where two boys had been shot in the last 24 hours. This was the village in which the 12-year-old boy we saw in hospital was shot.

The Azerbaijanis had cut off the water supply so villagers have to go down to the river to collect water which is dirty. We talked to the MVD Soviet Colonel who seemed sincere about his peacekeeping role. In the last 2 days he has arrested four armed Azeris. He claims that, if fighting starts from either side, they counter-attack.

We then visited Tokh in the Gadrut region for the funeral of five members of one family, including a 5-year-old child who had been shot and mutilated terribly in their own home on the night of the 16th to the 17th of October.

Mr. Chairman, I will move briefly to our conclusions and recommendations. May I say first in our conclusions, we are pleased that the policy of systematic deportations of entire Armenian villages in combined operations of Soviet Army and Azeri OMON troops appear to have been suspended.

There also appears to be a tendency toward greater neutrality by the Soviet troops, which is a welcome and significant development. However, there are reports of increased shootings and kidnappings by both sides. The Soviet Interior Ministry troops, while no longer overtly supporting Azerbaijani armed aggression, have continued attacks upon individuals, according to local informants.

We also received reports of asymmetrical treatment at checkpoints. Armenian drivers are stopped and frequently have to pay bribes. Azerbaijanis are allowed to pass freely. Members of the delegation witnessed such instances.

Third, several hundred Armenians are still in detention in Azerbaijani prisons where they are denied basic legal rights and subjected to torture. We were given an unofficial figure of 320 remaining detainees, with a further 20 people whose destination is totally unknown.

Fourth, Stepanakert Airport remains under control of Azerbaijani troops, reportedly the previous OMON troops remained "transport police." It is closed to flights from Yerevan. The implications

are extremely serious in terms of supplies of food and medicine, as well as for the free flow of civilian travel.

Our recommendations are as follows, first those relating of the Agreed Communique: We urge that they should be fulfilled as a matter of urgency. They have not yet been done so.

First, the return of deportees to their villages, with suitable protection and assistance to reestablish life in the face of problems associated with the destruction of their homes and loss of belongings, crops and livestock;

Second, a cease fire. The activities of all paramilitary groups should cease immediately, and the troops of the Soviet Interior Ministry should enforce peace;

Third, all remaining hostages must be freed, and all prisoners must be accorded the full protection of legal rights;

Fourth, normal functioning of transport and communication systems must be restored, especially the reopening of Stepanakert Airport to flights to Yerevan an elsewhere, and the road from Goris to Stepanakert.

Other recommendations:

We would recommend that President Gorbachev should issue a decree to reestablish democratic local government and civil administration in Nagorno-Karabakh;

That there should be free access to prisons by governmental and independent human rights organizations;

That there should be an international peacekeeping force such as the United Nations peacekeeping force which urgently needs to be deployed;

That Western aid should be directed to Republics and made strictly conditional on the fulfillment of human rights criteria, and the fulfillment under those criteria to be monitored by independent bodies;

Finally, that aid should be made available directly to Nagorno-Karabakh for both Armenian and Azerbaijani communities in need.

I conclude by emphasizing I believe the situation is extremely serious, with widespread suffering resulting from human rights violations. While some improvements can be welcomed, other developments are a cause for increasing concern; and there is a real fear that the situation could deteriorate to the extent of wholesale war. Thus, the need for constructive initiative is urgent and imperative.

Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Baroness, we appreciate very much your testimony, and also congratulate you for the attention you have been giving to this question. I am sure that your visits alone are very helpful.

I think one of the concrete lessons we have learned within the Helsinki process is that an ongoing presence—for example, like that of the Scandinavians vis-a-vis the Baltics States—is critical. So I think these regular visits are very important. We will wait for the rest of the panel to give their testimony before answering questions, if you would.

We very much appreciate your being here.

Next, I would like to introduce somebody who needs no introduction to any of us. She is a world figure of very substantial stature,

and all of those who value human rights have, for many years, followed her valiant career.

I first had the opportunity of meeting Dr. Bonner in 1981 when I visited Moscow with Senator Paul Simon. Along with her late husband, Dr. Andrei Sakharov, she spent seven years in internal exile in Gorki before receiving permission to return to Moscow in December of 1987.

Since the death of Dr. Sakharov, Dr. Bonner has continued valiantly the struggle for human rights that they waged together. As has already been said, she serves as President of the Sakharov Foundation.

Dr. Bonner, you do us great honor by your presence here, and we very much appreciate your being with us and look forward to your testimony.

TESTIMONY OF DR. BONNER, PRESIDENT OF THE ANDREI SAKHAROV FOUNDATION

Dr. BONNER. [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonev]. Today's hearing is an important event in the history of a bloody conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh—the conflict which the West has either failed to take note of or has interpreted as an ethnic one; but it involves violations of human rights by a state, in this case the U.S.S.R., which in combination with Azerbaijan, has been conducting a policy of forced deportations of the Karabakh Armenians in order to alter the historic demographic structure of the region in which Armenians are the majority and in that manner to solve the problem of Karabakh.

What is happening today differs from Stalin's deportations of ethnic groups only because it is proceeding in slow motion and because there is resistance, self-defense, which the Azerbaijani side interprets as aggression.

Precisely because the tragic events in Karabakh are a consequence of government policy, all the attempts at mediation made by independent organizations and people's deputies are futile, and the peace making trip to the Transcaucasus by the Presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan has for the time being produced no result.

Since the communique was signed in Zheleznovodst a month ago, the violence on both sides has only grown. I request that my open letter of October 3 to Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev be included in the record.

Similar conflicts have developed in Ossetia and in Moldavia. These and similar situations have been assessed incorrectly and have become insolvable by peaceful means, because in international law two concepts have become confused: the principle of inviolability of borders and the principle of self-determination of peoples. But the first principle applies to a state's right to peaceful coexistence with other states, while the second deals with human rights.

Two examples: The coalition forces had the obligation to defend Kuwait from Iraqi aggression; but by the same token, they had to defend the right of Croatia, like that of any people, to independence without worrying about the dissolution of a united government.

The state structure can be decided only by the population of the given area by democratic means. Most which should be demanded by outsiders is access for observers to ensure the absence of fraud.

In this regard, President Bush's remarks that the U.S. will recognize the independence of secession states only after the center of an already nonexistent U.S.S.R. recognizes them is distressing.

The European Community at the Moscow Conference on the Human Dimension once again clearly confirmed that protection of human rights is not a state's internal affair. Today, as formerly, taking as a base the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular the third paragraph of the Preamble, we must find the courage to defend the right of peoples to self-determination as resolutely as we defend the rights of the individual. Only thus will humankind be able to escape bloody tragedies like Yugoslavia, Ossetia and Karabakh and to discover the means for their political resolution.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much. The letters to which you referred will be included in the record at this point in time, and they are, of course, appended to your statement.

With Dr. Bonner are two parliamentarians from the Russian Supreme Soviet, Anatoly Shabad and Fyodor Shelov-Kovedyaev. Mr. Shabad is a member of the Human Rights Committee. Mr. Shelov-Kovedyaev is a member of the Law Enforcement Committee. Both of these Russian parliamentarians have traveled on many fact finding missions to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Mr. Shelov-Kovedyaev was the first to lead a delegation from the Russian Supreme Soviet to the region. Earlier this year, Mr. Shabad was in a village when it was assaulted and negotiated with the attacking forces. Both have published widely on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, and we thank both of them for being with us today.

Mr. Shabad, we appreciate your being with us.

TESTIMONY OF ANATOLY SHABAD, MEMBER OF THE RUSSIAN SUPREME SOVIET

Mr. SHABAD. Thank you. Honorable Mr. Chairman, Honorable Members of the Commission, first of all, thank you for your kind interest in the program which seemed up to the present moment only our trouble.

As long as your people is able to take other people's troubles as its own, it is a great people who provide the hope of security for all mankind.

Now, this summer, I had an opportunity to visit several times the region of conflict on both sides of the trenches, on the front line, so to say, and had the possibility to study the points of view of both sides.

One of my most important observations is that the situation is so grave that both peoples are very deeply—equally deeply convinced in the rightness of their cause. The responsibility for this grave situation lies with intellectuals who use every means to falsify, to misinterpret history, and this falsified history was readily accepted by the rest of the people.

Now this conviction is so strong that there is no way, no chances left that the conflict may be solved based on historical and local grounds. No such arguments, no reference to the history can have a decisive influence on the solution of the problem.

Even more important, my conversations with people in Azerbaijan indicates quite clearly that everyone in Azerbaijan, starting with the man in the street and up to the top leaders of political parties and officials, are equally determined to expel all the Armenians from the Nagorno-Karabakh Region as revenge for the fact that no Azerbaijani is left in the territory of Armenia which, unfortunately, is the case. Those people were expelled from there after violence in some villages and the violence in Baku which followed.

Without hesitation I state that all those in Azerbaijan are determined that all the lands in Nagorno-Karabakh must be cleared of Armenians. Most sophisticated officials don't say so, but I never believe that they are to any extent sincere when they admit that, oh, let the Armenians continue to live there. The only thing they need to do is obey the constitution and the laws and the regulations of Azerbaijan. But they are not frank when saying so.

Now what will follow? The only solution to the problem is by means of force. Now what is the force? During this summer, force was on the side of Azerbaijan when President Mutalibov was able to talk Gorbachev into putting the Soviet Army into action, which used all its weapons, including tanks, helicopters, heavy artillery, that were used to deport Armenians from their villages on the pretext of finding Armenian guerilla troops.

These guerilla troops are really the only defenders of the Armenian villages. At least, they are referred to as such by the Armenian population; and if not for them, not one Armenian would remain in the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh now.

Later, after the coup d'etat in August, the Soviet Army separated itself from these events and is now, more or less, neutral. So then the balance of forces shifted essentially toward the Armenians, and they used this opportunity to take back three previously deported Armenian villages mentioned by Caroline Cox in her presentation.

Now the Azerbaijanis are using some weapons which they did not use before. These are armored personnel carriers and even tanks and heavy artillery and helicopters, but at the present moment some balance of forces is established.

Now the negotiations that started at the initiative of Yeltsin and Nazarbayev may be the only chance for a peaceful settlement of the problem, but only if they are supported by the use of force on the part of the Army.

Unfortunately, this Army is undergoing a very deep internal crisis. It is good for nothing. It is not fit to be a peacekeeping force. So we must create new troops, well trained and reliable, with reliable personnel.

The present Soviet Army in Azerbaijan consists mostly of Azerbaijani soldiers. Azerbaijan claimed the right to possess all the weapons under the control of the Army in the territory of Azerbaijan. Now the concern of the Army is to avoid letting these weapons fall into the hands of the Azerbaijanis.

So we see that there is a prospect of war, and the negotiations may be considered a shelter; because Azerbaijan needs some time to gain force for the decisive battle. So I repeat that the only chance for the negotiations to be fruitful is only if there is some force that can back these negotiations.

Now some conclusions: What can we expect of the international community, especially from the government of the United States? The idea is to make clear to Gorbachev that he should remember his personal responsibility in the genocide that took place in the past summer. So he must be ready to use force to restore the demographic situation, at least the one that existed last spring.

The other thing which Gorbachev must do is to lower the level of military confrontation; that is, not to allow any arms to be given to the two opposing parties, and to admit observers.

Azerbaijan is against observers in its territory. It admits the mediators of the negotiation process, but it does not want observers who could monitor the fulfillment of any future agreement concerning cease fires and other things like that.

So the international community must make Azerbaijan admit observers from other republics of the Soviet Union and international observers as well.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much.

Now we have two alternatives. We have another panel so we can continue with testimony, or we can ask questions now of the first panel. So I ask my colleagues: do you want to do questions of these witnesses?

Before we decide, does Mr Shelov-Kovedyaev want to make a statement? We would be glad to hear from him.

TESTIMONY OF FYADOR SHELOV-KOVEDYAEV, MEMBER OF THE RUSSIAN SUPREME SOVIET

Mr. SHELOV-KOVEDYAEV [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonov]. Just a short one.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear at your meeting. I would like to underline the political character of the conflict which is taking place in the Transcaucasus Region.

It is precisely a conflict of a political nature, not of purely an ethnic nature. Back in the spring of this year, the Azerbaijani authorities characterized this conflict as the struggle of the Azerbaijani side committed to the Communist ideals against Armenian and Soviet forces.

After the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union, there was some transformation of the regime in Azerbaijan. As a result, the Azerbaijani regime became more nationalist in its appearance, but still you can see that there is a struggle of two systems, totalitarian and democratic systems, represented in the struggle.

That explains the active support that the Army has given in the past to the Azerbaijani side, when the Army has used the heavy artillery, the armored carriers and tanks, helicopters.

Second, we have to pay attention to the fact that in the past, as well as to a lesser degree now, the very highest authority of Azer-

baijan has believed that human rights are completely taken care of in Azerbaijan.

That explains the absence of any need on the Azerbaijani side for a dialogue with Armenia and the difficulties that such a dialogue experiences at the present moment.

It would be enough to say that the observers acting in support of the initiative of Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev could not mediate the conflict. The officials from Azerbaijan did not really express any interest in conducting negotiations, but it also related to the heightening of the tensions in Karabakh and the surrounding regions, because it is obvious that the authorities in Baku now find it more profitable to talk from a position of strength, and I believe in that regard that there is a rare opportunity for cooperation with the democratic forces inside the country.

I believe that the West can influence this situation and other similar situations in the Soviet Union and can influence it in positive ways, including support for the initiative of Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev.

One form of support from the West would be the establishment of a league to aid to the republics of the Soviet Union by monitoring human rights norms in the corresponding regions. I believe it is necessary to talk about that, because the conflict in the Transcaucasus Region, in case it continues to escalate can become a threat to global peace, because of the region's strategic importance and its location near the Middle East and Persian Gulf.

Recently, some of the republics have expressed interest in creating their own armies, and such initiatives place doubt on the Soviet Union's ability to carry out the agreements on disarmament, including disarmament in the conventional area.

In relation to that, I should let you know about the very important incident that has happened two days ago in the Kremlin. During a speech by Mr. Gorbachev, in response to his statement that he would take all steps necessary to ensure that the Army remains a single entity, deputies laughed in his face.

In particular, the representative of Azerbaijan, who was present as an observer, stated literally that he cannot understand how a President of a nonexistent country can give any recommendations to independent Azerbaijan.

Finally, for more than a year now, the process of consolidation of Muslim republics has been ongoing and, considering the orientation of serious forces in these republics toward the fundamentalist regimes outside of the Soviet Union, in a short time we can encounter very serious difficulties and threats to stability in central Asia.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Let me open with a couple of questions. I'm going to be brief in my questions, if the answers could be short. Senator DeConcini has just returned from a meeting with President Haval. I would ask all my colleagues, in light of the number of panelists, to be brief in their questions, so we can then move on to the second panel.

Let me ask particularly Baroness Cox and Dr. Bonner, in your visits there and in your work there would it be—Could you tell the panel whether or not you saw human rights violations on both

sides? Obviously, you've testified to the violence of Azerbaijanis against Armenians, but have there also been human rights violations committed by Armenians against Azerbaijanis?

Baroness COX. May I emphasize again that we set out to be absolutely impartial. We did look for evidence on both sides. Clearly, there is problem on both sides of people being injured and hurt on both sides, but I think there is a fundamental asymmetry, and the asymmetry relates to two major areas.

One is the policy of wholesale deportation, forcible deportation of villagers from the villages of their ancient homelands, accompanied by atrocities of rape and looting and killing and murder; and that wholesale policy is at the moment an asymmetrical one.

Secondly, in terms of the treatment of detainees: The evidence which we had and evidence which we have seen of the brutal treatment and torture of prisoners held in Azerbaijani jails is not, I think, in any way reflected in a similar situation in Armenia.

So I would say there is, obviously, problems on both sides, but there is an asymmetry, and the asymmetry makes the Armenians very largely the victims at the moment.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you. Excellent answer. Dr. Bonner?

Dr. BONNER. [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonov]. Yes. At the present moment, the violence obviously exists on both sides, but I want to remind that the conflict started in February of 1988 after the local decision by the Nagorno-Karabakh Region Soviet about its intention to pursue self-determination.

That was followed by pogroms in Sumgait which were not in any way met by any violence from the Armenian side, which waited for the legal resolution of that matter. For nine months the violence had been committed only on the Azerbaijani side, and there was no response from the Armenian side and no defense for the Armenians from the operators.

Only after the repeated pogroms in Baku and Kirabad have Armenians turned to self-defense.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Shabad, would you like to comment on that?

Mr. SHABAD. Yes. I witnessed some violations of human rights on both side and heard about more. There are numerous refugees from Azerbaijan and refugees from Armenia, and there are some refugees from the last Azerbaijani village called Nuvadi at the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. They are now living in tents near the border, and some of them want to come back.

Now the inspection into this case indicates that their leaving the place was not voluntary, that they were forced down by some shelling of a bandit, I would call it, troop which wasn't under the control of the government, and so on.

Unfortunately, the general attitude in the Armenian public opinion as well as the public opinion in Azerbaijan are now quite symmetrical. One cannot speak about human rights approach there without the risk of being considered as an inadequate idealist.

The concern is the idea that the punishment may be turned to innocents for crimes committed by somebody else, by another representative of the same ethnic group. This approach is overwhelming, which has nothing to do with the human rights.

For this reason, a large portion of Armenian public opinion opposes the idea of returning the villagers—Azerbaijanis to their villages, although the government of Armenia is willing to do so.

So to make a challenge to this non-human right approach, three of my friends and me planned a hunger strike which I followed 16 days, and the friend of mine is still on the hunger strike now, starving from September 29, demanding that the Azerbaijani refugees be returned to their place of dwelling.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, sir.

Mr. SHELOV-KOVEDYAEV. [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonov]. I would like to add only that the violence from the Armenian side was in many ways a consequence of many months of persecution of Armenian population by the Soviet Union's Army.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you. I have another question, but I'll get back to it; because we've taken some time here. Senator DeConcini.

Co-Chairman DECONCINI. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the witnesses' testimony, though I was not here for some of it. I've had a chance to review their statements, and I have no questions. I just thank them very much for their insight, information and their perspective in this very important area.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you. Congresswoman Boxer.

Ms. BOXER. Thank you. I will be brief and just ask questions to Dr. Bonner and Baroness Cox, quick as I can.

Dr. Bonner, do you agree with Baroness Cox's seven recommendations in her testimony, very clearly laid out, seven things that can be done to solve this problem?

Dr. BONNER [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonov]. Yes, in principle I agree with the recommendations of Baroness Cox. I wanted to—I believe there is just one more thing that is very important.

That is to ensure that all the Armenians detained in Azerbaijani prisons under criminal charges be transferred to prisons outside of Azerbaijan to some third republic and the cases be transferred there for investigation. Of course, that also goes for any Azerbaijani detainees in prisons in Armenia.

Ms. BOXER. So with the addition of that very important human rights protection, Dr. Bonner would agree with this. I would ask Baroness Cox—First of all, thank you, because I'm the kind of person that likes to resolve problems, and I think you and your recommendations have given us a path.

Would it help if this distinguished panel headed by my colleagues, Senator DeConcini and Congressman Hoyer—would it help if the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, embraced your recommendations? Would that give them some more momentum?

Baroness Cox. I think it would be an immense help. May I say that these recommendations have been quite widely discussed with everyone whom I met on my last visit, including the President of Armenia, President Ter-Petrossyan; and they are felt to be feasible and practical and potentially could be immensely significant in helping to reduce the conflict, stop the bloodshed and maybe prevent all-out war, which is a very real danger.

So the answer is an unequivocal and enthusiastic yes.

Ms. BOXER. My last question: I have embraced the notion of a United Nations peacekeeping force very strongly, and we have 65 Members in the House that have as well. As I understand it—and it doesn't even have to be a peacekeeping force, it could be some type of United Nations presence and, Baroness, you have also called for that.

It's my understanding that Azerbaijan would have to agree to such a presence. Now in your understanding of the law, is that true; and if they don't agree, is there any way we could get around that and still have some kind of a United Nations peacekeeping presence there? I would ask Dr. Bonner to comment on that also.

Baroness COX. I might say two things on that. I would agree with you, and I am so pleased you said it in your statement. I think the United Nations involvement is essential, given the present circumstances.

It's important to note that former Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Sheverdnadze supports this, and also stresses the need for U.N. involvement in general terms in Karabakh. The final document to the Moscow CSCE Human Dimension meeting last month further accepted this view as essential to stability and protection of human rights. So there is a lot of support.

Just one other point: It was interesting that, when I had the privilege of being received by President Mutalibov in July when we started our visit in Azerbaijan, he then expressed no reservations whatever about having a United Nations peacekeeping force.

I think he perhaps realized it wasn't acceptable at the Center at that time, and now that the Center is supportive and there seems to be no other contraindications to having it, it is President Mutalibov who is resisting it. I think he was the only one of the four Presidents at the Communique meetings who did resist it, and I would hope very much indeed that ways will be found for that United Nations involvement, which I think is essential and could actually redeem the situation eventually.

Dr. BONNER. [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonov]. I would like to add several words. I believe that the organization of observation groups, that the countries or signatories to the Helsinki agreements should provide the framework for organizing such observation groups.

I want to remind that in the history of the Helsinki movement, for many years we had the situation where public Helsinki groups have worked by themselves on the issues, and sometimes even in opposition to states' Helsinki Commissions. Today I think the situation has changed, and I believe that a monitoring group should be formed jointly.

In the member republics of the Soviet we already have four which have stated that they are inviting the monitoring groups into their corresponding republics. Those republics have addressed the concerns in Moscow. It is Kazakhstan, Kirgiztan, Armenia, and Moldavia.

Ms. BOXER. Mr. Chairman, thank you. That's all my questions. I would just like to say that I think these two women are heroines in this situation. If we can just help them and move forward with their ideas, I think we're on the way to solving a terrible problem,

as Mr. Lehman pointed out, one where if we can solve it, becomes a model for the rest of the problems, the ethnic problems, in the world.

Thank you again.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congresswoman Boxer. Congressman Lehman.

Mr. LEHMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions, and I will try to be brief.

Dr. Bonner, I think you posed the issue quite well in your statement, the larger issue here, when you say in international law two concepts have become confused, the principle of inviolability of borders and the principle of self- determination of peoples.

I want to ask you, how do we reconcile those contradictions? This is a problem not just in Nagorno-Karabakh and the Balkans but potentially all over Eastern Europe, Europe and even Great Britain and everywhere we have ethnic minorities wanting to exert certain rights and coming into conflict with existing orders.

There is a great potential for mischief here as well as potential for justice. I'd just like you to comment on that.

Dr. BONNER. [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonov]. I believe that's a task for jurists to formulate such policy. I only know that our great "jurist" Josef Stalin had combined the two principles in his constitution of 1936; but just as in the case of individual freedoms, it has taken us a long time to elevate the problem to the present state of recognition of its importance.

We have to fight for the recognition of self-determination right as one of important basic human rights.

Mr. LEHMAN. Let me ask one other question. You also state, and I'll read it here, that the United States will recognize the independence of secession states only when the center of an already nonexistent U.S.S.R. recognizes them is distressing.

I'd like to ask you more about independence because it is important—103 Members of this Congress including four of us on this dais sent a letter to the President asking him to recognize Armenia. What do you mean by the term distressing? How does it hurt the cause if we don't act? How would it help if we did?

Dr. BONNER. [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonov]. President Bush's remarks, in the way it was formulated, is distressing; because in the country that was formerly known as the Soviet Union there is no longer a center.

There is no legitimate power in the Soviet Union that can solve this situation; because the presently existing Supreme Soviet which was just appointed by the republics was not elected by anybody, and at the moment it is not clear who is represented by the Supreme Soviet.

In reality, one-sixth of our planet, which formerly was the Soviet Union, has no government at the moment.

Mr. LEHMAN. Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Senator Kennedy?

Mr. KENNEDY. I don't know how Teddy is going to feel about that, Steny, but in any event, I figured that it was the same British cartographer that cut up Northern Ireland that ended up cutting up Armenia and is the root cause of all of this.

In any event, Baroness——

Chairman HOYER. I know Mr. Kennedy. I knew he would not be able to resist. Congressman Kennedy.

[Laughter].

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you. To Baroness Cox, who I know has done tremendous work in this area and so many others that she has been involved with, as well as to all the witnesses: One of the things that I have noticed in both the communique that has been issued by Yeltsin and Nazarbayev, also the recommendations that you have made, Baroness Cox, tend to what might be considered critical and yet almost secondary issues to the central conflict that exist.

I wonder whether some thought has been given as to how the structure of the direct negotiations would take place, who it would be anticipated would be involved in those negotiations, and what the central issues that would be discussed might be.

Baroness COX. If I may respond very briefly to the very fundamental question, may I say first and foremost that concerned with human rights delegations, which is my role in this particular context, our primary concern must be to try to stop the immediate suffering.

As a nurse, if you've got someone dying of a hemorrhage, you stop the hemorrhage and then you talk about longer term treatment.

Mr. KENNEDY. I didn't mean to minimize the recommendations that you have made.

Baroness COX. I understand that. I think that the recommendations are really urgently needed to be considered and implemented. That having been said and talking into the longer term in terms of the discussions and negotiations, there is one point I would like to make then, that I think it would be very important indeed in the future for Nagorno-Karabakh itself to be represented to be an active partner in the discussions and in any negotiations affecting its own future.

So whatever the forum that may follow, and I don't have any magic solution to that—there clearly are conflicts issues—I would like to see a stage by stage process, these recommendations implemented, peace regained, and then a civilized and democratic procedure for discussion of the future but which does involve the people most directly concerned directly.

Mr. KENNEDY. I certainly didn't mean to minimize the importance of your recommendations, and I recognize that they are more dealing with the immediate needs; but I wonder if maybe Dr. Bonner might want to address herself to the fundamental issues that have led us to this point.

Dr. BONNER. [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonov]. Do you mean the fundamental issues of Nagorno- Karabakh?

Mr. KENNEDY. Well, I just mean that what you have here is a series of recommendations that deal with communications. It deals with cease fires. It deals with the necessity of normalizing certain kinds of relationships, but it doesn't deal with how the central issue that has gotten us to this stage is going to be resolved.

I just wonder whether some people have given thought to how that negotiation will take place, who is going to negotiate, what points are that ought to be discussed.

Dr. BONNER. [speaking through translator Alexei Semyonov]. It is difficult to know who can represent the two sides. Before he died Andrei Sakharov had just finished his version of a proposed constitution. His vision of the future for the Soviet Union was a federation of independent—of fifty independent parts, not a form of hierarchical structure for the Soviet Union in which there were center republics and the autonomies of different sorts but a flat structure in which all autonomous regions or ethnic groups receive equal status and equal representation.

From the moment the Soviet Union collapsed it was clear that that constitution was no longer valid as a proposal for the future of the Soviet Union, but there are more and more voices in the Soviet Union media, in the press, which say that we have to return at least to the fundamental assumptions of that document.

The fundamental humanitarian assumption of that constitution was with every people independent of its size or the territory have the right to self- determination toward some statehood, and so on. I believe that our form of Soviet Union will have to go through a transformation.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much.

Mr. Shabad, can you take thirty seconds?

Mr. SHABAD. Well, I want to comment on the question Mr. Kennedy asked about, the technology of negotiations.

There are delegations appointed by the Presidents Mutalibov and Yeltsin who will act as mediators. There are delegations of Azerbaijan and Armenia headed by the second persons of each republic and another delegation of Nagorno-Karabakh Region which is considered as a part of Azerbaijan as Azerbaijani delegation.

Then the treatments between them already started and the main topic of the negotiations will be the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh, to the extent to which it will be self-governing.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you. You just about made thirty seconds. As a parliamentarian, that's tough to do. We thank you.

I want to thank this distinguished panel. We have taken some period of time. We have another distinguished panel that we want to hear from that may have some other points of view. We apologize for keeping them waiting, but thank you all very, very much. You are certainly welcome to stay. I hope you do, and listen to the testimony.

While they are coming forward, let me introduce Dr. David Nissman. Dr. Nissman is a specialist on the Turkic peoples of Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus. He completed his doctorate at Columbia University and is the author of "The Soviet Union and Iranian Azerbaijan."

Dr. Nissman was the director of nationalities broadcasting at Radio Liberty from 1975 to 1978. He is currently a consultant on Soviet-Turkic affairs to various U.S. government agencies.

Joining him is Dr. Nadir Mekhtiyev. Dr. Mekhtiyev, a biochemist by training, is the Chairman of the Human Rights Committee of Azerbaijan's Supreme Soviet. He also heads Azerbaijan's Helsinki Watch.

Dr. Mekhtiyev participated in the Armenian-Azerbaijani negotiations brokered by Boris Yeltsin and President Nazarbayev. He has also taken part in direct talks between Armenian and Azerbaijani legislators.

And finally, Alexander Arzoumanian. Mr. Arzoumanian was a top aide to Armenia's President Ter-Petrossyan and today serves as Plenipotentiary Representative of Armenia to the United States and Canada. He has been sent to the United States by President Ter-Petrossyan and the Armenian Parliament to ultimately open Armenia's Embassy to the United States.

He is an authoritative source on Armenian affairs and Nagorno-Karabakh.

We welcome our three very distinguished representatives and apologize again for keeping you waiting.

Now I understand Mr. Arzoumanian has to leave early. So if I might, with the deference of the other two, recognize him first.

Mr. ARZOUMANIAN [speaking through translator Dr. Ruben Adalian]. Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF ALEXANDER ARZOUMANIAN, PLENIPOTENTIARY REPRESENTATIVE OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. Chairman, I am the Plenipotentiary Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United States. The President, Prime Minister, and Parliament of the democratically elected Armenian government have assigned me to represent Armenia in North America, to advocate diplomatic recognition of Armenia, to set up an Armenian embassy in the United States——

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Arzoumanian, could you pull that a little more closely to you? These microphones are not as sensitive as they could be.

Mr. ARZOUMANIAN [speaking through the translator].. To set up an Armenian embassy here in the United States when recognition is extended, and to assist Armenian-Americans and all others with their many commercial and humanitarian projects in Armenia.

President Levon Ter-Petrossyan, the Armenian people, and I sincerely thank you for holding this hearing. We also thank you for all the work the Helsinki commission has done to promote and protect the human rights of not only Armenians but also all other minorities and individuals.

Your work has been distinguished for accurately calling attention to human rights violations whenever they occur and regardless of attempts to justify those violations. The Nagorno- Karabakh crisis has been and continues to be a situation which deserves your attention.

In the short time I have today, I would like to outline four factors which are critical to stopping human rights violations and bringing peace to the region. Then I will be happy to answer any questions.

First and foremost, democracy and democratic choices must be respected by the Republics, by Moscow, and by the international community. Despite the cost, Armenia has firmly established itself as a democracy.

On October 16th we held multi-party presidential elections in which each candidate had equal and free access to the media, and on September 21 we held a referendum on independence in compliance with the Soviet law on secession.

We invited international observers to both elections, and we are firmly committed to maintaining transparency in Armenia. In addition, Armenia has adopted and implemented the Treaty on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and major human rights treaties, including the United Nations Bill of Rights and all CSCE Agreements.

We believe Armenia has met all the conditions the United States, other countries, and international law have established for diplomatic recognition, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those members of Congress who have urged President Bush to recognize Armenia and to also publicly repeat Armenia's request for recognition and admission to international organizations, including the U.N. and CSCE.

Armenia's record of democratization stands in contrast to other Republics including Azerbaijan's. As long as this contrast in policy and behavior exists, a solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis will probably not be possible. Anything the United States can do to promote democracy in our region, therefore, is deeply appreciated.

Second, please understand that the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh is not a territorial dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Soviet and Azerbaijani forces have used that characterization for years now to justify their repeated escalations in violence.

Since Stalin reversed Azerbaijan's December 1, 1920 acknowledgement that Nagorno-Karabakh and Nakhichevan were Armenian territories by rewarding Azerbaijan with jurisdiction over Nagorno-Karabakh and then imposed a six kilometer land corridor to separate Armenia from Nagorno-Karabakh, the issues have been human rights, fundamental fairness, and respect for law.

For decades, Armenians living under Azerbaijani jurisdiction suffered brutal persecution, and for decades Armenians petitioned for relief.

In 1987 and 1988, the Armenians of Nagorno- Karabakh continued such appeals and peacefully sought to exercise their rights to self-determination to free themselves from Stalin's condemnation and decades of persecution. Armenia, like many other countries then and now, simply supports the exercise of those rights.

In response to this peaceful movement, unfortunately, Azerbaijan countered with pogroms, deportations, and other forms of violence to which other witnesses here can attest. The Armenian government acknowledges that after months of repeated Azerbaijani attacks, Armenians became convinced that Soviet forces were not defending them. Armenians fought back.

When more than 300,000 Armenians were driven from Azerbaijan, 150,000 Azerbaijanis left Armenia. This was at a time before Armenia had a democratic government. Since a democratic government has taken power in Armenia, we have repeatedly, if unsuccessfully, requested that all refugees be given the right to return to their homes or receive compensation.

Today, local Armenians increasingly defend themselves against attacks from Azerbaijani OMON forces. These acts of self-defense, however, do not rise to the level which Azerbaijani and Soviet offi-

cials, including Azerbaijani President Mutalibov, former Interior Minister Pugo, former Supreme Soviet Chairman Lukianov, former Defense Minister Yazov, former KGB Chairman Khruchkov, and other Communist hardliners, alleged to justify massive human rights violations.

The Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh have repeatedly called for international observers and the news media to verify the situation for themselves. With few exceptions, however, observers and the media have been denied entry.

Third, the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh relates to the issue of how the entire Soviet empire will break up. Some Republics claim independence from Moscow based on their right of self-determination, but behave like an imperial Moscow when the question is self-determination for autonomous regions and minorities within their own Republics. This is a serious problem.

If Azerbaijan can show that such problems can be resolved by the use of massive military force without real consequences until the depopulation of Armenians is irreversible or that such force can be justified, it will set a terrible precedent for other Republics.

Fourth, an finally, there is the bold initiative of Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev. Where the central Soviet government itself was guilty of exacerbating and actively participating in the anti-Armenian violence, these Republic leaders have sought to bring a genuine negotiated solution.

Unfortunately, the Azerbaijani OMON only escalated its attacks following the initial success of this diplomatic initiative. However, the introduction of Russian and Kazakh observers to Nagorno-Karabakh, written commitments and negotiations are all positive steps.

Thank you very much, and I will be happy to answer any questions.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Mr. Arzoumanian. I want to recognize, because we are running late, Dr Nissman right away. We would be pleased to hear his statement.

TESTIMONY OF DR. DAVID NISSMAN, EXPERT ON AZERBAIJAN

Dr. NISSMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Commission.

From the Azerbaijani point of view, the issues connected with the Armenian claims to Nagorno-Karabakh can only be resolved after the conditions which created the problem in the first place are removed.

These are: The retraction of Armenia's territorial claims to territories belonging to Azerbaijan; the retraction also by Armenia of actions taken by the Armenian government and parliamentary organs, including the annexation of the NKAO by Armenia; election of representatives to Armenia's parliament from that territory; and the repatriation of some 250,000 Azeris driven out of their ancestral homes and off Armenian territories and compensation for the possessions and everything else they lost as a result of this expulsion.

With regard to Armenia's historical claim to Nagorno-Karabakh, the Tsarist administrator Yermolov took a census of the region in

1823, at which time the ethnic composition of the present territory was 78 percent Turkic and 22 percent Armenian. One of the conditions of the Treaty of Turkmenchay in 1928 which ended the Russo-Persian War was that Armenians from Iran received permission to resettle in the Russian Empire

As a consequence, approximately 50,000 people moved into this territory, all in the area of Nagorno-Karabakh. A second wave of Armenian immigrants followed during and after the Crimean War, an a third wave following the Turkish genocide of 1915.

By the time Soviet power was established in 1920, Armenians constituted slightly more than half of Karabakh's population. At present time, as you know, it totals some 75 percent.

An understanding of the pattern of Armenian movement into the NKAO and the fact that it has only taken place over the last 200 years is critical when evaluating the Armenian claim that Nagorno-Karabakh is part of a "Greater Armenia."

This claim is not backed by the demographic history of the region. In fact, the Armenians are in Karabakh as a result of nineteenth century Russian colonial policy. Unfortunately, Armenia's claim has been, and is, spread by Soviet central media by partisans of the Armenian cause. This general belief, I might add, has carried over into Western reportage.

In the context of the historical claim to the region which I've just mentioned, the Parliament has announced—Armenian parliament has announced the annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh. To this end, a slate of people's deputies from the NKAO were illegally elected to Armenia's Parliament.

In Azerbaijan, this is viewed as blatant interference in Azerbaijan's internal affairs. It must be borne in mind that Nagorno-Karabakh does not even border the Republic of Armenia. Even Moscow, which has played a relatively passive role and almost pointless role in the Armenian-Azeri dispute, maintains that the annexation and illegal parliamentary elections run counter to the law.

The last time Armenia annexed a large portion of Azerbaijan's territory, the effort was successful. Following the Second World War, three of Azerbaijan's rayons were tacked onto Armenia. This effort was backed by Stalin. In the aftermath, 100,000 Azeris were expelled from the newly acquired Armenian territory and forced to take refuge in an Azerbaijan economically unprepared to receive them.

In the first months of 1988 a new wave of Azeri refugees from the then Armenian SSR began to arrive in Azerbaijan. By the end of December 1988, this number had grown to 130,000. They had been forced to leave behind them their houses, jobs and land.

These were not Azeris who had moved into Armenian territory over the last few years or even during the Soviet period, but people who had populated the same villages and lands for centuries. Their sudden arrival and their plight began to be covered widely in an Azeri press which had hitherto suppressed in the Soviet style any hint of this potential for violence and ethnic conflict.

As the number of refugees swelled, so did incidents of Armenian-Azeri ethnic violence. Armenians began to leave Azerbaijan, justifiably afraid for their lives and property. The Azeri refugees from Armenia, homeless and without jobs, tended to congregate in urban

centers like Baku and Sumgait and turned into powerful and potentially violent mobs.

An additional problem is that, for the most part, these are rural workers, peasants, lacking the skills to easily accommodate themselves to urban conditions. As of this writing, there are approximately 250,000 such Azeri refugees from Armenia.

Under these circumstances, it is only natural that one of Azerbaijan's demands to end the conflict is the repatriation of these refugees. I might add as a final footnote that efforts have been made to portray this issue as a Christian-Muslim conflict. This has no basis in fact.

I suspect that it is one designed to appeal to Western insecurities about the nature of Islam and Islam's intentions. It is part of a picture which tries to portray the Azeri Turks as the same terrible Turks described in era following the 1915 massacre of the Armenians. The Azeri Turks and the Ottoman Turks cannot be equated in this regard.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Doctor. Now Mr. Mekhtiyev, who I want to thank again for being with us.

TESTIMONY OF DR. NADIR MEKHTIYEV, MEMBER OF THE AZERBAIJAN SUPREME SOVIET

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through translator, Professor Oleg Nariman-Bekov]. Distinguished Chairmen, Members of Congress, Baroness Cox, Elena Bonner——

Chairman HOYER. If you could pull that microphone just a little closer, the microphone, it would be helpful. Thank you very much, sir.

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through translator Nariman-Bekov]. I'm sorry—Members of the Russian Parliament, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the sovereign democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, I would like to thank the Helsinki commission of the United States Congress for inviting me to testify before you today. My name is Nadir Mekhtiyev, and I am here today in my capacity as Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan.

Forces who manipulate the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh for their own ends, especially the Center, have sought repeatedly to keep the region unstable, thereby creating an excuse for Moscow's constant and unhelpful intervention. The conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh was unleashed by anti- democratic forces who are opposed to goodwill among all peoples of this earth.

The people of Azerbaijan consider their multi-nationalism a national treasure, historically inherited, and an indispensable condition of our existence and of our true democratic development. Unfortunately, the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh has become a trump card for those who wish to create and manipulate tension in the region to achieve political and economic goals.

By way of historical background, I would like to tell you that between 1918 and 1988 there were three distinct deportations of Azeri Turks from Armenia.

From 1918 to 1920, more than 280,000 Azeri Turks were deported from Armenia. Fifteen thousand people were killed, and Azeri Turk villages in the Erevan, Zangezur and Ejmiadzin regions of Armenia were completely destroyed.

From 1948 to 1951, more than 100,000 Azerbaijanis [Stalin prohibited the name "Azeri Turks"] were deported from Armenia at Moscow's insistence. This was to provide space for Armenians returning from abroad.

In 1988, more than 200,000 Azerbaijanis were forced to leave Armenia. More than 100 people died during this tragic moment in our history, including women, children and the elderly.

In 1989 the situation worsened. More than 1,000 Azerbaijani families were forced to flee their native villages in Nagorno-Karabakh. They came to Baku, and in an ironic twist they became refugees in their own country.

These families, numbering close to 10,000 individuals, were joined in Baku and in other places in Azerbaijan by more than 50,000 Meskhetian Turks who were forced to leave their homes in Central Asia. Azerbaijan, thus, has a refugee problem of enormous dimensions.

I am deeply saddened to say that certain groups in Azerbaijan and elsewhere used the anger and frustration of these displaced persons to further their own ends, and in February 1988 the tragedy in Sumgait occurred. This left more than 30 dead, Armenians and people of other nationalities, as a result of unspeakable, barbarous acts.

On January 13, 1990, these atrocities were repeated in Baku, and more than 70 Armenian lives were lost. All the world knows that on January 19 and 20, 1990, Soviet troops invaded Baku, and more than 150 citizens of different nationalities were murdered: Azerbaijanis, Russians, Jews, Lezgins, and others.

The legacy of this tragedy will never leave our people. The tragedies of February 1988 and January 1990 are still under investigation, and the results of that investigation have yet to be made public.

The situation in Nagorno-Karabakh today is, to a great extent, complicated by heavily armed terrorist groups which are beyond the jurisdiction and control of the President of Armenia or any official government body. These terrorists act not only against the native Azerbaijani population but at the same time, target Armenians who actively seek an end to the conflict.

Following negotiations with Armenian leaders from Nagorno-Karabakh in Baku earlier this summer, one member of the Armenian negotiating team was gunned down in the streets of Stepanakert.

I believe that the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict lies in the creation of a democratically determined autonomous region in the framework of a sovereign Azerbaijan. This would grant equal rights for all individuals, regardless of nationality, politics or religion, in accord with all international human rights laws.

Neither fire and bloodshed nor ethnic and religious hatred will solve the problems of the innocent people, both Azerbaijani and Armenian, who inhabit Nagorno-Karabakh. Any attempts to charac-

terize the situation as Muslim versus Christian are clearly political provocations and will only exacerbate the conflict.

I believe that Armenian and Azerbaijani people, each with a great history and culture, are actively seeking an end to this horrible conflict. At a meeting in Moscow on September 18, representatives of the Armenian parliamentary Human Rights Commission sat down with us, their Azerbaijani counterparts, for what I hope will be a series of talks that will lead to the peace we are so desperately seeking.

Representatives of the Andrei Sakharov Congress took part, including Baroness Cox, who presided at this initial meeting. I must tell all those present that we are extremely grateful for her help. At this meeting we agreed to the following points:

An immediate cease fire and end to military operations;

Withdrawal of illegal Armenian military groups and Azerbaijani OMON troops from the region;

Return of refugees from both sides;

Start of direct negotiations between the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities in Nagorno-Karabakh with the participation of independent international observers.

These points were delivered to Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev, and were included in the joint communique issued by Presidents Yeltsin, Nazarbayev, Ter-Petrossyan and Mutalibov at their historic meeting in Zheleznovodsk on September 23. As you know, these talks are continuing with the aim of developing concrete measures to settle the conflict.

I believe that history has given us a chance to negotiate an end to this tragic and bloody conflict. The Yeltsin-Nazarbayev initiative, the continuation of talks between the Human Rights Commissions of the Armenian and Azerbaijani Parliaments, and now the attention of the Helsinki Commission of the U.S. Congress, give us the first glimmer of hope for the first time in the four years of this ordeal.

I am confident that the people of Azerbaijan as well as the people of Armenia find support and understanding in the country of Jefferson and Lincoln. You have inspired so many people of the world to strive for that precious thing that we call freedom. You will continue to inspire us, and we are grateful.

I would like to conclude my remarks by inviting the distinguished members of the Helsinki Commission of the U.S. Congress to travel to Azerbaijan at the earliest opportunity. We welcome your presence in Nagorno-Karabakh, which will be seen as a confidence building measure and, like these hearings, will give hope and encouragement to the people who live there.

Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much for that excellent statement, Mr. Mekhtiyev. I would like to ask Mr. Mekhtiyev if he keeps—his Commission or Committee—lists of those people who have been displaced or that he believes need to be restored to their homes.

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator]. In Azerbaijan?

Chairman HOYER. As I understand it, he's talking about Azerbaijanis having been displaced from their homes in Nagorno-Kara-

bakh or in Armenia, but I think Nagorno-Karabakh is what he was referring to.

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator]. We have that list at home. We do not have it with us now.

Chairman HOYER. I understand that. Let me ask him: Have there been discussions between representatives of Azerbaijan and Armenia with reference to the restoration of those homes to the people displaced?

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator]. Yes, we have discussed that problem, and we came to the conclusion that all of them should be guaranteed their homes and all conditions for a normal life.

Chairman HOYER. Now when you say we came to that conclusion, does that mean your Armenian interlocutors and yourself or your Commission?

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator]. Yes. At discussions between the Committees for Human Rights of the Parliaments of Armenia and Azerbaijan which were taking place in Moscow with the participation of Baroness Cox, it was said that those refugees from Armenia who are now in Azerbaijan are the citizens of Armenia, and refugees from Azerbaijan who are living in different parts of the Soviet Union are citizens of Azerbaijan, and they have to be restored in their rights.

Chairman HOYER. Is that policy being pursued now?

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator]. Yes. The answer is yes. The government is very positive. Its attitude is very positive. It says yes to all these points, and this is one of the most important points in solving the problem.

Chairman HOYER. I would like Mr. Arzoumanian to comment on Mr. Mekhtiyev's observation that the solution to this problem was the creation of an autonomous region for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Mr. ARZOUMANIAN [speaking for himself]. I will answer in Armenian.

Mr. ARZOUMANIAN [speaking through the translator, Dr. Adalian]. The Armenian side in contra-distinction to the Azerbaijani is not engaging in declarations but is rather taking concrete steps in order to resolve the matter of the refugees.

According to the agreement reached at Zheleznovodsk, Armenia is prepared to take the villagers deported from the village of Nuvadi. It may be that Mr. Mekhtiyev is not aware of the fact that on Monday the Minister of the Interior of Armenia met with the villagers of Nuvadi. Two Azeri families have already returned to their village, and that there is a written understanding that the other villagers will gradually be returning home as well.

The Ministry of Interior of Armenia is assisting in the return of the Azeri refugees to their village.

Chairman HOYER. If I can interrupt just one second. Obviously, Baroness Cox has to go. Baroness, we very much appreciate your being with us. We have a great respect for the work that you're doing and the commitment that you have. We think it is a very, very useful work, and we look forward to working with you in this effort to try to bring human rights recognition and some degree of peace to this region.

Thank you.

Baroness COX. Thank you very much. I have to fly to Canada.

Chairman HOYER. Again, thank you very much, Baroness. Mr. Arzoumanian, excuse me for interrupting you.

Mr. ARZOUMANIAN [speaking through the translator, Dr. Adalian]. I am confining my statement to the case of the villagers of Nuvadi since they are the only ones who have officially requested from the government of Armenia to return to their village.

Chairman HOYER. Now, Mr. Arzoumanian, maybe I missed the total implication of your answer, but the question that I asked concerns the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. Mr. Mekhtiyev indicated that he thought the solution to this issue, and taking him at his word with reference to his concern and the concern of his Human Rights Commission, is the creation of a sovereign or an autonomous region for Nagorno-Karabakh, but still remaining within the framework of Azerbaijan.

Obviously, his testimony is that historically Nagorno-Karabakh has been a part of Azerbaijan and is not physically next to or contiguous with Armenia. I'd like your comment on that proposal as to whether that is an item or a possible solution that you are pursuing.

Mr. ARZOUMANIAN [speaking through the translator, Dr. Adalian]. I don't want to engage in a debate on history with the distinguished gentleman, but it has been the position of the Armenians for over the last three years that indeed it is the autonomy of the region that is being requested by the Armenians.

Therefore, for the last 3 years it has been the military forces that have governed Armenia. We are indeed in agreement on that matter.

Chairman HOYER. Do I draw from your answer then that, yes, that is a useful alternative to pursue if in fact the Azerbaijanis would pursue it? As I understand your answer, you are saying that we would like that region to be autonomous, but the Azerbaijanis are not allowing that to happen by interposing themselves by military force. I understand that.

What I'm trying to get at is: there are obviously two, at least two, solutions here. One could be that Nagorno-Karabakh could be assumed into Armenia, notwithstanding the fact that there is not physical proximity.

The other solution would contemplate, as Mr. Mekhtiyev suggested, an autonomous region. Autonomous regions, we know, have had some problems, Serbia being, I guess, the most current example of the problem what with its autonomous region of Kosovo. But I'm asking you, is it the position of your government that Nagorno-Karabakh ought to be a part of Armenia or would it be acceptable as an end result that it would be recognized as an autonomous region wherein the human rights of the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh would be fully respected and their autonomy would be respected?

Mr. ARZOUMANIAN [speaking through the translator, Dr. Adalian]. The democratically elected government of Armenia has never stated that Nagorno-Karabakh ought to be part of Armenia. The question is the self-determination of the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The human rights of the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh have been trampled, and it is the respect of human rights that is being commended, as well as the regulation of legal organs of the government of Karabakh as well as the participation of Karabakh as an equal partner with Armenia and Azerbaijan in the resolution of the problem.

Chairman HOYER. Now one last question, just so I can completely understand. What I thought I heard you saying was that it would be your government's position that Nagorno- Karabakh ought to be, in effect, a sovereign, independent state itself, as opposed to an autonomous region within Azerbaijan. Is that a correct interpretation, or perhaps I didn't hear you?

Mr. ARZOUMANIAN [speaking through the translator, Dr. Adalian]. We regard the restoration of the autonomy of the region as the first step in creating the conditions whereby the Armenians of Karabakh, in conjunction with Azeri and Armenian authorities, can determine what the fate of the Armenians of Karabakh will be in the future.

We want to create the conditions where the Armenians of Karabakh determine their own fate.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you. Let me point out that, as I am sure you know, the Helsinki Commission does not perceive its role within the framework of the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act to interpose itself on those decisions which are essentially internal political decisions. However, it is the business of the Commission that those decisions be carried out in a peaceful process within which self-determination can be effected.

I might also add, however, that the concept is a very complicated one, as the example of the United States demonstrates. I don't know the answer to the question, but as Yugoslavia reflects, it is a particularly emotional and even violent one.

Now the Soviet constitution provides for secession. I have no idea what the Azerbaijani constitution provides for, if in fact there is such a document. I presume there is some sort.

First, is there an Azerbaijani constitution?

Mr. MEKHTIYEV Yes, sir, of course.

Chairman HOYER. All right. Does that constitution provide for a process of secession by a constituent part?

Mr. ARZOUMANIAN [speaking through the translator, Mr. Adalian]. Congressman, if you could excuse us, we have to catch a plane.

Chairman HOYER. Certainly. Thank you very, very much.

This will be the last question I ask. Then I'm going to turn to Mr. Lehman.

Dr. Nissman, we have ignored you, and I apologize for that. I found your testimony excellent.

Dr. NISSMAN. That's quite all right.

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator Mr. Nariman-Bekov]. Yes. There are certain parts in the constitution which allows those people who are striving for their independence and their sovereignty to do that according to the international jurisdictional laws.

For example, if you take Nakhichevan, which is an autonomous republic, it has its own internal laws, and it is a sovereign republic

in the framework of Azerbaijan. Of course, it says that if any autonomous formation wants to be an independent part of it, it has to do that according to the existing constitutional laws.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you. Mr. Lehman?

Mr. LEHMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to express my appreciation to you again for allowing me to sit in with your committee today, and I have gained an appreciation of the work you do here and the importance of this committee. I am very grateful.

I want to thank this panel for their help in trying to shed some light on the situation as well.

There is an old saying that violence begets violence. Obviously, that is true here. I guess people who think they are right can argue forever about who started it in the first place, but the point is to stop it and pull the combatants apart and try to impose a just structure on a situation.

In that regard, not all the violence is shooting. There is violence of other kinds. For the past 2 years, Armenians have complained about Azerbaijan's rail blockade of Armenia. Do you dispute that there is a blockade and, if you don't, what is its purpose?

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator, Mr. Nariman-Bekov.]. We agree with you that violence is a result of some other violence. So we are against any kind of violence in that region, and the fact that we have this conflict situation there is because some people are thinking that way.

As for the economic blockade that we have there, there are two possible reasons for that. The first one is you have to see that the railroad that goes to Armenia through the territory of Azerbaijan travels through violent regions.

The people who are putting their trains over there—They have no guarantee of their safety. They are afraid of going through that territory.

The second reason is that there are certain persons who use that difficult situation. For example, the leader of Nakhichevan, who was in previous days the Communist leader of Azerbaijan, is using that situation to make an economic blockade against the wishes of the President and Parliament of Azerbaijan.

So you have to see what are the real reasons of that blockade, and you have to find out who is really guilty for that.

Mr. LEHMAN. I guess you have answered my question, that there is a blockade. With the change in leadership, I am hopefull that the situation will improve. Is that an accurate description?

I learned a new word today, Mr. Chairman, a new description of evil, I guess, the Center. What is the Center's role in that blockade? Does the Soviet government play any role or could it play a constructive role here?

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator, Mr. Nariman-Bekov]. Certainly, we are sure the Center is using blockades and all other things to cause tension in that region, to use that tension for their own political goals.

Besides that, when we were talking about Nakhichevan, Nakhichevan is a separate part of Azerbaijan which is divided from Azerbaijan by Armenian territory; and Nakhichevan is a part of Azerbaijan, and they are making sometimes their own decisions.

You have to know also, talking about economic blockades, that now there is nothing in the Soviet Union to be taken by trains. We don't even have empty trains. We don't have goods coming to Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia itself.

So what is the economic blockade you are talking about? We have nothing to get there.

Mr. LEHMAN. When I was in Armenia, we were fortunate to have a U.S. government plane. The people flying Aeroflot had to wait two days to get out, because there was no gasoline at the airport. Obviously, the trucks didn't get in.

I want to thank you, Mr. Mekhtiyev. I thought your statement was very enlightening, very conciliatory, and obviously a product of a man who cares about human rights and is interested in a peaceful solution.

Chairman HOYER. Dr. Nissman and Mr. Mekhtiyev——

Mr. LEHMAN. Mr. Chairman, could I ask Mr. Nissman one question?

Chairman HOYER. You certainly can.

Mr. LEHMAN. I'm sorry I didn't jump right in.

First of all, the view of history you gave here is obviously open to dispute, but I'm not going to get into that. I'm not a historian. I do, though, want to recognize the fact that you described what happened to the Armenian people at the beginning of this century as a genocide, something this government here is not yet willing to do, but something you stated unequivocally. I appreciate that statement.

With respect to the refugee situation, obviously, there were a lot of refugees in 1988, refugees on all sides of the borders. How much of that problem was related to the earthquake?

Dr. NISSMAN. With regard to the Azeri refugees, virtually none. They were from a different region.

Mr. LEHMAN. I would just state, that's in some dispute. I'm not in a position right here to——

Dr. NISSMAN. They were—the Azeris did not come from Laminakan, which is where the earthquake was.

Mr. LEHMAN. Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

I want to ask a final question, for then we have to conclude.

Dr. Nissman—and Mr. Mekhtiyev if you want to comment, you heard the seven recommendations of Baroness Cox with reference to moving ahead on solving some of the problems that exist. Can you comment on those?

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator, Mr. Nariman-Bekov]. I am familiar with this program, the suggestions of Baroness Cox. She gave them to me a month and a half ago, and I fully agree with them.

When we were negotiating with the Committee of Human Rights of Armenia, we came up with suggestions on four points, and these four points include all these seven points of Baroness Cox.

That means we have to stop the fire. We have to start exchanging refugees. We have to start negotiations between Azerbaijani and Armenian communities that live there. If not the suggestions of Baroness Cox, we wouldn't have these four common points with the Armenian side.

Chairman HOYER. One additional recommendation that she made was deployment of U.N. peacekeeping forces. Are you in agreement with that, is the Azerbaijani Government in agreement with that proposal, and would they accept or invite such a body?

Mr. MEKHTIYEV [speaking through the translator, Mr. Nariman-Bekov]. The answer is yes, and the best approvement of this positive answer is that the last session of the Supreme Soviet in Azerbaijan has declared independence of Azerbaijan, and being independent, being a democratic state, it should be a member of United Nations and it should obey all the regulations and international laws of the United Nations.

So, of course, they will never be against that. I will do my best to support this decision to send the observers of United Nations to that part of our country.

[Translator]. If you have heard his statement, he said that he is inviting in the name of our Parliament the representatives of the Helsinki Commission of the United States and the U.N. observers to visit Azerbaijan and see what happens there.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Mekhtiyev, I want to thank you for that invitation. I want to point out that Bulgaria's Ambassador to the Vienna Follow-up Meeting issued an invitation to the Commission to visit Bulgaria to investigate the Turkish minority issue. We went and visited Kurdzhali, which you may be familiar with on the Turkish border.

I'm not so sure they were happy about the results of our visit there, but we are certainly going to pursue your invitation, and we will come to Nagorno-Karabakh.

I want to thank both of you again for being with us and thank all of our witnesses for contributing to this critical issue.

The Commission is, obviously, very concerned, as I made it very clear that though not signatories, the Republics follow Helsinki documents, United Nations documents and other international accords dealing with human rights.

That is our concern. And we are equally concerned for the violation of human rights of Azerbaijanis and Armenians, as well as Bulgarians and Americans.

We thank you for being here. We are very appreciative, as I said before, of all of your attendance. The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at 4:53 P.M.]

APPENDIX

STATEMENT BY REP. STENY HOYER
CHAIRMAN, HELSINKI COMMISSION
HEARING ON NAGORNO-KARABAKH
OCTOBER 23, 1991

LET ME WELCOME YOU TO THIS HEARING ON A SUBJECT OF GREAT IMPORTANCE AND EQUALLY POWERFUL EMOTION. MOST OF US WHO FOLLOW THE USSR REALIZED THE EXPLOSIVE IMPACT OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS UNDER PERESTROIKA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS WHEN WE READ ABOUT RALLIES BY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF ARMENIANS IN YEREVAN IN LATE 1987. THEY WERE DEMANDING THAT NAGORNO-KARABAKH, AN AUTONOMOUS REGION IN AZERBAIJAN LARGELY INHABITED BY ARMENIANS, BE JOINED WITH ARMENIA.

THIS DEMAND, NOT SURPRISINGLY, DID NOT GO DOWN WELL WITH AZERBAIJAN, AND THE ENSUING YEARS HAVE WITNESSED THE CONSEQUENCES OF IRRECONCILABLE PRIORITIES: HUNDREDS OF DEATHS AND MASS POPULATION TRANSFERS, WITH HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS FLEEING ACROSS THE BORDERS OF REPUBLICS WHERE THEY HAD LIVED FOR YEARS, IF NOT GENERATIONS. THE ARMENIAN-AZERBAIJANI CONFLICT WAS THE FIRST OF MANY NATIONAL CLASHES THAT HAVE ROCKED SOVIET SOCIETY IN RECENT YEARS AND IT HAS BEEN AS INTRACTABLE AS ANY OF THEM.

THE BATTLE HAS BEEN FOUGHT NOT ONLY WITH WEAPONS BUT WITH LANGUAGE TAKEN FROM THE HELSINKI ACCORDS. THE ARMENIANS CLAIM THAT THEIR CASE IS BASED ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RIGHT OF ARMENIANS IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH TO SELF-DETERMINATION, PURSUANT TO PRINCIPLE VIII OF THE ACCORDS. THE AZERBAIJANIS COUNTER THAT THE CRUCIAL ISSUE IS THE SANCTITY OF RECOGNIZED BORDERS, PURSUANT TO PRINCIPLE III OF THE FINAL ACT. THESE TWO CONTRADICTORY IMPERATIVES HAVE LONG, AS IT WERE, LURKED IN THE DARK CORNERS OF THE HELSINKI PROCESS, AND EVENTS IN YUGOSLAVIA DEMONSTRATE THE DANGERS OF EXPLORING TOO DEEPLY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM. STILL, IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECALL THAT PRINCIPLE I OF THE FINAL ACT ENVISIONS PEACEFUL CHANGES OF FRONTIERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW.

TODAY, AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF BLOODSHED AND THE DOWNFALL, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, OF CENTRAL SOVIET INSTITUTIONS, THE PROSPECTS OF REACHING ANOTHER SORT OF COMPROMISE THROUGH DIRECT INTER-REPUBLIC NEGOTIATIONS APPEAR BETTER THAN BEFORE. IF SO, THE RAMIFICATIONS WOULD EXTEND WELL BEYOND ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN.

THE HELSINKI COMMISSION RECENTLY VISITED ARMENIA, WHERE WE MET WITH PRESIDENT TER-PETROSSYAN. HE INDICATED THAT AN IMPENDING AGREEMENT BROKERED BY PRESIDENTS YELTSIN AND NAZARBAEV OFFERED PROMISE. SINCE THEN, THE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN SIGNED. ONE REASON FOR CONVENING THIS HEARING IS TO EXAMINE WHETHER THERE ARE STILL REASONS FOR CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM ABOUT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. FOR THAT PURPOSE, WE HAVE INVITED AN UNUSUAL GROUP OF EXPERT WITNESSES. WE THANK THEM FOR COMING AND WE ARE VERY EAGER TO HEAR THEIR TESTIMONY.

STATEMENT BY SEN. DENNIS DeCONCINI
CO-CHAIRMAN, HELSINKI COMMISISON
HEARING ON NAGORNO-KARABAKH
OCTOBER 23, 1991

I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN CHAIRMAN HOYER IN WELCOMING OUR DISTINGUISHED WITNESSES. IT HAS BEEN ABOUT FOUR YEARS SINCE THE WORDS "NAGORNO-KARABAKH" BECAME WELL KNOWN TO PEOPLE OTHER THAN ARMENIANS AND AZERIS. THESE WORDS, UNFORTUNATELY, HAVE COME TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH NATIONALIST VIOLENCE AND STRUGGLE OVER DISPUTED TERRITORY.

EACH SIDE IN THIS CONFLICT HAS APPEALED TO HISTORY. BOTH ARMENIANS AND AZERIS CLAIM THAT NAGORNO-KARABAKH HAS BELONGED TO THEM FOR CENTURIES. BOTH SIDES HAVE DISMISSED AND DISPARAGED THE HISTORICAL CASES BROUGHT BY THE OTHER. AND THAT APPLIES BOTH TO ANCIENT AND RECENT HISTORY -- BOTH CLAIM, WITH RESPECT TO THE CONFLICT THAT BEGAN IN LATE 1987, THAT THE OTHER SIDE INITIATED THOSE HOSTILITIES.

SOME OBSERVERS SAY THE KEY TO THIS CLASH IS RELIGION: HOW CAN CHRISTIAN ARMENIA AND MUSLIM, TURKIC AZERBAIJAN POSSIBLY SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES OVER NAGORNO-KARABAKH? MANY CLAIM THAT THE KREMLIN HAS DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PLAY OFF ONE SIDE AGAINST THE OTHER. IN APRIL 1991, HOWEVER, THE SOVIET ARMY OPENLY TOOK SIDES AND ORGANIZED ASSAULTS WITH AZERBAIJANI FORCES AGAINST ARMENIAN VILLAGES IN AND AROUND NAGORNO-KARABAKH, KILLING AND DEPORTING ARMENIANS AND REPOPULATING THE AREA WITH AZERIS.

THIS CONFLICT OVER TERRITORY SEEMS UNSOLVABLE. AND FOR THOSE OF US WHO ARE NEITHER OF ARMENIAN OR AZERI DESCENT, IT IS UNCLEAR HOW JUSTICE COULD BE DONE TO BOTH SIDES. BUT WHAT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE IS THE NECESSITY OF STRICT OBSERVANCE OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF ARMENIANS AND AZERIS IN THE REGION. ALMOST ALL OF TODAY'S BORDERS BETWEEN REPUBLICS IN THE FORMER USSR ARE DISPUTED; IT WOULD BE DISASTROUS TO HAVE A DOZEN NAGORNO-KARABAKHS. THE ONLY WAY TO AVOID THIS -- REGARDLESS OF WHO CONTROLS THE TERRITORY -- IS ADHERENCE TO HELSINKI COMMITMENTS ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS AND NATIONAL MINORITIES.

AGAIN I WELCOME OUR WITNESSES AND LOOK FORWARD TO BEING ENLIGHTENED ON A VERY SERIOUS MATTER.

NEWS from ...

CONGRESSWOMAN
Barbara Boxer
6th District, California

ATTENTION:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT:
Rob Alexander (202) 225-5161

Opening Statement by
U.S. Rep. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif.
before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
23 October 1991

Mr. Chairman, it is a great pleasure to join the members of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe to discuss the prospects for peace in Nagorno-Karabagh. Thank you for the invitation.

I had the great honor of traveling in Armenia and the Soviet Union in August as part of a human rights fact finding delegation, sponsored by the Andre Sakarhov Foundation. I especially want to welcome the president of that organization, my friend Elena Bonner. During my trip, I spent an unforgettable hour with her discussing Nagorno-Karabagh and other human rights issues.

I also met with many of the brave residents of Nagorno-Karabagh, men and women who had lost their homes in horrible raids, pogroms. The violence has ravaged families as hundreds have died and tens of thousands have lost their homes.

One woman told me her story. "Thirty men stormed into my home with masks on and guns pointed. My three children and my in-laws were there and we were terrified. They told us to get out of their country. They trashed everything in my home. We fled with nothing and will never be back."

I was saddened and appalled by the violence, violence which has been condoned, even perpetuated by the Soviet government. It seemed there was only one answer: an outside, neutral force which would stem the violence and participate in negotiations toward peace. Thus, I have proposed a United Nations presence in the region. The response of my Armenian hosts was one of great enthusiasm. Upon returning to the United States, 64 of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle joined with me in calling on President Bush to press for a UN force for the region.

Events have changed rapidly in the region. Armenia has overwhelmingly chosen independence in its elections. Russian President Yeltsin has brokered a peace accord between Armenia and Azerbaijan. But the violence continues. Between 30 and 40 Karabagh Armenians have been killed and people's homes and livelihoods destroyed since the accord was signed.

More than ever, an outside force such as the UN is necessary for the region to prevent violence and promote the message of peace. I hope today's witnesses will share with us their thoughts on the prospects for such a plan.

-30-

CONGRESSMAN

JOE KENNEDY

Press Release

STATEMENT BY REP. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II (D-MA) 10/23/91
BEFORE HELSINKI COMMISSION

I would like to thank Chairman Hoyer and Co-Chairman DeConcini for convening this timely and vitally important hearing. I would like to thank all of the witnesses for coming here today; especially Yelena Bonner, who has continued her dedicated work and that of her heroic husband; the late Andrei Sakharov.

As a Congressman who represents one of the largest Armenian communities in the U.S., this hearing is critical to my constituents. Many of them still have relatives living in Armenia and many of those relatives are directly affected by the outrageous human rights violations that are occurring in Nagorno Karabakh. Now that our attention is turned to the ever-changing events in the Soviet Union, we should be grateful to the Helsinki Commission for refocussing our attention to the unchanged and unresolved conflict in Nagorno Karabakh.

The artificial boundaries of Stalin's Soviet Union have splintered before our eyes, but the lines drawn around Nagorno Karabakh remain in place. These arbitrary lines have institutionalized a policy of official discrimination against Armenians that go beyond simple economic and cultural isolation. It has fueled a conflict that has led to some of the worst human rights practices in the world. Forced deportations, baseless detention, and unwarranted killings bring to light the frustrations and illegitimacy of 70 years of Azerbaijani rule. Today the examples are still prevalent.

*** Recently, it was reported that over 10,000 Armenians had been forced from the Karabakh region. Men, women and children were dragged from their homes, and told not to return.
*** In January of 1990, Azeri security forces in Baku attacked and killed over 100 Armenians.
*** And as late as May 1991, Soviet and Azeri forces collaborated and surrounded two little towns, jailed hundreds and were responsible for the deaths of over 60 innocent Armenians.

The failed coup in the Soviet Union has marked a watershed moment for Moscow. But this historic moment has been diverted for Armenians inside Nagorno Karabakh. Moscow has an opportunity to bring about a peace that ensures the rights of Armenians inside Nagorno-Karabakh. President Yeltsin has shown the way,

but his efforts have fallen short. The years of strife and hatred cannot be solved by a simple visit by a popular leader. That is a bare minimum effort. Concrete mechanisms must be put in place that promotes the self-determination of Armenians in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

An objective mediator can offer the best assurances. As a members of the U.N. Security Council, Moscow and the U.S. can work together to create this opportunity. Whether be by the hand of President Yeltsin or President Gorbachev, Moscow can use its influence in international arena to resolve this conflict. In Western Sahara, the U.N. is now facilitating a referendum that allows a minority population to decide it's own fate. The same could easily be done for Nagorno-Karabakh.

For our part, the U.S. also has a responsibility to help end this conflict. As home of the 2nd largest Armenian population in the world, it is our duty to lend assistance. We have a demonstrated experience in intervening on the side of peace. We have done it in Cambodia; we have done it in Cyprus; and we have done it in Namibia. It is time we work with the Soviets to help bring peace and justice to this troubled region. Today, 700,000 American-Armenians are looking to President Bush to again enter the foreign arena and show leadership on this very issue.

I hope today's hearing will send a message to the White House, the Kremlin and to Baku (Ba-koo) that we in Congress are concerned by the status quo in Nagorno-Karabakh. That we are support the aims and objectives of Armenians. And that we look forward to a coordinated effort to finally bring peace to a historically troubled region.

# # #

EVIDENCE FOR CSCE HEARING, OCTOBER 23 1991.

The Baroness Cox.

I appreciate the opportunity to give evidence here today. In anticipation of so doing, I made a third visit to Armenia, Azerbaijan & Nagorno Karabakh last week, in order to obtain up-to-date evidence. I present the report of this visit as the basis for my contribution.

Delegation to Nagorno Karabakh, the Shaumyan region of Azerbaijan & Yerevan, 16-19 October 1991, with Christian Solidarity International.

Delegation Members:	Baroness Cox
	John Eibner
	Felix Corley
	Alexander Goldin
Accompanying Journalist:	Vaughan Smith

Objectives of Visit:

To visit the Shaumyan Region of Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh to follow up the two previous delegations by the Sakharov Foundation in may & July 1991, both of which were headed by Caroline Cox. The brief for this visit was to assess the level of human rights violations since the Zheleznovodsk Communique of September 23, 1991. The team also had a special interest in the conditions of the christian Church in this area.

Itinerary and Findings:

October 16

Yerevan to Shaumyan by helicopter; visit villages of Karachinar, Buzluk and Verishen. Night in Karachinar.
Due to the closure of Stepanakert Airport to traffic from Yerevan, the only access to the region is by helicopter flights, flying over Azerbaijani air space. It is claimed that 11 helicopters have been shot down in recent months. Flights are therefore uncertain, irregular & dangerous, leaving the area virtually cut off from the outside world, with desperate shortages of medical supplies & food.

Karachinar: A village under repeated attacks. For example: 36 people have been killed in the last month; 4 died in one truck on October 3; daily shelling (numbers of shells range from 2 to 260 a day - 260 fell in the locality 28/29 September) many houses are damaged; some look normal from the outside but the interiors are devastated. 4 to 5 days ago OMON helicopter landed, 2 people were killed and 3 wounded, including a child.

Buzluk: Enforced deportation occurred 13/15 July. The village is now virtually a "ghost village". Visit graveyard: tombs desecrated - marble slabs removed and/or defaced. 3 reasons suggested: stolen as building materials; removal of evidence of Armenian presence; to insult and humiliate. One grave of newly buried man (Adik Arutunyan) killed on the first night of the attack had been exhumed by the Azeris who removed new clothes in which the

body was dressed and his gold teeth. Spoke to his father who showed us his home which had been virtually stripped of belongings. Saw gates of homes with Azeri signs of ownership.

Village retaken by Armenians on September 14. One family was seen returning with belongings; life will be very difficult for deportees as they have lost virtually everything and have been unable to harvest crops.

Verishen: Attacked by Azeris on July 14; retaken by Armenians on September 14 and now being restored.

In this district, 5 Armenian villages suffered deportations; 2 have been retaken by Armenians.

Thursday October 17

Further visits to homes in Karachinar damaged by artillery shelling. Visited one house devastated by shelling on October 10; on that night 4 people died from shelling from the Azeri area of Shefek. According to government statistics 78 Armenian houses have been hit by shells.

Stepanakert: Visit hospital and see patients suffering from wounds inflicted from attacks:
- Magarian, Garikh and Bergedvan, Aristan, both aged 27 from Metztaglar, stopped while driving a tractor and shot, one in the spine, the other in the thigh: both wounds could have been fatal.
- A. Chapar form Mardakert region: the night of October 1/2 OMON attacked the village; 6 men killed, houses burnt and many wounded. This woman, 8 months pregnant, fled to the forest and hid for three days; became very ill and admitted to hospital; baby dead; woman developed brain damage; needs brain surgery but impossible to bring in neurosurgeon because Stepanakert airport closed.
- Alasyan, Bardan, aged 12, shot through the chest at school number 9 at Stepanakert October 9.

Friday October 19

Visit adjacent Azeri/Armenian villages at Kirkejan. Frequent shooting, especially sniping. Visit Azeri side; militia Major talks about Azeri love of peace; gives no allegations or evidence of specific attacks. visit Armenian side: elderly man points to a tree 80 yards away where 2 boys were shot at in the last 24 hours; in this village the 12 year old boy we saw in hospital was shot. The Azeris had cut off water supply so villagers have to go down to the river to collect water which is dirty. Talk to MVD Soviet Colonel who seemed sincere about his peacekeeping role; in the last 2 days has arrested 4 armed Azeris; claims that if fighting starts from one side, they counter-attack.

Visit Tokh in the Gadrut region: funeral of 5 members of Danielyan family, including 5 year old child shot and mutilated in their own home on the night of 16/17 October. Also at the funeral was Anya Badasyan, who had helped the second Sakharov delegation. Her house had been burned down by the Azerbaijani OMON the same night as the Danielyan family were murdered, although she claimed there was no connection between these two events.

Conclusions

a) The policy of systematic deportations of whole Armenian villages, in combined operations of Soviet Army and Azeri OMON troops appeared to have been suspended. There also appears to be a tendency towards greater neutrality by the Soviet troops, which is a welcome & significant development.

b) However, there are reports of increased shootings and kidnappings by both sides. The Soviet Interior Ministry troops, while no longer overtly supporting Azeri armed aggression, have continued attacks upon individuals, according to local informants. We also received reports of asymmetrical treatment at checkpoints: Armenian drivers are stopped & frequently have to pay bribes; Azeris are allowed to pass freely. Members of the delegation witnessed such instances.

c) Several hundred Armenians are still in detention in Azeri prisons, where they are denied basic legal rights and subjected to maltreatment, including torture. We were given an unofficial figure of 320 remaining detainees, with a further 20 people whose destination is unknown.

d) Stepanakert airport remains under the control of Azeri troops, reportedly the previous OMON troops renamed 'transport police', and is closed to flights from Yerevan. The implications are very serious in terms of supplies of food and medicine, as well as for the free flow of civilian travel.

Recommendations

a) The recommendations of the Agreed Communique should be fulfilled as a matter of urgency, particularly:

(i) The return of deportees to their villages, with suitable protection and assistance to re-establish life in the face of problems associated with the destruction of their homes and the loss of belongings, crops and livestock.

(ii) Ceasefire: the activities of all paramilitary groups should cease and the troops of the Soviet Interior Ministry should enforce peace.

(iii) All remaining hostages must be freed and all prisoners must be accorded the full protection of legal rights.

(iv) Normal functioning of transport and communication systems must be restored, especially the re-opening of Stepanakert Airport to flights to Yerevan & elsewhere, and the road from Goris to Stepanakert.

b) President Gorbachev should issue a decree to re-establish democratic local government and civil administrations.

c) There should be free access to prisons by governmental and independent human rights organizations.

d) An international peace-keeping force, eg United Nations, should be deployed.

e) Western aid should be directed to Republics and made conditional on the fulfillment of human rights criteria; these conditions should be monitored by independent bodies.

f) Aid should be made available directly to Nagorno-Karabakh, for both Armenian and Azeri communities.

The situation is extremely serious, with widespread suffering resulting from human rights violations. While some improvements can be welcomed, other developments are a cause for increasing concern. And there is a fear that the situation could deteriorate to the extent of wholesale war. Thus the need for constructive initiative is urgent & imperative.

Caroline Cox,
23/10/91.

STATEMENT OF ALEXANDER ARZOUMANIAN

Plenipotentiary Representative Of The Republic Of Armenia
To The United States And Canada
210 East 58th Street
New York, New York

BEFORE THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

Hearing: The Nagorno-Karabakh Crisis -- Prospects For Resolution

October 23, 1991

Mr. Chairman, I am the Plenipotentiary Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United States. The President, Prime Minister, and Parliament of the democratically elected Armenian government have assigned me to represent Armenia in North America, to advocate diplomatic recognition of Armenia, to set up an Armenian embassy in the United States when recognition is extended, and to assist Armenian-Americans and all others with their many commercial and humanitarian projects in Armenia.

President Levon Ter Petrosian, the Armenian people, and I sincerely thank you for holding this hearing. We also thank you for all the work the Helsinki Commission has done to promote and protect the human rights of not only Armenians but also all other minorities and individuals. Your work has been distinguished for accurately calling attention to human rights violations whenever they occur and regardless of attempts to justify those violations -- The Nagorno-Karabakh crisis has been and continues to be a situtation which deserves your attention.

In the short time I have today, I would like to outline four factors which are critical to stopping human rights violations and bringing peace to the region and then I will be happy to answer any questions.

First, and foremost, democracy and democratic choices must be respected by the Republics, by Moscow, and by the international community. Despite the cost, Armenia has firmly established itself as a democracy. On October 16, we held multi-party presidential elections in which each candidate had equal and free access to the media, and on September 21 we held a referendum on independence in compliance with the Soviet law on secession. We invited international observers to both elections, and we are firmly committed to maintaining transparency in Armenia. In addition, Armenia has adopted and implemented the Treaty on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and major human rights treaties including the United Nations Bill of Rights and all CSCE Agreements.

We believe Armenia has met all the conditions the United States, other countries, and international law have established for diplomatic recognition, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those members of Congress who have urged President Bush to recognize Armenia and to also publicly repeat Armenia's request for recognition and admission to international organizations including the U.N. and CSCE.

Armenia's record of democratization stands in contrast to other Republics including Azerbaijan's. As long as this contrast in policy and behavior exists, a solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis will probably not be possible. Anything the United States can do to promote democracy in our region, therefore, is deeply appreciated.

Second, please understand that the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh is not a territorial dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Soviet and Azerbaijani forces have used that characterization for years now to justify their repeated escalations in violence. Since Stalin reversed Azerbaijan's December 1, 1920 acknowledgment that Nagorno-Karabakh and Nakhichevan were Armenian territories by rewarding Azerbaijan with jurisdiction over Nagorno-Karabakh and then imposed a six kilometer land corridor to separate Armenia from Nagorno-Karabakh, the issues have been human rights, fundamental fairness, and respect for law. For decades, Armenians living under Azerbaijani jurisdiction suffered brutal persecution; and, for decades, Armenians petitioned for relief.

In 1987 and 1988, the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh continued such appeals and peacefully sought to exercise their rights to self-determination to free themselves from Stalin's condemnation and decades of persecution. Armenia, like many other countries then and now, simply supports the exercise of those rights.

In response to this peaceful movement, unfortunately, Azerbaijan countered with pogroms, deportations, and other forms of violence to which other witnesses here can attest. The Armenian government acknowledges that after months of repeated Azerbaijani attacks Armenians

became convinced that Soviet forces were not defending them, Armenians fought back. When more than 300,000 Armenians were driven from Azerbaijan, 150,000 Azerbaijanis left Armenia. This was at a time before Armenia had a democratic government. Since a democratic government has taken power in Armenia, we have repeatedly, if unsuccessfully, requested that all refugees be given the right to return to their homes or receive compensation. Today, local Armenians increasingly defend themselves against attacks from Azerbaijani OMON forces. These acts of self-defense, however, do not rise to the level which Azerbaijani and Soviet officials, (including Azerbaijani President Mutalibov, former Interior Minister Pugo, formerSupreme Soviet Chairman Lukianov, former Defense Minister Yazov, former KGB Chairman Khruchkov, and other communist hardliners,) alleged to justify massive human rights violations. The Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh have repeatedly called for international observers and the news media to verify the situation for themselves. With few exceptions, however, observers and the media have been denied entry.

Third, the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh relates to the issue of how the entire Soviet empire will break up. Some Republics claim independence from Moscow based on their right of self-determination, but behave like an imperial Moscow when the question is self-determination for autonomous regions and minorities within their own Republics. This is a

serious problem. If Azerbaijan can show that such problems can be resolved by the use of massive military force without real consequences until the depopulation of Armenians is irreversible or that such force can be justified, it will set a terrible precedent for other Republics.

Fourth, and finally, there is the bold initiative of Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev. Where the central Soviet government itself was guilty of exacerbating and actively participating in the anti-Armenian violence, these Republic leaders have sought to bring a genuine negotiated solution. Unfortunately, the Azerbaijani OMON only escalated its attacks following the initial success of this diplomatic initiative. However, the introduction of Russian and Kazakh observers to Nagorno-Karabakh, written commitments and negotiations are all positive steps.

Thank you very much, and I will be happy to answer any questions.

APPENDIX

TO STATEMENT OF ALEXANDER ARZOUMANIAN

Plenipotentiary Representative of the
Republic of Armenia

Before the US Commission on Security and
Cooperation in Europe
October 23, 1991

Documents, Chronologies, Commentaries on the Crisis in Mountainous Karabagh April-September, 1991

Prepared by
THE DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS
THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

October 1991

CONTENTS

Armenia's Democracy and Soviet Imperialism
by Levon Ter-Petrossyan

Communication to USSR Leaders, April 22, 1991
by Levon Ter-Petrossyan

The Legalization of Deportations
Azerbaijani Deocuments

Chronology of Events
April 16-September 29, 1991

Getashen and Martunashen. The Story of Two Villages
A Case Study of State Terrorism: Background, events, victims, hostages, sample testimonies

Soviet Forces Attack Armenian Villages Inside Armenia May 6, 1991
Information Office, Parliament of the Republic of Armenia

Chronicle of Azerbaijani Military Aggression Against Armenians
April 29-May 15, 1991

Casualty Lists
April 29-August 11, 1991

Vardan R. Hovanisian, Journalist
Profile of a typical "Bayevik"

Eyewitness Accounts
Andranik. Magarian
Philaret Berikian
Arsen Atanasian
A. Shabad

Data On Population Deported From Artsakh
to May 21, 1991

Declaration by Parliament of Armenia
April 30, 1991

Declaration by Parliament of Armenia
May 6, 1991

Appeal by Parliament of Armenia to UN Secretary-General Perez De Cuellar
May 6, 1991

Letter by Levon Ter-Petrossyan to President George Bush
May 8, 1991

Declaration by Presidium of the Parliament of Armenia
May 8, 1991

Declaration by Representatives of Mountainous Karabagh
May 16, 1991

Appeal by Parliament of Armenia to
UN Secretary-General Perez De Cuellar
May 16, 1991

Letter of President Levon Ter-Petrossyan to
Laurent Fabius, President of the National Assembly of France
May 17, 1991

Appeal of Presidium of Parliament of Armenia to
Supreme Soviets of USSR and SSR Republics
May 20, 1991

Appeal of Presidium of Parliament of Armenia to
USSR Supreme Soviet
May 20, 1991

Declaration of Parliament of Armenia
July 6, 1991

Announcement from Coordinating Council of the
"Democratic Russia" Movement
April 27, 1991

"Russian Intellectuals Protest"
April 27, 1991

U.S. Senate Resolution
May 17, 1991

"Operation Karabagh"
By Inessa Burkova, May 1991

ARMENIA'S DEMOCRACY AND SOVIET IMPERIALISM

By *Levon Ter-Petrossyan*

During the past two weeks the central authorities of the USSR introduced two new approaches to the solution of political problems: Deportation of civilians and war on constituent republics. Both approaches were planned in detail and involved the armed forces, KGB, and Interior and Defense ministries of the USSR. Both were tested against the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian people. The results were mixed. The civilian population suffered much. It is doubtful that any problems were resolved. On the contrary, the increased tensions and resentments make real solutions more difficult. If for no other reasons but the latter, the international community must have a second and close look at the recent events in Armenia.

Beginning on April 29 subdivisions of the Soviet army and the USSR and Azerbaijani Interior Ministries, supported by heavy artillery, tanks, and helicopter gunships, began shelling Armenian villages in Azerbaijan, gradually expanding their military operations to villages inside Armenia on the Azerbaijani border.

The operations, which were accompanied by atrocities against civilians and Armenian Interior Ministry militiamen, ended with the forced deportation of Armenians in Getashen and Martunashen villages adjacent to Nagorny-Karabagh.

During ten days of military operations, there have been over 50 deaths, including 14 militiamen; hundreds have been injured and denied treatment for days; many villages have been evacuated.

The use of the armed forces and modern weapons against the civilian population has grave implications for the nature of the political system of the USSR, its centers of power, and its relations with the international community. These repressive measures, reminiscent in their brutality and cynicism of the not-too-distant past, can also be used against other republics, particularly those which, like Armenia, have opted for democracy and sovereignty.

Last January, the world witnessed another Soviet exercise in the use of military power, when the people of Lithuania dared think of themselves as an independent nation. At that time I was sent to Vilnius on behalf of the USSR Federation Council to ascertain the facts and find ways of ending the violence. Pointing out the illegality of the military operations and the reaction of the international community facilitated bringing that carnage to an end.

The central authorities avoided the mistake they made in Lithuania by acting under the cover of a July 1990 presidential order to disarm civilians and by marking Armenian militiamen as "armed bandits." While the policy was implemented under the cover of a legal pretext, the specific operations could not be defended even by the standards set by the Soviet government for states of emergency.

Moreover, the Soviet government has yet to present a convincing case for the use of such brutal force. During August and September of 1990, the newly elected democratic government of Armenia was able to disarm peacefully all self-proclaimed and unruly armed elements in Armenia without the help of Moscow. At that time the Armenian government was able to confiscate six times more weapons than the full force of the Soviet army did recently.

Armenia has instituted self-defense units as part of the regular militia that function under the command of the republic's legal authorities. Their size and importance have been exaggerated in Soviet and Azerbaijani reports. Yet some expansion of the militia was necessary to ensure the defense of the population in the border areas and to see that local incidents--reduced in number but unavoidable until the resolution of the conflict--do not produce large scale confrontations. These tasks the militia was able to perform with increasing confidence. They could not have and did not fight the Soviet army. Yet it is these militiamen that became the targets of Soviet army operations, in some cases becoming victims of brutal murders in the name of "disarming armed bandits."

If the help of the Soviet army was needed for any domestic purposes, it is difficult to understand why the Soviet leadership decided to use the Fourth Army stationed in Azerbaijan to institute law and order in Armenia when the Seventh Soviet Army is stationed in Armenia. One must also wonder why doctors and journalists have been taken hostage; and why hostages were taken to Azerbaijani prisons if they had committed illegal acts in Armenia, when the law requires them to be charged and tried in Armenia? The use of the Fourth Army, made up significantly of Azerbaijanis endowed with a sense of a special mission, could not have but increased the brutality of the aggression and caused an increase in tensions.

It is apparent that such policy decisions and large scale military operations could not have been implemented without the knowledge and approval of USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev himself. Under no circumstances can President Gorbachev and the central authorities of the USSR escape responsibility for the massive violations of elementary human rights, the Charter of the United

Nations, and international treaties and conventions. Neither international law nor the USSR Constitution, including its articles on states of emergency, sanction, what the Soviet army and dreaded OMONs--special forces--have inflicted on the Armenian people during the past two weeks.

The central authorities could not possibly claim ignorance since on April 22, a full week before the beginning of military operations, I informed President Gorbachev and other high-ranked officials of the accumulation of forces around Getashen and Martunashen and warned that such actions could only signal the beginning of deportations in that region. In the absence of a reaction from Moscow, the Parliament of Armenia on April 25 formally requested that a special session of the USSR Congress of Peoples' Deputies be called urgently to study the issue and find ways of avoiding the predictable calamity. Under the constitution, the USSR Supreme Soviet is obligated to call a special session when the parliament of any republic makes such a request. No such meeting was called then. The request was reiterated since the events of the last two weeks and it has been refused.

The history of state sponsored terrorism and its direct link to the highest authorities of the USSR suggest that violence has been serving clearly set political purposes.

Since the victory of popular and democratic forces last August, Armenia's parliament, led by the Armenian National Movement coalition, has introduced a multi-party political system; implemented a policy of land distribution to the peasants; initiated a policy of privatization of commerce and industry; adopted international conventions on human, civil and political right; and accepted universal standards of freedom of conscience and religion. We are now developing legislation to introduce judicial reform.

In addition, based on the clear mandate it received during the May-July 1990 elections, the new government is redefining the long held but failed concept of Armenia's security. In August 1990 the Parliament adopted a Declaration On Independence, as only the beginning of the long road toward total sovereignty. More than an abstract ideal, we see independence as a practical necessity for the establishment of democratic institutions. History has shown that in the long run democratic institutions are incompatible with imperial interests.

Furthermore, independence is a means to extricate ourselves from the machinations of an imperial context within which national interests are distorted to the point where all neighbors are seen as enemies and Moscow is represented as the only guarantee of national survival.

We are reconsidering our relations with all our neighbors. This includes Turkey, with whom Armenians have had tortuous relations; and Azerbaijan, with whom we have negotiated in good faith since coming to power on the basis of the *status quo* created in January 1990. We believe Armenian-Azerbaijani discussions could have led to some sort of understanding between the two republics had other considerations not postponed what is inevitably the only road to peace and security.

Independence means neither political isolation nor economic self-sufficiency. Few countries today wish the first or claim the latter. On the contrary, independence will allow us to develop more normal and natural relations with neighbors and the rest of the world community, on the basis of mutual benefits and negotiations.

The process of achieving independence is as important for us as the goal itself. Armenia is the only republic whose strategy for independence is based on the requirements of the law on the secession of republics within the Constitution of the USSR. The Armenian Parliament's decision on the republic's own referendum and the setting of the date for that referendum, September 21, 1991, were based on the requirements of the USSR Constitution.

During the past months it has become increasingly clear that the only policy goal pursued consistently by the central authorities has been the preservation of the empire. Political and economic reform have become expandable. The USSR government, in pursuit of its imperial agenda, has been willing to circumvent and even disregard its own laws and Constitution when it comes to dealing with the preservation of the empire.

The entente between imperial Moscow and authoritarian Azerbaijan must be seen in this context. The government of Azerbaijan, still under the control of the Communist Party, has become an ally of the anti-reformist forces in Moscow. The two share an interest in perpetuating authoritarianism and dependency. Their joint strategy penalizes Armenia for its decision to hold its own referendum on the question of independence and democracy, while rewarding Azerbaijan for its support of Moscow, and creating conditions that facilitate the preservation of the empire.

The Soviet Union has tried to represent the conflict as an ethnic one, a continuation of the antagonism between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Western governments and media have tended to accept that interpretation at face value. The two republics certainly face major difficulties. Yet the last two weeks are evidence of what I have always believed: The essence of the question is political rather than ethnic or national.

In the short run, the military operations against Armenia, code named "Operation Ring," constituted an attempt to draw

Armenia into a war against Azerbaijan, and to turn Armenians into martyrs in a futile struggle against the Soviet Army. Any of these reactions would have justified a formal military intervention in Armenia itself. While bearing the full weight of the war machine on the civilian population of our republic, the Soviet government intended the citizens of Armenia to associate national and democratic aspirations with terror and destruction, sovereignty with insecurity and impotence. Armenians are already feeling the impact of the economic blockade, inflation, shortages, lack of progress on Nagorny-Karabagh, unemployment, and budget deficits. The added sense of powerlessness could have produced widespread discontent, destabilized the political situation in Armenia,weakened its legal and legitimate government, facilitated a military intervention, and led to the abortion of the constitutional process toward independence.

It is also obvious, that a show of force against Armenia is bound to bolster the weakening authority and position of Azerbaijan's President Ayaz Mutalibov, the head of the only Communist government in the Transcaucasus. Without him Transcaucasus would drift away from the empire, since Georgia has already declared independence, and Armenia, albeit in its own way, has stated its intention to achieve independence.

The levers which the central authorities have in other republics--such as ethnic minorities, an ideologically oriented communist party, a government lacking legitimacy and popular support--are absent in Armenia. That is why violence has become necessary and convenient. In February of 1988 the central authorities responded to the rise of the mass democratic movement in Armenia with the encouragement, if not organization, of the pogroms against Armenians in Sumgait and, in January 1990, in Baku. Since then the state has assumed a more direct role.

The democratic government of Armenia is determined to institute a government of law and justice, to give our nation a sense of normalcy. That is why we have already undertaken or completed the reforms that have remained a pledge elsewhere in the USSR. My government is determined to pursue a course of moderation, of negotiations and compromise to achieve real security and peace for all nations and peoples in our region, with respect for international norms of self-determination.

Moreover, Armenia has not ruled out one or more agreements with a union of soviet republics or bilateral agreements, as long as Armenia, with a democratically elected government, participates in negotiations as a sovereign state and is not imposed

conditions which impede and hinder the processes of democratization, economic reform, and national sovereignty. The government is more than ever aware of Armenia's strengths and, especially, its vulnerabilities. Yet we also know that only a democratically elected government of a sovereign state has the right to distinguish between the vital and secondary interests of the nation and only a sovereign nation has the right to determine its future status and the strategy to achieve it.

Above all, we cannot accept that our vulnerabilities be turned into a rationale to keep Armenia in a perpetual colonial status. The process of decolonization gave sovereignty to many nations during the twentieth century regardless of their size and beyond their economic and military capabilities. That process cannot arbitrarily be stopped at the doors of the last, and most violent, of the empires.

Armenia wishes to see nothing more and nothing less than the respect of international standards of behavior by governments.

It is my hope that the government of the United States and the international community will consider carefully the implications of Soviet policies with regard to Armenia and other democratic republics of the USSR. I am also confident that the international community will undertake whatever means it considers necessary and proper to ensure that the principles of collective security, peaceful conflict resolution, and self-determination are respected within, as much as without, the USSR.

May 1991

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

COMMUNICATION
By President Levon Ter-Petrossyan

Yerevan, April 22, 1991

To **M. S. Gorbachev**, President of the USSR
G. Yanaev, Vice-President of the USSR
A. Lukyanov, Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet
V. Pavlov, Prime-Minister of the USSR
V. Kryutchkov, Chairman of the KGB of the USSR
D. Yazov, Defense Minister of the USSR
B. Pugo, Minister of Interior of the USSR
Y. Primakov, Chairman of the USSR Security Council
V. Bakatin, Member of the USSR Security Council
A. Yakovlev, Member of the USSR Security Council

The unpunished deportation of the Armenian population from Sumgait, Baku, Kirovabad, Azat, Kamo and other places led to a status quo in the region that has not changed since January 1990. Any attempt now to change that status quo will condemn current attempts at stabilizing the situation in Kara-bagh to failure. This applies, first and foremost, to the Armen-ian populated region of Shahumian, the Getashen subdistrict, and the village of Berdadzor. Altering the status quo is certain to produce a chain reaction and lead to complications that will make constructive dialogue and a political solution impossible.

It seemed that the declaration of the state of emergency in the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabakh and adjoining Azerbaijani districts were aimed at guaranteeing the security of the population and at preserving the stasus quo.

During the past few days massive operations have been under-taken, directed at the deportation of the Armenian population of Getashen, Martunashen and other Armenian populated areas. These operations followed the April 16, 1991 meeting held in Baku with the participation of USSR govern-ment agencies at which time Azerbaijani President Ayaz Muta-libov communicated instructions to the participants; these operations also followed the visit of the second secretary of the Azerbaijani Communist Party Polyanichko to Getashen.

Just as he had done two years ago, the periodic plot to deport Armenians from their soil is being implemented by Y. V. Shatalin, the commander of the forces of the USSR Interior Ministry. To justify his illegal activities, Shatalin is misleading the leaders of the government and public opinion by distorting the facts.

At the present time, the Shahumian region, Getashen and Berdadzor are totally besieged. Helicopter flights are suspended, and electricity, water and food supplies have been halted to the general population. It has become impossible to transfer the injured and the seriously ill to central hospitals.

Any investigation of crimes committed in the region must be preceded by the immediate removal of Azerbaijani OMONs and of the armed units functioning under the jurisdiction of the Azerbaijani Interior Ministry from Getashen and Martunashen and by the transfer of the administration of these villages to the commander in charge of the state of emergency.

Levon Ter-Petrossyan
President

The Legalization of Deportations

[These documents, related to operation "Zaliv" (Gulf), were confiscated from Colonel Mashkov of the USSR armed forces. The inscription on the confiscated file read, *"Orders transmitted by Captain Yagodin at 17:25 H, May 1, 1991."*]

DOCUMENT 1

To the population of the villages of Chaikend [Getashen] and Martunashen of Khanlar District of Azerbaijani Republic:

Upon the request of the population of the villages of Chaikend and Martunashen the state of emergency district commandant's office

1. Guarantees the security of the Chaikend [Getashen] and Martunashen population until June 1, [1991] while the documents for the sale of [their] homes and properties are being prepared;

2. Guarantees the security of transportation of the population during the same period;

3. Has coordinated the above two points with the Interior Ministries of the USSR and [Azerbaijani] Republic.

[Signed]
R. Mamedov
First Deputy Interior Minister of Azerbaijan
Colonel Y. Mishin,
Deputy Commandant of the USSR Ministry of Interior Division

DOCUMENT 2

Azerbaijan SSR
City Council of Khanlar

May 1, 1991
N 791

To the population of the villages of Khanlar [Getashen] and Martunashen of Khanlar district of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

In response to the numerous appeals of the population of the villages of Chaikend and Martunashen to move to other regions for permanent settlement, the Khanlar District Council guarantees:

1. *That the processing of documents concerning the sale of homes and personal properties shall be in strict compliance with the law;*

2. *The security of transportation on the territory of Azerbaijan will be garanteed for all citizens by the USSR Interior forces;*

3. *All the above stated has been coordinated with the USSR Interior Ministry and the authorities of the [Azerbaijani] Republic.*

[Signed]
N. Mamedov
Chairman of the Khanlar District Soviet

Filaret Berikian, deputy chairman of the Special Economic Programs Commitee, provided the following explanation concerning the above documents:

First I would like to say that those documents were confiscated from Colonel Mashkov. The code name for this operation was "Zaliv"[Gulf]. These two documents have their logical place in the chain of events in Getashen and Martunashen.

On April 30 the two villages were barbarously shelled. Moscow and Baku cooperated to defeat the people. There is one word only to describe the situation: Hell.

A large room at the hospital was filled with dead bodies. The psychological state of the survivors seems self-evident. Their panic is but natural. For the sake of the children,women, and the old people, heads of families were ready to sign any document ..

The deportees insisted on being transported by helicopters only, since they did not trust the guards. There is evidence that soldiers have killed several old men. The OMONs have ordered the village evacuated at 10 A.M. on the first of. Witnessing all these barbaric and inhuman acts, people wanted to escape. It was a question of life and death, especially for the children.

I can add that these two letters have a lot in common, the preliminary study suggests that they have both been typed on the same typewriter. This means that the army, the Interior forces, the Azerbaijan KGB, and the Khanlar officials are all parts of one and the same mechanism. To put it clealy, that was a planned action aimed at terrorizing the people. (I believe Gorbachev himself would have been terrified had he witnessed the emptying of Getashen and Martunashen and projecting the same fate for Shahumian and Karabagh.)

All this leaves one impresion: there is a game being played, like a dance; it reminds me of the lambada where the leading dancers are Gorbachev and Mutalibov; the purpose of the game is to spite Armenia, which has startedon its path toward democracy and independence. There are other dancers too. They are all playing to the tune of the Communist International.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

April 16 - May 21, 1991

APRIL 16. Fourth week of siege by Soviet Interior troops of Armenian villages of Getashen [Chaikend] and Martunashen in Khanlar district, Azerbaijan.

APRIL 16. At a meeting held in Baku attended by the KGB, USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs and Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijani President Ayaz Mutalibov instructed that the Armenian population of Shahumian district and the villages of Getashen and Martunashen should be deported in case they refuse to submit fully to the authorities of Azerbaijan.

USSR Defense Minister Yazov, Interior Minister Pugo, and KGB chief Kryuchkov were informed of the results of the meeting.

APRIL 18. The Management Committee of the Internal Troops of the Commandment Board of Nagorny Karabagh in Stepanakert adopted a declaration appealing to USSR President M. Gorbachev, Armenian President L. Ter-Petrossyan, Azerbaijani President A. Mutalibov, and Kryuchkov to find a political solution to the problem of Nagorny Karabagh.

The Internal troops under the Commander of Nagorny Karabagh were withdrawn from Getashen and Martunashen and replaced by Azerbaijani OMONs from Ganja, who opened fire at the two villages from the first day of their deployment.

APRIL 22. Armenia's President Ter-Petrossyan sent a letter to M. Gorbachev and other high-ranking Soviet officials in which he warned that, unless steps were taken, the USSR and Azerbaijani military operations started in Getashen and Martunashen would produce the deportation of the native Armenian population from that region.

APRIL 23. The Parliament of Armenia met in special session to review the aggravation of the situation in Getashen, Martunashen, Shahumian district and in Nagorny Karabagh.

The inhabitants of Shahumian district and of Getashen and Martunashen villages sent a telegram to high-ranking Soviet officials informing them of the total blockade, and of being deprived of electricity and water.

The confrontation turned to virtual war following the visit to the region of the Second Secretary of Azerbaijan's Communist Party Polyanichko.

APRIL 25. The Parliament of Armenia requested that the USSR Congress of Peoples' Deputies convene a special session without delay to discuss the situation in Nagorny Karabagh and the border districts with Azerbaijan.

APRIL 29. During the last week USSR army and Azerbaijani Interior Ministry tanks and armored vehicles shelled Armenian villages along the entire length of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border.

APRIL 30. The USSR Security Council met in Moscow under the chairmanship of President M. Gorbachev. The shelling of Getashen from nearby hills began just as the meeting ended.

MAY 1. The Getashen population asked for medical help. Army units and the OMONs were withdrawn from Getashen. The shelling of Armenian villages in border regions continued.

MAY 2. The aggression against Armenia and Armenians continued. Two planes carrying the wounded from Getashen and Martunashen landed in Yerevan. The wounded had first been taken to Shahumian in armored vehicles.

The Azerbaijani OMONs distribute propaganda leaflets which claimed that the Armenian residents of Getashen and Martunashen have requested permission from the army and the OMONs to leave their villages. In a telephone conversation with Ter-Petrossyan KGB chief Kryuchkov used the text of that false document to justify the deportations.

At 18:00 USSR Deputy Defense Minister Shatalin "reminded" Armenia's representative in Moscow F. Mamikonian that "Armenians should not forget that the key to the nuclear station of Medsamor" near Yerevan is still with him.

The village of Avarus in the Goris district of Armenia was shelled at night. A Soviet army soldier committed suicide in the village of Khoznavar.

MAY 3. President Ter-Petrossyan met with President Gorbachev in Moscow.

The first military helicopter landed in Getashen but doctors were not allowed to leave the plane and treat the wounded. The helicopter returned to Armenia bringing twenty-two women and children as well as two wounded.

A telegram begging for help was received from the village of Getashen. The telegram ended with the words " SOS. People of the world! Save us!"

The entire village of Martunashen was set on fire by the aggressors.

At 16:15 the USSR Interior forces were withdrawn from the village of Hin Shen in the Berdadsor district of Nagorny Karabagh.

At 17:00 the TV station in the village of Baghanis in Noyemberian district of Armenia was shelled by the army and the OMONs.

At 17:30 a passenger vehicle was shelled near the village of Tsaghkavan in Ijevan district of Armenia.

MAY 4. USSR KGB chief Kryuchkov communicated to President Ter-Petrossyan of President Gorbachev's statement that Armenians could not be subjected to deportations.

May 4 is declared a mourning day in Armenia to commemorate the people killed in Getashen and Martunashen.

Troops landed at the "Erebuni" airport in Yerevan, ostensibly "to protect military objects."

Three hundred residents of Getashen and Martunashen, all women and children, were transported to Stepanakert by military helicopters.

MAY 5. A Parliament commission of Russia arrived in Yerevan tonight on a fact-finding tour.

MAY 6. L. Ter-Petrossyan sent a letter to Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the UN, requesting UN observers who could study the situation in the region and witness the referendum on the independence of Armenia.

The Parliament of the Republic of Armenia adopted a declaration about the aggravation of the situation at the border regions. The armed aggression, the shelling of regions populated by Armenians, the massacre and the deportation of Armenians carried out by the Soviet army and OMONs are regarded as an attempt to weaken the democratic government of Armenia.

The army laid siege to the village of Voskepar in the Noyemberian district of Armenia and demanded that the district militia hand in their weapons.

At 11:30 the villages of Tegh and Aravuz in Goris district of Armenia were shelled from the air. The village of Komidsor was shelled at 17:00.

Seventeen miltary helicopters transported military equipment and troops to Yerevan's Erebuni airport.

A joint Defense Committee was formed by the Council of Ministers and Parliament of Armenia to deal with the emergency situation.

MAY 7. Eleven militia officers were taken hostage in the village of Kornidzor.

At 13:00 L. Ter-Petrossyan held a press conference at the Presidium building. An eyewitness of events of Getashen participated.

MAY 8. Several cases of atrocities committed by the army in villages in Goris district have been reported.

The TV transmission center of Goris was shelled.

L. Ter-Petrossyan met the members of the Russian Parliament commission headed by Shelov-Kovediaev visiting Armenia.

At 19:20 Kryutchkov, the Chairman of the KGB, confirmed to Ter-Petrossyan that military operations would be over today. He also promised to see that the hostages were released as soon as possible.

The number of killed as a result of military operations reached 24; 14 were militiamen and ten civilians. The wounded include 5 militiamen and 16 civilians. The number of hostages has reached 104, including 67 militiamen. The operations produced 166 confiscated weapons; 124 were registered to the militia and 42 were hunting rifles.

MAY 9. The situation is relatively normal.

MAY 10. Paravakar, a village in the Taush district of Armenia, was shelled by a large concentration of 50 tanks and armored vehicles, 10 military helicopters, over 1,000 soldiers armed with automatic weapons, and led by one general and four lieutenant generals. The operations produced 5 weapons registered to the local militia.

After a period of relative inaction, the USSR army and Interior Ministry and Azerbaijani armed forces attacked Nagorny-Karabagh again.

MAY 13. Azerbaijani OMONs and USSR Interior Ministry forces initiated brutal searches in Armenian populated villages of Nagorny Karabagh. More than 100 Armenians were incarcerated, many houses looted.

A car carrying members of the Armenian Parliament on an inspection tour was shelled and had a narrow escape in Taush region of Armenia.

MAY 14. The fate of forty Armenian militiamen kidnapped in Noyemberian region of Armenia and taken to Ganja in Azerbaijan is unknown.

MAY 15. USSR and Azerbaijani armed forces encircled the Berdadsor and two villages in Askeran in Karabagh at 5 AM. All males aged between 16-50 were taken into custody and driven away in buses. From Perdadsor subdistrict alone 108 males were taken. One was killed, women and children were beaten up, homes were burned. The villagers were given 19 hours to leave their homes. Twenty-seven young men were taken away from Stepanakert. The Deputy Chief of the militia of Nagorny Karabagh was arrested.

Mass searches and arrests continue in Nagorny Karabagh. Over three hundred men have been incarcerated in Azerbaijan. Three shepherds were killed by Azerbaijanis in Armenia's Goris region. Military helicopters fired on anyone approaching to carry the corpses.

All the flights to Stepanakert were forbidden since 12:50. A meeting in which an appeal to UNO was held in Stepanakert.

L. Ter-Petrossyan made a statement for press which said in particular, "The government of Armenia appeals to the Parliaments and the leaders of all countries, as well as to all people of good will to use their influence with the USSR authorities to prevent the genocide of the Nagorny Karabagh Armenians."

The problem of Nagorny Karabagh was discussed by the French Council of Ministers.

MAY 16. Hamlet Grigorian, a member of the Armenian Parliament was arrested in Stepanakert by Soviet army.

The population of the village of Mets Shen was forced to sign a pre-drafted appeal to the Azerbaijani government asking "to be moved to Armenia."

The plunder, mutilations, and illegal arrests continue in Nagorny Karabagh.

At 19:00 a special session of the Parliament of Armenia appealed to the UNO Secretary-General to send observers to Armenia and Nagorny Karabagh and to raise the question at the UN.

The French Socialist Party condemned the Soviet army aggression against Armenia.

A group of Russian intellectuals known as the "Karabagh Committee" signed an appeal addressed to the members of the Russian Parliament to call for an end to the aggression against Armenia.

MAY 17. The situation remains tense. Zhukov, the commandant of the state of emergency region was called to Baku for emergency consultations. Iillegal arrests (now over 300) and shelling are continuing all over Nagorny Karabagh.

In Martuni region, seventy individuals are arrested, including the city mayor, the prosecutor, the head of the parking garage, and the head of the electrical department.

In Hadrut, the OMONs have deported in an unknown direction the residents of Aragul, Dolanlar, and Arpagyaduk villages. A military helicopter has shelled Hin Taghlar village.

In Martagert region more than 20 men have been arrested. A Ouaz vehicle has bee burned after being shelled near Talish village. Two Armenians who reached the site of the shelling have been kidnapped and taken to Mir Bashir village in Azerbaijan.

In Stepanakert during the last 24 hours there have been numerous cases of encirclement of homes and areas, "identity checks;" ten men have been arrested and moved to Aghdam, in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijanis have opened fire on Girkijan neighborhood, demanding that Armenians leave the city.

Meeting in special session, the Parliament of Armenia adopted a resolution concerning the situation near the Azerbaijani border and Nagorny Karabagh.

May 18. In Goris region of Armenia more than 1,000 deportees from 15 villages of Hadrut and Berdadsor in Karabagh are settled in two newly created camps. The deportees demanded that the military assure their safe return to their homes.

May 20. It became known that on the previous day at 21.30 the army and Azerbaijani OMONs appeared in the streets of Stepanakert and under the guise of "checking identities" attempted to arrest a few citizens.

In Martagert, during the night of May 19, the shepherds of Zaglig village were attacked by unknown individuals from Umutlu village. Khachik Rubeni Sargsian, born 1968, was killed. Artash Beniki Adamian was seriously wounded.

May 21. Berdadsor region in Nagorny Karabagh. Azerbaijanis began distribution among themselves of the land, homes, property and materials of Armenians. Many started settling in the homes of Armenian deportees.

In Askeran region 3 Azerbaijanis attacked the farm of Aghbulagh village and drove away a large number of animals.

In Hadrut region, Azerbaijanis carried all theproperty of Armenians with 30 cars. The residents of Dsor, Banasur and Aragul villages, accompanied by soldiers of the USSR Interior Ministry,

have atempted to reenter their villages but were stopped by the Azerbaijani OMONs.

In Girants village, between Noyemberyan and Ijevan regions in Armenia, the military used three bulldozers to destroy the autoroute. As a result Noyemberian was cut off from the rest of the republic. Transportation between the two has ceased.

Other than Getashen and Martunashen, the total number of villages whose residents have been deported stands at 17, in the Hadrut region.

May 22. In Ishkhanasar, Sisian region, 253 sheep were driven away from a farm. The militia started investigations.

The Republics temporary State of Emergency Council held its regular meeting to discuss the fate of the deportees from the Hadrut and Berdadsor regions in Nagorny Karabagh. The deportees continue to remian in camps in the Goris region in Armenia.

May 23. Twenty Azerbaijanis, armed with machine guns and equipped with walky-talkies, invaded the territory of Armenia near Goris. Having advanced for six kilometers they encircled a farm in the village of Khndzoresk, arrested G. Alexanian, a shepherd. The invaders subjected Alexanian to torture, demanding to know the whereabouts of militiaman R. Baghdasarian and two more people were. Alexanian was robbed of the 350 roubles he had on him.

In Taush region in Armenia, representatives of the two republics met on the boarder of the villages Aigepar in Armenia and Alibeili in Azerbaijan. The ten Armenian hostages taken in Getashen on May 5-7 were returned.

The following is the list of those hostages.

Kazarian Papik Arshki	born in 1937
Tersejian Sergei Sargisi	born in 1964
Japarian Misha Sargisi	born in 1961
Markosian Nikolai Hranti	born in 1954
Hakopian Aramaias Yashai	born in 1959
Aghadjanian Ashot Arshaviri	born in 1957
Markosian Yurik Araxi	born in 1939
Javadian Grigor Ediki	born in 1971
Zargarian Daniel Vasili	born in 1955
Seiranian Seiran Grigori	born in 1955
Sahakian Vagharshk Vagharshaki	born in 1964
Sahakian Martik Alexandri	born in 1967
Hakobkokhian Sargis Artushi	born in 1935 (a doctor)
Grigorian Gevorg Vahani	born in 1951 (a doctor)
Khachtrian Valera Movsesi	born in 1947 (a doctor)

The text of the resolution adopted by the American senate on May 17 was received. The resolution condemns the use of the armed forces against the peaceful people on the Eastern and Southern boardes of Armenia.

May 26. In Zangilan railway station in Azerbaijan two Armenian conductors, S. Sahakian and G. Nersisian of the Yerevan-Kapan train, were severely beaten and robbed of their money and a golden watch.

May 27. In Noyemberian region in Armenia two armored vehicles with disguised license numbers entered the vilage of Voskepar from the direction of the Azerbaijanian village of N. Askipar and stayed there for about thirty minutes.

In the evening an armored vehicle started towards V. Askipar from the same direction and shelled the village of Voskepar.

Later that evening fire was set on two houses on the outskirts of the village of Voskepar, which borders at the village of N. Askipara in Azerbaijan. Soldiers stationed here made no attempt to put down the fire.

In Goris thirty uniformed Azebaijanians intruded the village of Khoznavar which is 25 kilometers from the border of Armenia and fired at the farmers working in the fields. The militiamen returned the fire.

May 28. In the region of Kapan in Armenia the radiolocator and the airport of the village of Agarak were shelled from the village of Seitlar in the Azerbaijanian region of Zangelan.

The region of Kapan and the town of Kapan in Armenia were shelled late at night from the Azerbaijanian regions of Zangilan and Kubatli.The radio communication and one of the metallurgy plants buildings were damaged.

The village of Movses in Taush, Armenia, was shelled for two hours at night.

May 29. The vehicles of the Goris militia were stopped on the highway leadind from Kapan to Goris. The vehicles were fired atfrom the Azerbaijanian villages of N. Jibikli and V. Jibikli. Two militiamen were wounded, the driver was killed.

In Sisian, Armenia, the OMONs fired at shepherds in the pasture form the village of Michanak in the region of Nakhichevan. Then they demanded that the shepherds not enter the territory without the militia escort. No casualties reported.

May 30. In Goris 36 shells exploded in the Armenian village Khndzoresk-2 from the military station in the region of Kubatli in

Azerbaijan. The shelling lasted for four hours.

May 31. A truck was shelled from the village of Jibikli in the region of Kubatli on the highway leading from Kapan to Goris. No casualties reported.

Early in the morning an armed group intruded the village of N. Khndzoresk. They killed a cow at the local farm and retreated in the direction of the region of Kubatli.

The region of Kapan in Armenia. The outskirts of the village of David Bek were shelled from the village of Aim in the Kubatli region in Azerbaijan. The shelling lasted for about an hour. No casualties have been reported.

June 1. The village of Movses and the farmers working in the fields have been fired at several times during the day. No casualties reported.

The situation in the Nagorny Karabagh has aggravated again because of the settlement of the Azerbaijanians in several villages of the region of Hadrut whence Armenians had just been deported.

June 2. A helicopter boarded by the Azerbaijani OMONs landed in the village of Donalar in the region of Hadrut. Half an hour later there arrived two buses with the Azerbaijanis. The commandant of the state of emergency region assured that an engineer company has been sent to the region to prevent the introduction of the outside settlers.

June 3. Units of the Azerbaijani OMON assisted by soldiers of the engineer company began a mass introduction of the Azerbaijani settlers in the native Armenian villages. Two of these villages, Donalar and Dahbashi, are already inhabited by Azerbaijanis.

The regional commandant's office has withdrawn all the guard posts in the villages of Banazur, Arakul, Tsor, Spitakashen, and Arpagaduk. The remaining Armenian population had to escape to the town of Hadrut. The villages were once again plundered and robbed.

The villages of Hin Taghlar and Khtsaberd are isolatded from the rest of the world. There is no chance to take women and children out.

A bomb has exploded in a KGB officer's office in the region of Martuni. The office was damaged, but no one suffered.

The soldiers of the 23rd subdivision, under the supervision of the Azerbaijani Interior Ministry, participated in the arrest of peaceful civilians in their apartments, hospitals, and workplaces.

The following is the list of the people missing after the OMON and the Soviet Army operations.

The village of Dashbashi

Stepanian V.S.	born in 1941
Gasparian Y. Sh.	born in 1961
Gasparian V. S.	born in 1966
Sargissain V. G.	born in 1927

The village of Hin Taghlar

Khudanian M.G.	born in 1939
Anizian K.G.	born in 1977

Over 600 farm animals have been driven away.

Shelling of the villages, taking hostages, massacres and plunder, driving away of farm animals have become part of everyday life.

June 4. A group of unknown people armed with submachine guns made an attempt to drive away 250 animals from the Armenian village of Khintanglar in the region of Hadrut. When the attempt failed, the same gang, supported by a civilian helicopter was shelled the village of Aghdjakend.

A damaged car was found on the road leading from Stepanakert to Dashushen which goes through a forest. The owner of the car, a Stpenakert dweller L. Minassian claimed that he had met an accident with an armored vehicle.

The Armenian villages of Khtsaberd and Taglar were shelled by civil helicopters. The population of the village of Khandzadzor was forced to escape.

The commandant of the region of Hadrut declared that he could but supply with enough vehicle to transport the population.

The military guard post is prserved only in the village of Tsor.

The Armenian village of Buzlukh in the region of Shahumian has been shelled.

June 5.

The guard post in the village of tsor has been withdrawn.

The deportation of the Armenians carried out by the Azerbaijanian OMONs is being continued.

The Askeran region in the Nagorny Karabagh.

Under the giuse of 'identity checking' the OMONs made an attempt of driving away farm aniamls and arresting the director of the farm in the village of Krasnu. An Army unit arrived in time to ruin their plans.

Stepanakert.

The Interior forces gaurd post was fired at from the Azerbaijanian quarter of Kirkijan. The Armenian quarter Haikavan was also fired. The soldiers began to fire in response. The

skirmish lasted for about an hour. No in formation of casualties has been received.

Twenty-four Armenians taken hostages fromthe village of Shurnukh in the Goris region of Armenia were released. They claim that the way they were being treated was not the best one possible.

June 7. The region of Kapan in Armenia.

The town of Kapan, the hostel near the village of Karmrakar, and the village of Syunik were shelled from the regions of Zangelan and Kubatli in Azerbaijan. No damages and casualties.

The region of Goris.

The village of Khoznavar was being fired at for two hours late in the afternoon from the region of Lachin in Azerbaijan.

Four armored vehicles drove into the vilage of N. Khdzoresk and stayed there for about five hours.

The activity of the army arouses uneasiness among the population of the boarder regions of Armenia who are thinking of evacuating women and children.

June 9-July 8. Intrusions, attacks, beatings, shellings, illegal arrests, plundering, thefts and provocations continue from the Azerbaijani side all along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and intensify in the Shahumian district of Karabagh and in Mountainous Karabagh itself.

July 9-15. In the region of Shahumian the villages of Manashid and Erkenj were shelled from the Azerbaijanian village of Todan, leading to their deportations and the taking of more hostages. Instability continues along the border.

Sporadic unrest will continue.

Mid August. Yeltsin and Nazarbayev offer to mediate dispute.

August 18-21. Coup fails in Moscow. End of Soviet army support for Azerbaijani agression.

Sepember 20. Start of Yeltsin-Nazarbayev initiative.

September 24. Multi party agreement on ceasefire and on beginning of negotiations.

A CASE STUDY OF STATE TERRORISM

GETASHEN AND MARTUNASHEN
The Story of Two Armenian Villages in Azerbaijan

Getashen (Chaikend) and Martunashen are two of the many Armenian villages in the Khanlar district of Azerbaijan. Getashen had a population of close to 3,000; Martunashen was much smaller. The two villages adjoin the Autonomous Region of Nagorny Karabagh or NKAO and are 25 km from the town of Gyanja (Kirovapat).

A republican category road passing through Getashen connects it with Stepanakert, capital of NKAO. At a distance of 1 km from Getashen there are two formerly Armenian villages, Azat and Kamo, now inhabited by Azerbaijanis, once residents of Armenia. Martunashen, situated on the other side of Getashen, is surrounded by Azerbaijani villages. Shahumian district, populated by Armenians too, is located in the same direction, 12 km farther.

On three sides Getashen is surrounded by forests. On the left side there is a slope. The houses are mainly on the left and on the right stretching for 10 km. The village can be cut off from the other inhabited areas by blocking the one road. Martunashen is on the left side of the main road, 1 km farther away.

Getashen had been blockaded for 4 years. During that time the village was continuously attacked and fired at from neighboring Azerbaijani villages.

THE DEPORTATIONS

THE FORMS AND USES OF STATE TERROR

On April 30, 1991, at about 6 AM, 30 tanks and armored carriers blocked the exits of Getashen. The troops, made up of Soviet army soldiers and Azerbaijani OMONs (Interior Ministry special forces), all wearing paratroopers' uniforms, then began shelling the village.

Residents were forced to the center of the village. The OMONs threatened to kill women and children if they did not tell where the young men were. They used trained dogs to terrorize the villagers. Five or six helicopters flew continuously over the heads of villagers, increasing the terror. The soldiers and OMONs taunted the people, humiliated them, and threatened to shoot in case if they disobeyed. The search of homes, accompanied by looting, followed. They burnt 10 homes. Some of the villagers, including women and children, were savagely beaten. A few suffered bodily injuries. Some unarmed civilians were killed. According to the preliminary investigation some people delivering clothes and food from Armenia were killed by the soldiers and OMONs. They were not allowed to be buried in the cemetery and their relatives had to bury them on their personal plots.

THE CASE OF THE FIRST HOSTAGES

Forty villagers were taken hostage by the soldiers and OMONs. In order to set them free the Armenians captured 12 soldiers, who were later exchanged with 27 Armenian hostages.

The returned hostages were savagely beaten. They told that they were forced to put on uniforms of brigands and were given empty machine-guns to hold, and their photographs were taken with holding machine-guns.They were forced to eat cigarettes. The gold teeth of some of them were pulled out. They were subjected to other brutalities as well.

THE PARTICIPANTS

There is eyewitness testimony that the soldiers and OMONs were under the influence of alcohol and drugs.The people were forced to sign fake documents certifying that they were leaving the village voluntarily. Among the active participants in the operation was the chairman of the Khanlar district council, a certain Mamedov. People from the neighboring Azerbaijani villages took part in the brutalities; they were specially active in the looting of homes on the outskirts of the village. They ended up hauling away their loot on 5 trucks.

THE FINAL ACT

Later in the day the troops left the village and encircled it, at a radius of 500m.

This situation remained the same for several days , while the shelling continued, especially during nights.

The soldiers and OMONs returned on May 5 and proceeded with the forced of the village population, which ended on May 7. Getashen villagers were taken by helicopters to Kirovapat. From there they were hoarded into buses, driven to the Armenian border, and dropped there, between Khazakh and Ijevan districts.

THE CASUALTIES

The tragic events beginning on April 30, 199, resulted in 400 refugees from Martunashen and Getashen being deported and given temporary shelter in the following 7 rest homes in Dilijan:

1. Dilijan	67 deportees
2. Tourist Health Center	149 "
3. Haghartsin	47 "
4. Health Ministry	47 "
5. Ararat Trust	36 "
6. House of Cinematographers	17 "
7. House of Composers	57 "

The refugees are mostly elderly people. Ninety percent of the refugees in Dilijan are residents of Getashen.

Investigators from the Procurator's Office of the Republic of Armenia have interviewed over 100 refugees in Dilijan and prepared a list of property and other losses suffered as a result of the deportations. The republic's investigators were assisted by representatives from the Procurator's Office of Dilijan, the Ministry of Interior, as well as a Medical Examiner. 18 refugees were checked by the Medical Examiner. According to preliminary data, 2 women had received bullet wounds. The final report will be released soon.

The following is a preliminary list of the casualties and losses.

I. KILLED

1. Vanes Hakhumian, 76. Killed at home
2. Melsik Soghomonian, 34. Killed by ax at home
3. Maxim Yesayan .
4. Aramayis Sahakian,13. Killed on the street by a gunshot wound on the head
5. Aramayis Avakian. Killed in his kitchen
6. Beno Gyanjumian. Killed at home by a gunshot wound in the eye
7. Kyamal Zargarian. Killed in his backyard by a gunshot wound in the mouth
8. Papik Seyranian, 85. Killed at home
9. Horom Minasian, elderly woman. Killed at home
10. Aramayis Khamirchian
11. Valerik Nazarian
12. Papik Zargarian. Killed at home
13. Tatul Krpoyan. Teacher of the village school

II. HOSTAGES

1. Nikolay Gevorkian
2. Sargis Aslanian
3. Grisha Sahakian
4. Borik Hayrumian
5. Melik Hakobkokhian
6. Papik Dolants
7. Hrachik Atanessian
8. Papik Markossian
9. Aleksan Koloyan

10. Movses Brutian
11. Mikhail Safarian
12. Karen Chakharian
13. Albert Mitian
14. Mikal Chakharian
15. Karen Grigorian
16. Aramayis Hakobian
17. (Identity not established)

III. HOSTAGES EXCHANGED WITH SOLDIERS

1. Arsen Atanessian
2. Arkady Simonian
3. Aleksan Zargarian
4. Movses Chakharian
5. Kolik Seyranian
6. Karen Jirakhatsnanian
7. Aram Brutian
8. Papik Nalbandian
9. Alexan Chilingarian
10. Mezhlum Chilingarian
11. Engels Chilingarian
12. Babush Gananian
13. Movses Hakhumian
14. Mikayel Ghukassian
15. Arkady Galstian
16. Volodya Seyranian
17. Dero Zargarian
18. Papik Zargarian
19. Melsik Jalalian
20. Mikael Chitchian
21. Volodia Chitchian
22. Yura Hakopian
23. Aramais Jalavian
24. Sergey Gevorkian
25. Georgy Atanessian
26. Isahak Nalbandian
27 (Identity not established)

IV. MISSING

1. Grisha Sahakian
2. Sargis Adanian
3. Mishik HakobKokhian
4. Movses Dulants
5. Borik Saghramian
6. (Identity not established)

V. INJURED

1. Edik Mnatsakanian
2. Manya Atanessian
3. Khatchik Chakharian
4. Andranik Seyranian
5. Papik Sahakian
6. Seda Sahakian
7. Phirouza Sahakian
8. Marouj Chakharian
9. Arkady Sarian
10. Rosa Lazgian
11. Raphik Lazgian
12. Shoushanik Gazarian
13. Beno Tananian
14. Borik Sahakian
15. Isahak Nalbandian
16. Aramais Julhakian
17. Ashot Brutian
18. Mnatsakan Ghukasian

SAMPLES OF BRUTALITIES FROM EYEWITNESS TESTIMONIES

Edik Hakobkokhian, born 1957

On April 30,199, the soldiers and OMONs made a search in his home, as a result of which they found 3000 rubles and a set of golden earrings that belonged to his mother. Both items were confiscated. Then, one of the OMONs dragged him to the cell and, having closed the door, held a knife to his throat. Hakopkokhian screamed for help. A Russian soldier opened the door. Hakopkokhian managed to run out and hide at his neigbor's house.

Kima Hakobian

Electricity in the village had been cut off since the middle of April. The same happened to telephone lines and the water.

On April 17 the Ukrainian regiment was withdrawn from Getashen and substituted by another regiment. The same was claimed in the testimony given by Sergey Tsovian, who added that the Ukrainian regiment had been purposefully substituted by troops from Uzbekistan.

Seven OMONs entered her home and searched it. They found and confiscated 3200 rubles. They forced her to undress, dragged her to the yard, and photographed her. Then she was severely beaten.

Vladimir Saroyan and Varsik Sargisian

The OMONs confiscated from them valuable papers from them worth 3000 rubles.

Saroyan

The OMONs confiscated Saroyan's car, gave him 5000 rubles as compensation, and illegally re-registered it.

Sargsian

Before the eyes and with the help of Soviet Army mayor Rubtsov, a soldier threaten to take Sargsian's son hostage, then forced Sargsian to sign a document in which he agreed to sell his car to a Soviet Army colonel.

Nikolay Sahakian

Witnessed the murder of his cousin Aramayis Sahakian on his return home from the village spring. The latter was killed from a gunshot wound in the forehead.

Varsik Sargisian

Witnessed the murder of her uncle, 85 years old Papik Seyranian.

Zero Tanoyan

Witnessed the murder of Kamal Zardarian with a gunshot wound in his mouth.

Gyanjulian

Witnessed the killing of his father Zhora Gyanjulian with a bullet shot in his chest.

Pavlik Hakopian

Witnessed the OMONs shooting at and wounding his neighbor Tamar Javadian

Nikolay Bayandurian and Maxim Terzikian
Witnessed the murder of the village school teacher Tatul Krpeyan.

Zarik Babajanian and Agamir Israyelian
Testified to the savage murder of Melsik Soghomonian at his home. Soghomonian was killed by an ax, and then his body was axed to pieces.

Semik Bukushian
Witnessed the OMONs and soldiers dragging 90 years old Tigran Babajanian along the road and hitting him with the butt of a rifle . They left him lying on the ground and disappeared.

Norik Javadian
Testified that when the OMONs set fire to his house, he approached his house to attempt to put out the fire. At that point he saw the OMONs kill his unarmed neighbor Armo. Having noticed Javadian, the OMONs started to shoot at him. He also testified that the OMONs pulled out the golden teeth of Yasha and Aleksey Hakopians. Hakobian's wife has testified to the same fact.

Silva Avakian
Testified that her husband was killed in the kitchen at his home, having been shot in the head, chest, and hip.

Andranik Seyranian
Testified that, while transporting the villagers by bus, the OMONs checked his documents. Then they dragged him out and beat him severely merely because his name was Andranik [an Armenian national hero].

[Signed]
J. A. Azizbekian
Member, Investigation Administration Committee
Junior Counsellor of justice

Yerevan, May 12, 1991

[Translated from the original Russian text with minor editorial adjustments]

SOVIET FORCES ATTACK ARMENIAN VILLAGE INSIDE ARMENIA

YEREVAN, MAY 6. The Minister of Interior of the Republic of Armenia , Mr. Ashot Manucharian, announced this morning that forces of the USSR Ministry of Interior started shelling the northeastern Armenian village of Voskepar, Noyemberian Region, at about 10 A.M.

According to the Armenian Interior Ministry sources, the shelling followed a demand by the USSR forces that the village leadership turn over weapons carried by the local militia. The village came under intense attack by USSR helicopters and armored vehicles when the village refused to disarm the militia. The small police force known as the militia constitutes the only self-defense force of the village.

The Parliament of Armenia, which was scheduled to meet in full session, postponed its agenda to consider and adopt unanimously a number of resolutions. These include appeals to the Secretary General of the UN, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, and to the UN Commission on Human Rights. In addition, the Parliament drafted an appeal to the Armenian people and a Declaration on the situation.

Armenian government sources have also informed that Soviet armed forces have taken direct control of the nuclear power station Medzamor near Yerevan, closed in 1989.

CHRONICLE

OF SOVIET AND AZERBAIJANI MILITARY AGGRESSION AGAINST ARMENIA
April 29 - May 15, 1991

Between April 29 and May 15, 1991, subdivisions of the Soviet Army and of the USSR Ministry of Interior troops, headquartered within the 5km security zone inside Azerbaijan, undertook large scale military operations inside Armenia.

To execute what is seen as punitive action, the armed forces attacking Armenian villages and towns bordering Azerbaijan used helicopters, tanks, artillery, and armored vehicles.

Soviet authorities tried to conceal the troops and equipment involved in these operations from the Armenian government and people. Identification marks and symbols on the equipment were painted over or cleared away.

The military operations were accompanied by acts of cruelty and barbarism against the civilian population.

The following is a chronicle of military operations against the Armenian population and Armenia.

April 29

At 7 a. m. two automobiles and a vehicle were fired at on the Ijevan-Noyemberian road from Kemerli village, Ghazakh region of Azerbaijan.

Later the villages of Tsakhkavan, Getashen, Voskepar and others, bordering Ijevan and Noyemberian, were shelled from the territory of Hermlue, Verin and Storin AKsipar, and Baganis-Ayrum areas of Ghazakh, Azerbaijan.

Numerous houses and much property were damaged. People were panic-stricken. Villagers under attack, including children, women and the elderly, tried to run away to the forest near by ; but the forest was also shelled by the troops.

The road leading to VosKepar village was also shelled by the tanks and the armored vehicles. As a result, the attempts to evacuate the villagers failed.

April 30

At 12 noon a military helicopter shot a rocket over Voskepar village, accompanied by shelling. Soviet forces in the village made no attempt to stop the shelling from their comrades. There also was no attempt to evacuate the villagers. A militian man was wounded because of shelling.

May 1

Voskepar, Voskevan, Baganis, Dovekh villages of Noyemberian district in Armenia were shelled from the territory of Ghazakh.

Subsequently shelling was extended to Berkaber, Sarigjukh, Tsaghkavan and Kirantz villages in Ijevan region. A militiaman and two Ijevan residents were wounded. At the same time the soldiers invaded the militia post near Voskepar village and drove the hospital car (GAS-66 make) to Ghazakh.

Similarly, Movses and Aygepar villages of Armenia's Taush region were shelled by cannons and machine-gunned from the territory of Alibeili village in Azerbaijanian's Tauz region. The attack caused considerable damage to houses and public works. Two villagers from taush were killed and one was wounded on the road connecting Movses and Aygepar villages.

May 2

Betwen 1 a.m. and 3 a.m., the Aravuz, Tegh, and Vahapur villages of Armenia's southern region of Goris were shelled intensely from the territory of Jagauz village in Lachin region of Azerbaijan. One farm sustained serious damage, a tractor was burnt and a farm was damaged, a tractor was burnt, and cattle destroyed.

A two day shelling of Aygepar, Movses, and Paravakar villages of Armenia's Taush region began. In addition to material damages, three villagers were wounded in Movses. Shelling was also initiated from Ghazakh in Azerbaijan of Baganis, Voskevan, and Dgudavan villages of Noyemberian in Armenia. One inhabitant was wounded; he subsequently died of his wounds. The shelling also destroyed the TV transmission tower near Baganis. Two armored vehicles caused much damage to the the areas under crop in Dosekh village of the Noyemberian district.

May 3

At 4 a.m. Khirants village of Ijevan region in Armenia was subjected to shelling. A village mini-bus was seriously damaged.

The same day, a fourteen year old boy was shot to death near Movses village and three villagers were wounded because of shelling of villages in Taush bordering. Villagers also found the body of a resident who had been executed.

Soldiers from the Ghazakh region of Azerbaijan opened fire on a car travelling in Armenia; three passengers were wounded; the car caught fire. Soldiers opened fire from armored vehicles on Ijevan residents attempting to help the wounded passengers. The three passengers were burnt alive.

May 4

A mini-bus was shelled by soldiers at Baganis village of Noyemberian region. Four members of Armenia's Ministry of Interior forces severelywere wounded. Two of them died in the hospital.

Several houses in Voskepar village in Noyemberian were set on fire by the Azerbaijani special forces and Soviet army soldiers.

Soviet army soldiers fired on villagers of Aravuz village of Armenia's Goris working in the fields. One person was wounded.

Soldiers shot at cars travelling on the Ghapan-Goris road in southern Armenia. Some of the vehicles were damaged from bullets fired on the 37th km of the road. An offical car belonging to the KGB was damaged from bullets fired on the 40th km.

May 6

At 7 A.M. the military subdivision, assisted by tanks and ZIL-131 vehicles, burst from Azerbaijan's Lachin region into Armenia's Tegh, Kornidsor, Khnatsakh, Vahatur, Khoznavar and Shurnukh border villages. The building where the officers of the special subdivision of the Interior Ministry of Armenia were settled was blown up.

In Shurnukh village a Zaporojets make car was set on fire; the apparatus of "Katary" teletransmittor was blown up; four villagers were wounded; an officer of the Armenian Interior Ministry was killed. Despite the fact that the villagers and the militiamen of Armenia's Interior Ministry did not show any resistance, twenty-five citizens were arrested, including eighteen militiamen, the chairman of the village council, and the principal of the school. Widespread shooting and action in the fields made spring sowing impossible.

The attack by soldiers on Shurnukh was repeated several times. During one of the attacks the soldiers rounded up, after terrorizing the residents. The Azerbaijanis serving at the military units headquartered in Khanbatli and Lachin regions of Azerbaijan were particularly active among the soldiers during these events.

The soldiers stole the TV set and farm equipment from the collective farm of Tegh village.

Soldiers burnt several houses and the cattle-breeding farm in Kurtghulagh village, where only some refugee families from Azerbaijan lived.

The servicemen fired point-blank at a KamAZ make vehicle which was acrrying three passengers along the Ghapan-Goris road. The passengers were wounded. They were stopped, searched, and after discovering nothing illegal, left helpless on the road, except for some bandages for their wounds.

Soldiers fired point-blank at two cars carrying an Armenian

militia officer and a militiaman from Noyemberian in the vicinity of Voskepar village. Ten militiamen and three civilians were killed.

At the same time the servicemen fired at Barekamavan village of Noyemberian region. A militiaman was killed. Thirty-four officers of Noyemberian local militia were disarmed and arrested by the soldiers in Barekamavan village and they were taken to the Ghazakh region of Azerbaijan. Only the head of local militia was freed.

May 7

Soldiers from Ghazakh region of Azerbaijan severely beat two Armenian militia officers serving in the weather station. They returned to Azerbaijan helicopter. The two injured officers were taken to the hospital by the villagers.

May 8

Soldiers set on fire a minibus in Khurtghulagh village of Goris region. They also shelled a passing car. As a result of these actions three inhabitants were wounded.

At night Azerbaijani OMONs invaded the territory of Movses village of Armenia's Daush region and burnt the public construction sites.

May 9

Soldiers from Lachin region of Azerbaijan took over two houses, and the property of the local militia CPP of Goris and taken to Azerbaijan. At the same time the soldiers of Chubatlii region broke the windows of the minibus in Shurnukh village pf Goris region.

May 10

Soviet army subdivisions blockaded Paravakar village of Daush region in Armenia. Within several hours the soldiers shelled the vicinity of the village with the excuse that they were disarming "armed bandits."

On the same day the soldiers burnt a tractor at Aravus village of Goris region.

May 11

Soldiers shelled the milk container vehicle (93-27 AD n) at Shavarshavan-Voskevan road of Noyemberian region of Armenia. A sa result of this action two citizens were wounded.

May 12

Soldiers coming on board of armored transporter N312 from Kubatli of Azerbaijan stole two piglets and collective farm seeder in Shurnukh village of Goris region in Armenia. Afterwards they left for Azerbaijan.

May 13

Three military helicopters shelled a vehicle and a minibus at Varagavan-Tsaghkavan road of Daush region in Armenia. Edward Yegorian of the Armenian parliament and Prof. Nazarov, head assistant of humanitarian problesm and human rights committee, a member of the soviet committee on European Security and Cooperation and some journalists were in the automobile.

A helicopter landing (12 soldiers) on the pretext of searching Arrmenian "armed bandits," shelled Tsaghkavan village of Daush region.

May 15

From 9 till 11 am, a military helicopetr flying over a farm in Artushen village, Goris, shelled people attempting to enter the farm territory where the bodies of three farm employees (two men and a woman) were found at 11am. 310 sheep were carried away to Azerbaijan's Kubatli region.

CASUALTIES

OF THE AGGRESSION OF THE USSR ARMED FORCES
AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
AND THE ARMENIAN PEOPLE

[April 29, 1991 - May 11, 1991. Partial listing]

I. KILLED

A. MILITIAMEN

1. Muratian Misha (born 1963) - Senior sergeant
2. Ananian Sashik (b. 1950) -Captain
3. Mnatsakanian Raphik (b. 1960) - Senior lieutenant
4. Mamian Artashes (b. 1962) - Senior lieutenant
5. Ganisian Vardan (b. 1958) - Corporal
6. Karageuzian Stepan (b. 1963) - Lieutenant
7. Aghababian Vahram (b. 1964) - Patrolman
8. Gishian Martin (b. 1970) - Senior sergeant
9. Mantashian Sos (b. 1964) - "
10. Mukhsulian Sargis (b. 1960) - "
11. Amiragian Spartak (b. 1942) - Corporal
12. Azizbekian Armen (b. 1962) - Militiaman, Special regiment
13. Matinian Harutyun - "
14. Kolozian Sargis - "

B. CIVILIANS

15. Ananian Vachik - Noyemberian Region
16. Khachatrian Lyova - Ashtarak Region
17. Hakopian Gegham -Yeghvard Region
18. Mamian Samvel - Noyemberian Region
19. Tamrazian Yura - Kirovakan City
20. Atoyan Samvel - Movses Village, Taush Region
21. Chapurian Edik - "
22. Baghtasarian Vahram - Berd Village, Taush Region
23. Chibukhchian Balabek - Ijevan Town
24. Manucharian Armen - "

II. WOUNDED

A. MILITIAMEN

1. Gishian Hamlet (b. 1946) - Captain
2. Abovian Vardan (b. 1963) - Patrolman
3. Harutiunian Samson (b. 1963) - Militiaman, Special regiment
4. Gishian Gevork (1968) - Patrolman
5. Melkonian Shago (1960) - Militiaman
6. Gasparian Hrand - Militiaman, Special regiment
7. Abrahamian Varsham - "
8. Mirzoyan Vartan - "
9. Sarukhanian Albert - "
10. Sirateghian Nelson - "
11. Papian Patvakan - "

B. CIVILIANS

12. Kazinian Harutiun - Noyemberian Town
13. Mirzoyan Aramayis - "
14. Abazian Rubik - "
15. Pahkian Hamlet - Movses Village, Taush Region
16. Ginovian Varujan - Novour and Movses Villages
17. Grigorian Erjanik - "
18. Alikhanian Armen - "
19. Hovakimian Murat - "
20. Ekhshatian Sh. P .- "
21. Mikhayelian Albert - Ararat Village
22. Asrian Hamlet - Aramus Village, Goris Region
23. Nersesian Rubik - Gpris Region
24. Shahinian Oleg - "
25. Grikorian Vladimir - "
26. Boghosian Benik - "
27. Baghdasarian Suren - "
28. Kiziriants Varujan - "
29. Petrosian Vladimir - "

III. HOSTAGES

A. MILITIAMEN

1. Beglarian Ignat - Captain, Deputy Chief of regional militia
2. Davtian Gagik - Captain, inspector
3. Sinipopov Igor - Inspector
4. Arustamian Samvel - Sergeant, inspector
5. Galstian Martun - Sergeant
6. Sirabian Ruben - Militiaman, Special regiment, Yerevan
7. Avakian Gevork - "
8. Vertilevsky Jan - "
9. Harutiunian Robert - "
10. Igitian Tigran - "
11. Danielian Armenia - "
12. Manukian Samvel - "
13. Baghtasarian Grisha - "
14. Petrosian Levon - "
15. Harutiunian Andranik - "
16. Margarian Armen - "
17. Gishian Hamlet (b. 1946) - Captain
18. Kocharian Georki (b. 1969) - Patrolman
19. Abovian Vardan (b. 1964) - Sergeant
20. Harutiunian Samson (b. 1963) - Corporal
21. Gishian Gevork (b. 1968) - Sergeant
22. Harutiunian Hrand (b. 1969) - Senior lieutenant
23. Tandilian Vahram (b. 1967) - Patrolman
24. Melkonian Shahen (b. 1961) - Militiaman
25. Kocharian Nikolai (b. 1959) - Senior lieutenant
26. Khachikian Edik (b. 1959) - Lieutenant, USSR Army
27. Ananian Misha (b. 1958) - Sergeant
28. Andonian gagik (b. 1966) - "
29. Khojian Seroja (b. 1955) - Militiaman
30. Khachikian Ashot (b. 1954) - Lieutenant
31. Mamian Shaliko (b. 1954) - Captain
32. Yeremian Valery (b. 1969) - Sergeant
33. Afian Jirair (b. 1969) - "
34. Mkrtumian Ararat (b.1969) - "
35. Vardanian Baghish (b. 1965) - "
36. Harutiunian Gevork (b. 1960) - "
37. Mamian Hayk - "
38. Margarian Gorun - Major, Head of Ttransportation Department, Kirovakan
39. Hakobjanian Gevork - Senior lieutenant, Kirovakan

40. Kapoian Vasil - Lieutenant, "
41. Davtian Manvel - Senior lieutenant, "
42. Aghajanian Margar - Lieutenant, "
43. Andonian Karen - "
44. Melkonian Arjanik - Sergeant, "
45. Kotanjian Garegin - "
46. Nalpantian Kolya - Corporal, "
47. Chilinkarian Artush - Sergeant, "
48. Tumanian Armen - "
49. Andonian Rafik - Lieutenant, "
50. Tsakanian Artur - Sergeant, "
51. Margarian Smbat - Corporal, "
52. Poghosian Armen - Sergeant, "
53. Tevosian Valery - Special regiment, Yerevan
54. Simonian Gnel - "
55. Markosian Artur - "
56. sadoyan Nikola - "
57. Davrishian Martiros - "
58. Sargsian mayis - "
59. Gabrielian Aram - "
60. Armen [driver] - "
61. Dsolovian Sargis - Sergeant
62. Amirkhanian Spartak - Sergeant [deceased in captivity]
63. Azizbekian Armen - " ["]

B. CIVILIANS

64. Aslanian Artur - Shurnukh village, Goris Region
65. Mkhitarian Sergey - "
66. Asrian Henrik - "
67. Harutiunian Slavik - "
68. Safarov Artur - "
69. Pajanian Samvel - "
70. Hakobian Samvel - "
71. Virapian Artusha - "
72. Azarian Albert - "
73. Palayan Ararat - "
74. Haroyan Ararat - "
75. Movsisian Styopa - "
76. Sargsian Edik - "
77. Danielian Andranik - "
78. Byichkov Viktor - "
79. Petrosian Armen - "
80. Mkrtchian Hrachik - "
81. Baghdasarian Garnik - "

82. Shamirian Nels - "
83. Shasparian Erik - "
84. Sargsian Vazgen - " (psychiatric patient)
85. Sargsian Sasha - " (")
86. Avetisian Lutvik - "
87. Ghazarian Vachakan - "
88. Barkhutarian Arayik - "
89. Shamirian Mels - " (Technician, Television station)
90. Gasparian Edik - " (")
91. Ghazinian Harutiun - Noyemberian Region
92. Amiraghian Ashot - "
93. Amiraghian georgi - "
94. Aghbalian Ara - Voskepar Village
95. Grigorian Gevork - Medical doctor, resident of Yerevan, taken hostage in Getashen
96. Khachatrian Valery - "
97. Hakobkokhian Sargis - Head of Medical Department of Getashen
98. Hovannisian Vardan - APN news agency reporter, cameraman

P.S. The above are incomplete listings. As of May 22, 1991, the total number of killed since April 29 was put at over 60, while the number of hostages was close to 500.

IV. CONFISCATED WEAPONS

From Militiamen 124 units
From civilians 42 unist (hunting rifles)

TOTAL 166 UNITS

PREPARED BY THE KGB, YEREVAN

A TYPICAL "BAYEVIK," OR ARMED BANDIT

VARDAN ROUBENI HOVHANNESIAN
Journalist, Video-Reporter

Vardan Roubeni Hovhannesian was born in 1968 in Yerevan. After graduating from high school in 1986, he served in the Soviet Army.

Two days after his honorable discharge from the army, the December 1988 earthquake struck Armenia. Vardan took an active part in rescue operations. He suffered a number of injuries, including broken ribs, while attempting to save lives, dragging victims from under the rubble. None of his injuries kept him from returning to the scene and providing whatever assistance he could.

Vardan has always been fond of photography. He used the video camera for the first time in May, 1989 on the advice of the friends of his father, who is a producer for the Armenian television company. He combined his zeal for journalism with the technology of the videocamera to produce valuable and intelligent footage of recent events in and around Armenia.

In 1990 he visited Europe and the United States where his documentary footage is highly valued by television companies and research centers. In Los Angeles he completed a special course to improve his skills as a documentary editor.

Since May,1990 Vardan Hovhannesian worked as a freelance photoreporter on contract with several news agencies. He was particularly adept at documenting crisis situations.

Vardan had been to Karabagh and Getashen several times. He was one of the few to film the Armenian-Azerbaijani battles on the border with Nakhichevan in January, 1990. He had a narrow escape during the May 27, 1990 events in Yerevan. He was in Vilnius in January, 1991 and documented the actions of the Soviet army.

In April, 1991 Armenian television broadcast a documentary produced by him on the situation of Armenians in Karabagh.

Vardan was in Getashen during the recent joint Soviet-Azerbaijani military operations against Armenian villages. He participated in the negotiations with OMON commanders on the evacuation of women, children, and the injured. While documenting events he was attacked by soldiers who broke his camera and hit him on the head with the rifle butt.

Vardan Hovhannesian was arrested by the USSR Ministry of Interior troops and handed to the Azerbaijani prosecutor's office.

Vardan Hovhannisian was released in August 1991 without ever being charged, under pressure from the international community.

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS

"OPERATION RING"

I. As Seen by
Andranik Nahapeti Margarian and Philaret Arseni Berikian

Helicopter flights to the Armenian districts that had been under constant shelling with advanced weapons have been halted since April 23,1991.

Beginning on April 20, the villages of Getashen and Martun-ashen were subjected to psychological" terror. Military helicopters were flying at as low as fifty meters above ground. Our villages were constantly shelled from nearby Azerbaijani villages where Ministry of Interior troops were located. The population was going mad because of the systematic shelling and the noise of the helicop-ters.

Seeing the tanks, the infantry, and then the OMONs, people begged their defenders to stop shooting, thus trying to save their lives or at least the lives of their children. The people were still more terrified when the tanks, soldiers, and OMONs appeared on the outskirts of the village. Behind these troops, they saw the Azerbaijanis from the nearby villages coming with their horses, cars, and trucks loaded with sacks and boxes. The population of Getashen was familiar with this script of pogroms...

A real massacre began on the ourskirts of the village of Geta-shen. After the withdrawal of the army, the OMONs surrounded the women, children, and the old people who had been unable to escape... The soldiers who had helped the OMONs into the village acted as indifferent witnesses, at best...

The OMONs selected a group of people, mostly children, and designed an execution raw. At that very moment the school teacher Tatul, one of the Getashen defenders, pulled the ring from a gren-ade, seized the colonel by the arm, and threatened to blow up both himself and the colonel. The colonel ordered not to fire. Another defender jumped at the armored vehicle and pulled the ring of another grenade and demanded that the crew get out from the vehicle. To make them do so he grabbed the lieutenant by the hair. This is how the fourteen hostages were taken.

Yet there was one OMON remaining in the armored vehicle. He was found there later. That was the Azerbaijani death broadcast on TV and advertised in Azerbaijani newspapers.

The two defenders with grenades organized the group which took the hostages and the equipment of the armored vehicle. The fourteen hostages were locked in a basement, and the colonel called out the soldiers, the OMONs, and the armored vehicles. But about fifty Armenian hostages have been already taken in the village of Getashen. Twenty-seven of these were exchanged with the fourteen taken by the Getashen defenders. The Azerbaijanis could not refuse the exchange, since by that time General Shatalin's final order had been received. Only women and children were released.

The young men are still hostage. We are sure that they have been tortured and then killed. There is evidence of two of them beeing forced to act for Azerbaijani TV, with submachine guns hanging from their necks. The commentator said that those were Armenian "armed bandits." Then they were taken to the side, naked, and killed.

After the hostages were hidden, Tatul and his friends began to withdraw. They took the colonel with them, while holding the grenades with pulled rings.

Their aim was to start the negotiations to free the Armenian hostages. Artur followed Tatul and Hrach a few steps behind. Tatul demanded that Artur stay with them, as if compelled by a premonition of the end, but Artur would not obey.

An OMON fired from the rear and all three of our defenders were shot at. A few minutes later a grenade blew up. The three defenders were killed by the submachine gun volley. The colonel was only slightly wounded. The people of Getashen did kill the OMON taken hostage with two submachine gun volleys.

The population of the village of Martunashen was much better organized. They were not as affected by the panic of women and children. Maybe it was because of their smaller number. The village of Getashen, ten times bigger than Martunashen, had to have many more defenders and that caused much disorder.

There was no light, no water, and the village was spread over a huge territory. And then there were rumors, and rumors, and rumors. There were helicopters flying above their very heads, large caliber machine guns firing, and cannons shelling. Nights were real nightmares.

Suddenly a new rumor: Turks have appeared in a certain district. The defenders got there but the rumors turned out to be false. All that is nerves... Nerves... Everything was piling up...

[As told to Yuri Hayrapetian in Special Bulletin, Information Office of the Parliament, Republic of Armenia, May 18, 1991]

II. As Seen by
Arsen Atanesian

[Arsen Atanesian, a deportee from Getashen, was interviewed at the Republican Hospital of Yerevan, where he was recovering. The interview was published in Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, May 2, 1991.]

On April 30, at about 6 a.m., over 100 tanks and armored vehicles attacked the village. First they seemed to have come to defend us. They came with the village maps, stopped at the guarding positions and surrounded the village. Then military men burst into the village. A Soviet Army lieutenant demanded my passport by my house which is one of the first ones in the village.

I gave it, he examined then tore my passsport and hit me. Turning to those who had arrived with him he said "Take him too." Then they gathered our neighbors, 29 people in all, took us away from the village; made us lie on the ground with our faces down and walked on our bodies and hit us. Then the lieutenant ordered his men to draw back and handed us to the Azerbaijan OMON. The OMON people beat us for about 2 hours.

Then a bus took us to the now Azerbaijanian but until recently the Armenian village of Kamo. They started to beat us again, then gave us some papers and demanded to sign that we agree to abandon our houses voluntarily and move to another republic.

First they called S. Chilingarian (70), a one-legged invalid, who had been brought to Kamo with us, and demanded that he should sign the paper. He did not, so they hit him on the head with a machine gun. None of us signed and they started to beat us again. Then Mamedov, the head of the Khanlar Regional Internal Affairs Department, called me and took me to Alikend village by car. There were buses parked. On the whole way from Kamo to Alikend, which is 8-10 km, I was told that those were the buses to be used for our transfer.

Then I was brought back to Kamo and told to go to Getashen and bring the village officials for some negotiations, as the village had to be evacuated in 24 hours. At that very moment I saw them bring-ing two women with their children, beaten all over. I asked to sent them back to the village.

This is all I can remember. After that request, I was called back. Being hit by an OMON captain, I lost my consciousness. I was taken to the village hospital. As far as I know 30-40 houses in the village have been burnt. In the course of two hours after the army had attacked the village, all the guard positions and roads were occupied, all the ways leading to the woods closed. Some ten minutes later the OMON men started robbing people and their houses. I must say that the 29 hostages have been brought back to the village, but 16 others were taken in unknown direction. They are said to be taken to Khanlar. The clothes of 6 of them with their passports were brought to the village at night and left there. There is no information about the rest.

There has been shooting after the armored vehicle and tanks had driven into the village. Three houses in Martunashen have been shot at. That was where Keri ("Uncle," as everyone used to name him) was shot. About 120 cows, 400 cattle have been taken from the village by OMON people.

They have robbed everything that could be robbed. As far as I know there are 12 victims among the village people and defendents. I can speak no more...

III. As Witnessed by
Russian Parliamentrarian A. Shabad

Members of the Armenian Parliament have been asking me to come and ascertain the situation here. The new aggravation of the situation and recent events in Getashen are the reasons for my being here.

[...] A special Commission has been formed by the Russian Parliament and I have no doubt they will do everything possible. Meanwhile, we received very alarming information about troops landing in Yerevan; I decided to come at once.

I did not manage to get into the village of Getashen. The Azerbaijani government has denied both the Commission and myself entry into Getashen. I worked with the commission for a day and we went to the village of Voskepar together. There I decided to stay after they left.

The Shelling of Voskepar

[I decided to stay in Voskepar because] I was sure that I would not be allowed to return. I wanted to get answers to a number of questions I have been asking while in Moscow; I could not understand what was going on here. Now I understand absolutely everything. That was one reason.

Also, I had no moral or ethical right to leave. I realized that the village was going to be shelled again the next day. There were almost no officials in the village, the people were very nervous. Besides, I was afraid the Getashen events could be repeated and I already had a clear idea about that since I had spoken with Getashen victims in the hospital.

I hoped that my being there could alleviate the situation. Maybe I was right, as the shelling was not so heavy the day I was there as it had been the previous day. And there were no casualties. The shelling of the previous day was a targeted one, as if someone was giving direction constantly. I thought it possible to return only when the tanks withdrew.

[...] I had no contact personally with the military. Negotiations were carried out by the members of the Parliament Commission. First, I was supposed to negotiate with the village population. But later I was asked not to do it, or else I would be asked to leave. That was true. I could have been sent out of the region if not something worse. The military were very nervous about my being there.

DATA
ON THE POPULATION DEPORTED FROM ARTSAKH
TO MAY 21, 1991

FROM HADRUT DISTRICT

Karaglukh	104	of whom	to Goris	44	to Hadrut	60
Jeraberd	54	of whom	to Goris	8	to Hadrut	46
Khendzadzor	142	of whom	to Goris	6	to Hadrut	136
Dolanlar	306	of whom	to Goris	249	to Hadrut	57
Arpaguiadouk	13	of whom	to Goris	10	to Hadrut	3
Petrosashen	12	of whom	to Goris	0	to Hadrut	12
Spitakashen	6	of whom	to Goris	0	to Hadrut	6
Biniatlu	18	of whom	to Goris	5	to Hadrut	13
Total	533					

FROM BERDADZOR SUBDISTRICT

Yeghtsahogh	101	of whom	to Goris	76	to Stepanakert	25
Kirov	241	of whom	to Goris	186	to Stepanakert	61
Metsashen	115	of whom	to Goris	95	to Stepanakert	20
Tsaghkadzor	23	of whom	to Goris	13	to Stepanakert	10
Total	480					

Note: From April 20 to May 20, the number of Armenians killed in Getashen and Martunashen reached 22; some were residents of Yerevan visiting relatives. During the same period 14 citizens were killed in Artsakh.

bmac/dossier27

ENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

DECLARATION

In Mountainous Karabagh, in the Shahumian region, in the Getashen district and on the Azerbaijan-Armenia border there now exists a state of war. The communist regime of Azerbaijan, with the consent of the highest authorities of the USSR and the immediate participation of the armed forces of the USSR Interior Ministry, is continuing to implement a policy of deportation against the Armenian population from its homeland, by violating universal values and all norms of international human rights.

In view of the increasingly complex situation, on April 25, 1991 the Parliament of Armenia requested that the USSR Congress of People's Deputies be called to a special session.

In response, at the suggestion and the military assistance of the central authorities, the situation has become more critical. Armenian villages along the full length of the Azerbaijani border are now being bombarded.

The USSR central authorities are pursuing a policy of drawing Armenia into a war with Azerbaijan. The Parliament of Armenia considers this a policy of state terrorism against the Armenian nation and the legitimate authorities representing it and, furthermore, it considers these military actions acts of aggression against Armenia.

The Parliament of Armenia declares that the full responsibility of the subsequent deterioration of the situation and its consequences rests with the President of the USSR, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the USSR Ministries of Interior and Defense, and the KGB of the USSR.

The Parliament of Armenia insists on its request that the USSR Congress of People's Deputies be called immediately into special session, as a necessary mechanism of resolving the crisis.

The Parliament of Armenia, facing this alarming threat, is appealing to all the peoples of the world, the governments and parliaments of all the nations, the Supreme Soviets of all the republics, and people of goodwill to use all possible means to put an end to the aggression against the Armenian people.

Yerevan, April 30, 1991

PALIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

DECLARATION

Anticipating correctly the actions planned against the Armenian populated villages of Getashen and Martunashen in Azerbaijan, on April 25 the Parliament of Armenia demanded that the USSR Supreme Soviet be called into a special session. The Parliament's assessment was based on reliable evidence proving the existence of a plan to depopulate the inhabitants of those villages and the certainty that tensions would rise to unmanageable levels should the plan succeed. By requesting a special session of the USSR Supreme Soviet the Parliament of Armenia hoped to prevent the implementation of the deportation plan.

The constitutionally sanctioned request for the special session of the USSR Supreme Soviet was followed by the brutal attacks of USSR Interior Ministry and Azerbaiajani OMON forces on Getashen and Martunashen, accompanied by a number of killings, massacres, looting, and orders for the deportation of the inhabitants.

The joint declaration by the USSR Interior and Defense ministries on May 4 proves once more that they participated in the implementation of the planned deportations. The leadership of these institutions consider the subjection of Azerbaijan-based USSR armed forces to Azerbaijani jurisdiction quite normal, while they encourage the defection of USSR Interior Ministry forces under Armenian jurisdiction serving on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and encourage their illegal activities.

Forces belonging to these ministries are now shelling Armenian habitats with the support of Soviet artillery and tanks.

By taking steps toward the deportation of Armenians in Azerbaijan and by the continuous shelling of Armenian territory, the USSR authorities are attempting to destabilize the situation in Armenia prior to the referendum, to create excuses for intervention in the domestic affairs of Armenia, and to develop obstacles to the process of democratization.

The Parliament of Armenia considers the policy of trampling on elementary human rights accompanied by massive repression and barbarisms by the highest authorities of the USSR as an attempt to preserve a repressive regime and to overthrow the legally constituted government--an attempt that condemned to fail historically. The Parliament of Armenia expresses its determination to resist any encroachments against the rights of the Armenian people.

Yerevan, May 6, 1991

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

APPEAL
of the Presidium of the Parliament of Armenia
TO MR PEREZ DE CUELLAR
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

The Parliament of the Republic of Armenia resolved on March 1, 1991, that Armenia will hold a referendum regarding its future status on September 21, 1991. The referendum will be held according to the referendum laws of Armenia and the USSR law on "The Order of Solution of Questions Related to the Secession of a Union Republic from the USSR." The question posed in the referendum of Armenia is: "Do you agree that Armenia should be an independent and democratic state outside the USSR?"

The current provocations against Armenia suggest that all means will be used to block the referendum of the Republic of Armenia. Given this complex state of affairs, the presence of observers from authoritative international organizations will contribute the the preparation and holding of the referendum under normal conditions.

In view of the above, and given our concern that the openness of the preparation and holding of the referendum be ensured and that mechanisms foreseen for such purposes by international law be put into effect, the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia is hereby requesting that you send United Nations observers to witness the preparation and holding of the referendum.

The Parliament of the Republic of Armenia expresses its readiness to receive your designated observers at the earliest possible time and to secure for them the necessary working conditions.

Yerevan, May 6, 1991

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

LETTER
of President Levon Ter-Petrossyan
To the President of the United States

Dear Mr. President,

The Republic of Armenia and the Armenian people, having opted for democracy and sovereignty, are living through critical times.

Armed forces of the USSR and Azerbaijani Interior Ministries, supported by heavy artillery, tanks, and helicopter gunships, are implementing a preplanned policy of depopulation of Armenians in Azerbaijani territory, specifically those living in villages adjacent to Nagorny-Karabagh. Many villages have already been forcefully evacuated and others burnt.

There have been repeated cases of pogroms and massacres committed by Soviet and Azerbaijani armed forces against the civilian and defenseless Armenian population.

The horrors which only armies can inflict have now been spread to villages inside Armenian territory near the Azerbaijani border since last week. Units of the Fourth Army of the USSR stationed in Azerbaijan have crossed the border into Armenia and have been shelling villages along the border. In the absence of a declaration of a state of emergency, such operations constitute an undeclared war by the central authorities against the civilian population of a constituent republic.

Armenian self-defense units, whose size and importance have been exaggerated in Soviet and Azerbaijani reports, are capable of defending the population from brigands and mob attacks but not against armies. Moreover, it is militiamen of the Armenian Interior Ministry that have been the targets of Soviet army operations, in some cases becoming victims of brutal murders.

My government is convinced that these military operations and atrocities are being committed with the aim of destabilizing the situation in Armenia and weakening its legal and legitimate government. Since the victory of popular and democratic forces last August, Armenia has introduced a multi-party system, implemented a policy of land distribution to the peasants, and adopted a constitutional path toward the attainment of independence. In this respect, the government of Azerbaijan, still under the control of the Communist Party, has become an ally of the anti-reformist forces in Moscow. The two share an interest in

perpetuating authoritarianism and dependency; their joint policies are intended to penalize Armenia for its decision to hold its own referendum on the question of independence and democracy.

It is apparent that such policy decisions and large scale military operations could not have been implemented without the knowledge and approval of USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev himself. Under no circumstances can President Gorbachev and the central authorities of the USSR escape responsibility for the massive violations of elementary human rights, the Charter of the United Nations, and international treaties and conventions.

The government and people of Armenia have followed closely the concerted action of the international community in dealing with violations of international law and standards in the Gulf region in the spirit of the New World Order, and the consequences of the war there.

Armenia wishes to see nothing more and nothing less than the respect everywhere of international standards of behavior by governments.

It is my hope that the government of the United States will consider carefully the implications of Soviet policies with regard to Armenia and other democratic republics of the USSR and that it will undertake whatever means it considers necessary and proper to ensure that the principles of collective security, peaceful conflict resolution, and self-determination are respected within, as much as without, the USSR.

Levon Ter-Petrossyan
President,
Parliament of the Republic of Armenia

Yerevan, May 8, 1991

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

DECLARATION

By the Presidium of the Parliament

The Soviet Army is continuing its aggression against the Republic of Armenia while implementing a bloodstained policy of deportation of Armenians from the villages of Getashen and Martunashen. The list of the villages that have been subjected to violence and ruined is growing longer daily: Voskepar, Kirants, Tegh, Kornidzor, Shurnukh, Khoznavar, Artzvashen, and others in Armenia.

Soviet officials have characterized the ar and ground shelling and bombardment of peaceful villages as "a regime of identity checking" rather than war. Consequently, the Soviet Army does not feel obligated to respect international conven-tions regulating behavior during war, such as the UN Convention on the Treatment of Prisoners; it also ignores legal norms which must be maintained even if official Soviet interpretations were to be trusted.

The Soviet army and the Interior Ministry forces are carrying out operations which are inconsistent with rules effective in a state of emergency. The use of advanced weaponry and equipment against the peaceful population of the invaded areas; violence against and brutal murders of women, children, the elderly and invalids; illegal arrests of local officials, factory directors, and police officers have become routine in border areas.

There is much evidence that Soviet army-held Armenian prisoners, now called "hostages," are being subjected to inhuman torture for the purpose of extorting from them testimony that would validate the official version adopted by the President of the Union concerning the presence of Armenian "armed bandits."

Based on the above, the Presidium of the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia has determined that,

1. *The Soviet army and the central government are obligated*

a. *To put an immediate end to the aggression against the Armenian people;*

b. *To ensure that the operations carried out by Soviet armed forces are within the strict bounds of legality and to prevent the army from exeeding its authority;*

c. *To release all the hostages, captives, and those otherwise arrested illegally; and,*

d. *To provide accurate information on missing citizens.*

2. *Appropriate Soviet and international tribunals must investigate these events and draw the necessary conclusions regarding:*

a. *Flagrant violations by the USSR of the December 10,1984* UN "Convention Against Torture" signed by the USSR;

b. Offenses against the December 14, 1974 UN Declaration About the Security of the Women and Children in the State of Emergency and National Conflicts.

3. *The international community must inevitably examine the responsibility of those who inspired, organized, and committed the state sponsored atrocities in Armenia.*

Yerevan, May 8, 1991

REPRESENTATIVES OF MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH

DECLARATION
By Representatives of Mountainous Karabagh

At a meeting held on May 16, 1991 in Stepanakert, Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh, We, the plenipotentiary representatives of the workers of Mountainous Karabagh, have determined that,

1. We are witnessing the development of tragic events in Mountainous Karabagh. These events are accompanied by atrocities, repressive measures, plunder and murders, by the burning of homes, hospitals, and whole residential areas; by illegal arrests; by the violation of dignity and of human rights; and the depopulation of peaceful citizens from their villages and towns.

2. This policy of repressive violence is directed exclusively against Armenian citizens under the cover of "identity checking," and is carried out by the OMON forces of the Azerbaijani Interior Ministry and armed forces of the USSR Interior Ministry.

3. The continuing deportation, slaughter, and terrorizing of Armenians in Karabagh is forcing local councils to request that international organizations and foreign countries give political asylum to the Armenian population of the region.

To prevent further bloodshed, the representatives declare that,

1. *The people of Mountainous Karabagh remain faithful to the legal order established by the USSR Constitution and see their future existence within the context of a renewed Soviet federation;*

2. *The people of Mountainous Karabagh appeal to the highest authorities of the USSR to intervene in Mountainous Karabagh without delay in order to secure the life, dignity, and elementary human rights of the Armenian population;*

3. *The meeting of representatives believes that the state of emergency should be enforced exclusively by the armed forces of the USSR Interior Ministry;*

4. *The meeting appeals to the Azerbaijani community of the Region to enter into negotiations on the reinstatement of constitutional authorities, and on the solution of the multi-dimensional problems that divide the two communities. Negotiations should be based on the declared willingness of all parties to the conflict to reconsider the anti-constitutional measures imposed on Mountainous Karabagh.*

Bureau of the City Committee of the Communist Party,
Stepanakert
Executive Committee, City Council of Stepanakert
Regional Council of Mountainous Karabagh
Executive Committee of Regional Council
Bureau of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party,
Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh

May 16, 1991
Stepanakert, Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh

PARLIAMENT OF ARMENIA

APPEAL
By the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia to
Mr. Perez De Cuellar
Secretary-general of the United Nations

In appeals addressed to you and to the UN Commission on Human Rights on May 6, 1991, the Parliament of Armenia requested that the United Nations send observers to Armenia and, especially, to Mountainous Karabagh to ascertain the situation locally and prevent our people and republic from becoming the victims of planned violence and bloodshed.

Events are progressing at a dangerous pace and may lead to genocide. Armed forces of the USSR and special Azerbaijani militia are implementing a policy of forced deportation, terrorizing, and callous disregard for the dignity and human rights of Armenians throughout the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh. These acts constitute a repetiton of operations which, only recently, resulted in the deportation of the residents of Getashen and Martunashen, and the murder and mutilation of many citizens.

To prevent further bloodshed, the Parliament of Armenia is requesting, once more, that you urgently undertake all the means necessary to ensure the presence of UN observers in Mountainous Karabagh.

We are only too aware of the growing role of the UN in the defense of the Rights of Man and of Nations, and we are convinced that in this case too the UN will discharge its responsibilities.

May 16, 1991
Yerevan

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

LETTER
of President LevonTer-Petrossyan
To Mr. Laurent Fabius
President of the French National Assembly

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia, I would like to inform you that events in Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh engendered by the intervention of the armed forces are developing in a direction that is bound to lead to major human tragedies, political complications, and diplomatic difficulties.

The Soviet Union is engaged in a virtual war against Armenia. During the past three weeks Armenian villages along the border with Azerbaijan have been shelled with tanks, artillery, and helicopter gunships; the civilian population is being terrorized; local militia, our regular police functioning under the jurisdiction of the Armenian Interior Ministry, and civilian inhabitants have been taken hostage and incarcerated in Azerbaijan.

The USSR armed forces and Azerbaijani armed bands legalized by Soviet authorities are implementing a policy of deportations against the population of the Armenian villages in the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh and nearby Armenian populated districts, in Azerbaijan. That policy is accompanied by atrocities, plunder, and bloodshed. In the last few days we have received reliable reports of all males in villages and towns being gathered and moved to unknown locations while communities, now made up of women and children alone, are subjected to indignities, torture, and deportation. The course and pace of events, if not checked on time, are certain to have genocidal effects.

This callous aggression against a republic that has opted for democracy and independence. And it is being led by thehighest ranking officialsof the USSR, which has adhered to the relevant international treaties and conventions defininf universal human and political rights.

The time has come, I believe, for the international community to display its active concern for the flagrant violations of massive

human and political rights that are occurring in this region.

The Presidium of the Parliament of Armenia believes that a first step which the international community can take is to determine for itself the impact of USSR and Azerbaijani policies on Armenia and Armenians.

On behalf of the Parliament and government of Armenia, therefore, I would like to extend an invitation to you and the Assemblee Nationale to send observers to Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh for the purpose of ascertaining the facts and determining whatever action you will then deem appropriate to prevent further destruction and death in the region.

The government and people of Armenia share with the international community the general concern regarding the political stability of the USSR. Furthermore, as an emerging state striving at full sovereignty Armenia subscribes to the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other states.

I am certain you will agree, however, that this principle was not meant to give a free hand to governments or to use mass terror and deportations as a means to settle political issues.

Moreover, we believe that in the long run the international community has little to benefit from relations based on the tolerance of evil, as has been demonstrated so often in recent history.

May I also add that we have extended similar invitations to other governments and international organizations, including the United Nations. On May 6 and again on May 16 the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia requested of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the UN Commission on Human Rights to send their own observers for the same purpose. Any assistance you may provide to ensure the interest of the UN in this matter will be deeply appreciated.

My government is ready to provide whatever support your representatives may need to accomplish their mission.

Levon Ter-Petrossyan
President
Parliament of the Republic of Armenia

Yerevan, May 17, 1991

PARLIAMENT OF ARMENIA

Appeal
of the Presidium of the Parliament Republic of Armenia

To the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and The Presidiums of the Supreme Soviets of Soviet and Autonomous Republics

Following the pogroms and deportations in the villages of Getashen and Martunashen adjoining Mountainous Karabagh and the large scale punitive operations executed by the Soviet army in Armenian districts near the border with Azerbaijan, the policy of violent repression and illegal activities has now extended to Mountainous Karabagh. Supported by the Soviet army and Interior Ministry forces, and under the cover of "identity checking," the Azerbaijani OMONs have initiated a new wave of terror and deportation accompanied by plunder, rape, and massacre of the unarmed population.

Almost all the men in the region are incarcerated in Azerbaijan, while the women and elderly are subjected to insults and humiliation.

The civillian population of 15 villages in the subdistrict of Berdadzor and district of Hadrut were deported beginning on May 16. More than one thousand have found shelter in temporary camps along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and in the villages of Khndzoresk and Tegh in the district of Goris.

High officials of the Soviet government have pledged numerous times that the deportees would be returned to their homes and their safety would be guaranteed. In fact no practical steps have been taken. The Soviet government has not had representatives on site who could ascertain the situation of the deportees.

In order to prevent the final solution of the question of Mountainous Karabagh by changing the demography of the region and to ascertain directly the tragic situation of the deportees, we appeal to you to:

1. *Send observers to the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh and the adjoining districts;*
2. *Undertake all possible means to assure the return of the deportees to their homes; and,*
3. *Prevent future atrocities from being committed against the Armenian people.*

Yerevan, May 20, 1991

PARLIAMENT OF ARMENIA

RESOLUTION
On the Situation Created in Armenia's Border Regions with Azerbaijan and in Mountainous Karabagh

The continuing operations of USSR armed forces and Azerbaijani OMONs in Armenia's border regions with Azerbaijan and in Mountainous Karabagh have by now turned into a virtual war against Armenia.

Atrocities are being committed in the name of a regime of "identity checking" and under the cover of the implementation of the presidential order "On the Prevention of the Creation of Armed Bands Considered Illegal by the USSR Constitution and On the Confiscation of Illegal Weapons." These atrocities, including the deportation of Armenian citizens, the terrorizing of the population, mutilations, murder, plunder and other barbaric practices, manifest signs characteristic of a genocide.

Despite verbal pledges by the highest officials of the USSR to put an end to these criminal activities, atrocities are expanding.

Fully cognizant of the consequences of the activities and anxious to prevent further bloodshed, the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia RESOLVES,

1. *To call on the President of the USSR with the following demands:*

a. *To end immediately the implementation in Karabagh of the above mentioned presidential order in its current form, since it has generated a chain of illegal activities. To exclude the Azerbaijani OMONs from participation in "identity checking" operations;*

b. *To send to Mountainous Karabagh teams of special observers, including members of the Presidential Council, representatives of Armenia and others republics, as designated by them, and members of the USSR Parliament, and reporters, to supervise the implementation of his own order;*

c. *To apply equally to the Azerbaijani side the implementation of the presidential order;*

d. *To secure the return to their homes of Armenians deported from the villages of Getashen and Martunashen, from the Hadrut district of Mountainous Karabagh, and from*

Perdadsor and other areas, and provide assurances of their security;

e. *The resolve the question of the immediate release of those kidnapped and illegally incarcerated; and,*

f. *To entrust the security of Armenians in Mountainous Karabagh and Shahumian district to the Commander in charge of the area covered by the state of emergency decree.*

Levon Ter-Petrossyan
President

Ara Sahakyan
Secretary

Yerevan, May 17, 1991

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

Appeal
of the Presidium of the Parliament Republic of Armenia
To the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet

Since the beginning of May 1991, during the unprecedented operations executed by the USSR armed forces and Azerbaijani OMONs in the villages of Getashen and Martunashen and subsequently in Armenian districts bordering Azerbaijan and in Mountainous Karabagh, over 500 Armenians--members and leadersof local councils, militiamen, doctors and innocent citizens--have been detained by the authorities as "armed bandits."

Considering the total absence of information on their fate and the conditions of their incarceration,

Considering the substantial evidence of mistreatment of Armenian detainees in the examination rooms of Azerbaijani prisons,

The Presidium of the Armenian Parliament hereby appeals to the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet

To undertake the necessary measures to remove these citizens from Azerbaijani territory, to release innocent civilians, and the ensure that legal proceedings against any of the detainees are administered by a third party.

Yerevan, May 20, 1991

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

DECLARATION

Since April 1991, the USSR and Azerbaijani authorities have carried out wide ranging military actions against the Armenian people. The purpose of these actions has been to achieve definite political objectives: to terrorize the Armenian population; to pressure the authorities of the Republic of Armenia to abandon their current political course of establishing an independent and democratic state; and to bolster the communist regime in Azerbaijan by forcibly deporting the Armenian population of Artsakh (Mountainous Karabagh) as a solution to the Karabagh problem.

Under the pretext of finding Armenian "armed bandits" and verifying identification papers, soldiers from the Soviet army, Soviet Interior Ministry units and Azerbaijani OMON units used tanks, heavy artillery, and military helicopters to commit atrocities against Armenians in tens of villages. As a result 41 persons were killed and roughly 70 injured in the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh (NKAO) and in Getashen and Martunashen villages alone. Three hundred and thirty five civilians were taken hostage, of which only 189 were released subsequently, while three hostages died of torture in Azerbaijani prisons; and twenty population centers were completely emptied of their inhabitants, turning into deportees another 5000 Armenian nationals.

In addition, the mass bombardment and other illegal actions initiated from the Azerbaijani side of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border against Armenian citizens in Armenia resulted in the deaths of 35 and the wounding of forty four Armenians. More than 60 policemen in the service of the Interior Ministry of Armenia, at least ten local deputies, directors of factories, and numerous civilians were taken hostage. The attacks against 28 villages caused the destruction of many houses and public structures, and damaged crops and fields. The aggressors stole more than 1000 animals. As a result of systematic shelling the airport at Kapan was seriously damaged and the Goris-Kapan road closed off.

Surveillance flights as well as illegal and humiliating searches have become common in Armenia's border regions. Agricultural work has ceased in the regions of Noyemberyan,

Daush, Ijevan,

Goris, Kapan and in many villages in other regions. The direct financial cost of the damage caused by these activities is estimated at more than 50 million rubles.

These events were discussed by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian SFSR, the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine, the presidiums of Latvia and Lithuania, and the presidiums of the City and Regional Councils of Leningrad. These bodies adopted resolutions condemning the use of Soviet military units against civilians.

A number of delegations from other countries visited the affected districts in Armenia and reached similar conclusions.

Violating the USSR Constitution, the USSR Supreme Soviet refused the request of the Armenian Parliament to hold an extraordinary session of Congress of People's Deputies for the purpose of discussing the situation. In addition, the USSR Supreme Soviet refused to create an independent parliamentary committee to study the numerous charges of violation of constitutional and human rights by the military .

The central government failed to respond to the constructive proposals offered by the authorities of Armenia and NKAO for the stabilization of the situation, the release of the hostages, and the return to their permanent homes of forcibly deported Armenians. A positive approach to these proposals would have created the preconditions necessary for the start of negotiations toward the reestablishment of the legitimate authorities in NKAO. Clearly, only the constitutionally elected leadership can guarantee the civil rights of the region's inhabitants regardless of their nationality.

The President of the USSR thus aborted the efforts by NKAO and Armenia to reach a political solution through bilateral and multilateral negotiations.

Without undertaking any real political initiatives to stabilize the situation, on July 4th the President of the USSR issued yet another decree. One more time, the President has decided to rely on the empty promises of Azerbaijani leaders as guarantees of the civil rights of Armenian nationals.

As in the past, decrees based on empty promises were followed by large scale armed attacks on Armenians, this time in the Shahumian district. For all practical purposes, the President's decree constituted the deportation order for the Armenians of that district. The decree was followed by killings, illegal arrests, the terrorizing of the civilian population, and new methods of trampling upon the dignity of citizens. Armed units are forcibly deporting Armenians from their villages, destroying

food and other life sustaining essentials, and artificially altering the demographic makeup of Mountainous Karabagh.

The renewed aggression has served to vitiate, again, the many peace initiatives offered by the authorities of NKAO and the government of Armenia to resolve the crisis.

These developments have also lent further credence to the charge that the President of the Soviet Union has failed to fulfill his constitutional responsibilities to guarantee the life, belongings and honor of citizens of the USSR.

When most Union republics are trying to stabilize the situation through constructive dialog, the actions sanctioned by the President of the USSR and implemented by Azerbaijan have thwarted the normalization process and destabilized the situation in the entire USSR.

In view of this situation, the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia condemns the inhuman and illegal policies carried out against the population of Artsakh by the leaderships of the Soviet Union and Azerbaijan.

The Parliament of the Republic of Armenia demands that the leadership of the Union immediately cease its direct involvement and encouragement of the terrorizing and forced deportation of the Armenian population.

The Parliament of the Republic of Armenia appeals to all the republics of the Union to call upon the government of the Soviet Union to put an end to the use of the citizens of their republics serving in the military in punitive actions taken against the civilian population.

The Parliament of the Republic of Armenia calls upon the leaders of the world community, including the Group of Seven industrialized democracies, to take notice of the obvious violations of human rights in the Soviet Union and of the clearly political intent of these violations.

The Parliament of the Republic of Armenia expresses its determination to protect the security and dignity of the Armenian population by all possible means.

July 6, 1991
Yerevan

ANNOUNCEMENT
from the Coordinating Council of
THE "DEMOCRATIC RUSSIA" MOVEMENT.

It has already been two weeks that an undeclared, large-scale war has been going on in the Transcaucasus against the independence movement in Armenia, which has already removed the Communist Party from power, nationalized its property, and distributed land to the peasants. Military action against Armenia and the Armenians has been carried out by forces of the Soviet Army in conjunction with forces of the interior stationed in Azerbaijan, and the Azerbaijani special militia troops.

Tanks, helicopters, missiles and armored vehicles have been employed against the Armenian militia and the unarmed population. Using the sharp national conlfict between the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis, one in which it is already pointless to search for the guilty or the innocent, as grounds for interference, the Communist leadership of the USSR has given unilateral support to only one side.

In order to strengthen the Communist regime of Azerbaijan's president, A. Mutalibov, kept in power thanks only to the aggresive actions carried out by Soviet armed forces in Baku, in January, 1990, which were provoked by anti-Armenian pogroms in the city, central authorities have given the carte blance to the anti-Armenian hysteria whipped up by Mutalibov, and supports, at all costs, his intention to solve the national question through the violent deportation of Armenians from territories under Azerbaijani jurisdiction as well as from territories under Armenian jurisdiction.

Deportation from territories under Armenian jurisdiction involves the violation of the existing border, the inadmissability of which M. Gorbachev has so often spoken, and which is now being carried out by Soviet armed forces in the Noyemberyan and Krasnoselsk districts of Armenia.

Under the pretext of fighting Armenian insurgents, the majority of whom were disbanded and disarmed by the Armenian authorities last autumn, the troops have engaged in acts of terror against the Armenian population, the goal of which is their deportation. The pogrom carried out in the Armenian villages of Getashen (Chaikend) and Martunashen was an act of genocide, which was followed by deportation. A similar threat hangs over other Armenian villages.

Exceeding even the limits of the mandate, as defined by the Soviet president's decree on the disarming of the illegal military formations, the Soviet forces have disarmed the Armenian militia on the territory of the Republic of Armenia, taken them hostage, and turned them over to the Azerbaijani authorities. The murder of fourteen members of the Noyemberyan militia by paratroopers in the village of Voskepar, on the morning of May 6, 1991, compares with the bloody crimes carried out by the Communist regime, April 9, 1989, in Tblisi, January 1990 in Baku, and January 13, 1991, in Vilnius.

The disarming and murder of the Armenian militia, following their withdrawal from the Armenian villages in the zone of conflict where they were protecting villagers from the divisions of the Soviet forces of the interior, will inevitably lead to the arming of the population, and carries with it the threat of turning Armenia into a new Afghanistan, provoking a surge of anti-Russian feeling, and threatening the secruity of all Russian--both military and civilian--on the territory of Armenia.

The central leadership of the USSR is responsible for the turning of our soldier-sons into murderers, and for the dangers they encounter in carrying out these immoral acts.

Expressing its protest against the aggression toward Armenia and the Armenian population, the Coordinating Council of the "Democratic Russia" movement demands:

-the immediate cessation of all military actions involving the so-called disarmament in Armenia and Azerbaijan,

-the release of hostages, the return of all arms seized from the Armenian militia,

-the withdrawal of the 4th Army from the regions of conflict and their replacement by forces of the interior to serve as a buffer between the conflicting parties,

-the creation of an authoritative interparliamentary commission to supervise the activity of the interior forces and guarantee their neutrality,

-the inviting of military observers from the UN, the creation of conditions for the safe return of villagers to Getashen and Martunashen,

-an investigation of the facts of genocide and military terror,

-the bringing to justice of those guilty, right up to the president of the USSR, and a parliamentary investigation of the slaughter of the militia in the village of Voskepar.

The Coordinating Council of the "Democratic Russia" movement appeals to the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation to come to an appropriate political evaluation of these events, and to use its influence to put an end to the aggression.

Russian Intellectuals Protest

The group of Russian intellectuals known as the "Karabagh" Committee has made an appeal to USSR President Mikhail S. Gorbachev and Interior Minister Yazov, asking that the government take measures to stop the deterioration of the situation in Karabagh, Shahumian, and Getashen.

The telegram containing the appeal was signed by academician and Mrs. Andrey Nuykin, Chernuchenko, Gaidar, Shmelev, Adamovich, Sheinis and others. The telegram reads, in part:

"We appeal to you to take the necesary steps to prevent the violence being committed by the Azerbaijani OMONs and the Soviet army units, aiming at deporting the Armenians from Azerbaijan. The bloodshed in Karabagh is a blemish on your reputation."

On April 22 the conference of the electors club of the Academy of Sciences, attended by representatives of over forty-five institutes, discussed a report and supportive materials presented by Andrey Nuykin on the situation in Karabagh. The conference adopted a resolution condemning the actions aimed at the deportation of the Armenians from Karabagh and other regions of Azerbaijan. The resolution demanded that the government put an end to the policy of altering the demographic situation in the region and reinstate the constitutional authorities in Karabagh.

The intellectuals also demanded an end to the blockade of Karabagh and to USSR armed forces support to Azerbaijani military operations against Armenians.

[From Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, April 27, 1991]

UNITED STATES SENATE RESOLUTION 138

Whereas the Government of the Soviet Union and the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan have dramatically escalated their attacs against civillian Armenians in Nagorno-Karabagh, Azerbaijan, and Armenia itself;

Whereas the Government of the Soviet Union has refused Armenia's request to convene a special session of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Supreme Soviet to resolve the Nagorno-Karabagh crisis;

Whereas Soviet and Azerbaijan forces have destroyed Armenian villages and depopulated Armenian areas in and around Nagorno-Karabagh in violation of internationally recognized human rights; and,

Whereas armed militia threaten stability and peace in Armenia , Nagorno-Karabagh and Azerbaijan, therefore be it

Resolved,

That it is the sense of the Senate that the Senate:

1) Condemns the attacks on innocent children, women, and men in Armenian areas and communities in and around Nagorno-Karabagh and in Armenia;

2)Ccondemns the indiscriminate use of force, including the shelling of civillian areas, on Armenia's eastern and southern borders;

3) Calls for the end of the blockades and other uses of force and intimidation directed against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh, and calls for the withdrawal of Soviet forces newly deployed for the purpose of intimidation;

4) Calls for the dialogue among all parties involved as the only acceptable route to achieving a lasting resolution of the conflict; and,

5) Reconfirms the commitment of the United States to the success of democracy and self-determination in the Soviet Union and its various Republics by expressing its deep concern about any Soviet action of retribution, intimidation, or leverage against those Republics and regions which have chosen to seek the fulfillment of their political aspirations.

May 17, 1991
Washington, D.C.

OPINION

OPERATION "KARABAGH"
Or Why Gorbachev Was Not Pleased By the Armenians

Inessa Burkova
(*Khronika*, May 1991)

For the third year now, the country is distraught by the problem of Karabagh. For the third year people are dying. For the third year the central authorities are blaming "destructive forces" and "separatists," as if in frustration.

This writer has a different point of view. Blood is flowing because of Gorbachev and his team. Nagorny-Karabagh is a polygon where internal troops developed mechanisms to suppress popular movements.

The people of Karabagh were the first to raise the banner of "Perestroika," in February 1988. You will remember that at that time the country was still in a slumber, in its 70 years of political sleep. The people of Karabagh believed that the leadership of the party was really calling for a "peaceful revolution." They wanted to believe the leadership, because they were living a much more difficult life than any of us: They were subject not only to the pressure of the party *nomenklatura* but also that of a colonial, chauvinistic domination.

Nagorny Karabagh was autonomous by name only. In fact, it was a colony. Azerbaijani authorities were repressing Armenians economically, culturally, and socially. They heard Gorbachev appeal for "Perestroika." After some hesitation, the people of Karabagh echoed. They put the concept to work.

Democracy and glasnost made their first appearance in the country in February 1988 during public meetings in Stepanakert. To secede from Azerbaijan and to unite with mother Armenia. These were demands of the Armenians of Nagorny Karabagh. Thousands joined the chorus of *Miatsum!*(Union) during these meetings. Their banners read: "Karabagh to Armenia," "For Perestroika, Democracy, Glasnost," "Lenin, Party, Gorbachev," "All Power to the Soviets." The people demanded that its elected representatives pursue the cause with determination and without delay. And on February 20, 1988, the Council of Deputies of Nagorny Karabagh resolved: "... In response to the wishes of the workers of NKAO, to request from the Azerbaijani SSR and Armenian SSR Supreme Soviets to manifest a deep understanding of the aspirations of the Armenian people of Nagorny Karabagh and to resolve that NKAO be transferred from the jurisdiction of the Azerbaijani SSR to that of the Armenian SSR."

For the first time in 70 years, the Council of Deputies of the region articulated the real will of the people.

Let me point out that the people of Karabagh took that step with dignity. No one used a single insulting word toward the Azerbaijani people (Incidentally the number of Azerbaijanis who participated in the first meeting of Stepanakert was not small). They all blamed the "Father of nations" for everything that had gone wrong. In July 5, 1921, the historically Armenian and Armenian populated territories of Nagorny Karabagh and Nakhichevan were awarded to Azerbaijan by the Kavburo (Executive Council of the Caucasus) of the Russian Communist Party. That was, in fact, a *coup d'etat* instituted by Stalin and a bunch of eight Bolsheviks.

Authorities had just started to allow us to learn, in small doses, the historical injustices perpetrated by Stalin. The people of Karabagh wanted to take matters

into their own hands and correct that injustice.

The people heeded Gorbachev's words and "stood up." February 20, 1988 should have entered history as the real beginning of "Perestroika" in the country. However, that date is known only in Armenia. Mass media kept total silence for three days as though nothing had happened. On the fourth day, upon orders from above, they a torrent of calumnies. There began a campaign of vilification against Armenians. They started sowing seeds of hatred and enmity toward that nation.

In response, Armenia initiated a series of demonstrations and strikes. Public meetings of millions--even Moscow had never seen anything like them ...

The Supreme Soviet of Armenia was compelled to support the February 20 resolution of the NKAO Peoples' Deputies and to request that the highest legislative organs grant their request. But the issue was never debated in substance. During the meeting of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet (*) Gorbachev gave an hour- long lecture to the representatives from Yerevan and Stepanakert, upon which, with pain in their hearts, Armenians accepted a compromise. They were ready to drop temporarily their demand for *miatsum* with Armenia, to become part of the Russian SFSR or to accept direct rule by the central government, as long as they were not forced to return to Azerbaijani rule. But the Kremlin was not listening to them: "There could be no reshaping of boundaries!" "Get together with the Azerbaijanis and reestablish your friendship!" And that after Sumgait!? After the horrendous massacre that had been covered up!? This was good advice: The victim must be friends with his executor, with those who murdered his relatives! The people of Karabagh, breaking the chains of fear and obedience, continued to struggle alone against the powerful state machine.

At that time, in November 1988, new massacres (**) were organized. Hundreds of Armenians were butchered, raped, mutilated, hundreds of thousands became refugees, were denied their homes and work ... The genocide which had been kept secret from the world and remained unrecognized, acquired the right to exist. Its waves spread throughout the country ...

When Moscow realized that bloody confrontations did not serve as a deterrent against the disobedient, there began the blockade of Armenia and Karabagh: rail, autoroutes, fuel-energy. Subsequently, as if it was the devil himself who had now entered the scene, Armenia was granted the unimaginable earthquake ... The authorities made things much worse: The blockade continued. In the autumn even the flow of gas was interrupted.

As if the blockade was not enough, in January of 1990 they started shootings. They instigated the shelling of Armenian villages by the Azerbaijani armed irregulars. Armenians resisted. Once more, the central authorities surprised the Armenians: They stirred up trouble on the official frontier with Iran, exposing Armenia's vulnerabilities. Thousands of Azerbaijanis from Iran were "welcomed" with their weapons. Armenians were forced to organize self-defense units to defend their borders with a foreign country and ... their boundaries with Soviet Azerbaijan. Who had ever heard of such a thing?

The central government attacked with particular brutality the 4.4 thousand km2 tiny Karabagh that had been declared a special zone since autumn 1988. A real encirclement ensued. Karabagh was isolated from the rest of the world and especially from Armenia. Cars and trains are not allowed to enter Karabagh. (In the beginning, the blockade was enforced by the Azerbaijanis. Now it is the Soviet army's doing.) The only way to reach Stepanakert is by plane, even that with great difficulty: The flights have been reduced on purpose and are often postponed; not everyone is allowed to enter the city. Even NKAO's communications with the world are severed. Radio, local and Yerevan television broadcasts are forbidden. The press from outside the region seldom reaches Karabagh; the local press is under the heaviest hand of military censors. The people of Karabagh have been denied

theatre, cinema; their clubs, dance halls, museums, youth centers, and stadiums are closed. Karabagh is under siege. They often disconnect the electricity of the region and deny access to heating fuel. However, the state had for a long time been repressing the people of Karabagh as well as the refugees they had welcomed from genocide and the earthquake, through unemployment and semi-starvation.

The people of Karabagh have no defenders. Calumnised and under siege, they cannot even rely on the local Soviet authorities. Local authorities-- the regional council and executive-- do not exist. They have been dissolved by a stroke of the pen of Gorbachev and Mentavashvili. At first, the local authorities were replaced temporarily by a special governing committee which reported to Baku and Moscow at the same time. But that, too, was unacceptable to Azerbaijani party-crats. At their insistence, the special committee was dissolved by the USSR Supreme Soviet on November 28, 1989. Armenian deputies assumed that local soviet authorities would be reinstated. But that has not yethappened. And it is not clear why, the constitutional review committee has not intervened; it has not noted this crudest violation of the constitution.

This is the second year now that there are no Soviet authorities in Nagorny Karabagh. There, the master is the army. The USSR internal Ministry armed forces, implementing the state of emergency, is refining its techniques for application in the whole country.

A military representative is present in each workplace, each company. He is the authority. At all entrances to Stepanakert and crossroads of the city there are military posts supported by armored vehicles and tanks. During curfew hours, patrols seize people in their own courtyards, beat them up with sticks, drag them to the "filter." For each alleged violation of the curfew, citizens are punished with a penalty of up to 1000 rubles or up to 30 days incarceration. They arrest members of the parliament, too. They take out telephones from homes and workplaces. They organize night searches, calling them "identity checks." They attack visiting relatives and arrest them as "militants."

Soldiers have training sessions with armored vehicles and tanks in the streets of the city. They spread fear and terror by firing at pedestrians, homes, balconies, and windows. This is how Armen Hacobian, the talented sculptor and father of three, was killed, when he stood against the armored vehicles calling, "What are you doing, boys?" Spartak Hacobian's four children were orphaned, too. Tens of Stepanakert Armenians have been wounded by bullets, the use of which is against international law.

In the villages, USSR and Interior Ministry armed forces are executing real pogroms under the guise of "identity checking." They encircle villages and take over homes by forcing locks and breaking windows. They turn everything upside down in search of "weapons and militants." They keep whatever valuables-- money, jewelry--they find. They have thus looted the collective farm of the Sarnaghbiur village: they took the truck, auto parts, and communications equipment, without checking documents. Earlier the soldiers had stolen supplies and materials which had been brought to Bertatsor for the refugees by the charitable organization, Amaras.

Nonetheless, as strange as it seems, contrary to the lies of the official press, no soldier has been killed in the hands of an Armenian. Here they understand that soldiers are just pawns, who execute orders. The guilty are be found among the higher ranked.

That is also where the orders were issued to the army in NKAO: To spread the operations for "identity checking" from Stepanakert to the countryside and to dissolve soviet authorities in the regions as well. In the spring and autumn of 1990, the soldiers, weapons in hand, toccupied the buildings housing the regional soviets and executive of Hadrut, Martuni, and Askeran; they dissolved the government

agencies elected legally, and replaced them with "organization committees" from Baku. They did the same to the leadership of Shahumian district which had been detached from the Nagorny Karabagh illegally in 1921 and only a year ago reunited with NKAO by the will of the people. On September 21, armed brigands in militia uniforms appeared in Armenian populated Getashen village of Azerbaijan's Khanlar district; they demanded that the residents leave the village within three days, or else ... Residents of two Armenian villages, Kamo and Azat, had already been deported at the force of arms.

The ultimate purpose? The army has been ordered to deport Armenians from Nagorny Karabagh and to assist Azerbaijanis to settle there so that at some point Azerbaijanis can declare an end to the autonomous status of the region: This would allow Azerbaijan to reassert its authority in Karabagh, this time much more harshly.

This is the reason for the state of emergency in Nagorny Karabagh. It was introduced on January 15, 1990, for "prophylactic purposes." Compare: In Baku a state of emergency was declared on January 20, 1990, a week after the mass pogroms against Armenians there. The army entered the capital of Azerbaijan only when the new set of pretenders of power had set its mind on occupying the headquarters of the party. The army was protecting the *nomenklatura*.

The USSR armed forces are intervening in politics, in inter-ethnic issues, and more recently, in economic matters based on orders from above with much more frequency. And there is no end to the number of victims, the sorrow of the people.

It is necessary to state the truth, at least. Because, as long as we can still tell the truth , we may still have the hope that evil is not eternal, that it is possible to prevail over it.

(*) The plenary session of the USSR Supreme Soviet, July 18, 1988.

(**) Pogroms in Kirovapat, Fizuli, and a few other areas on November 20, 1988.

1

THE NAGORNO-KARABAGH CRISIS: THE VIEW FROM AZERBAIJAN

BY

DAVID NISSMAN

From the point of view of the government of Azerbaijan, the issues connected with the Armenian claims to the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Oblast can only be resolved after the conditions which created the problem in the first place are removed. These are: the retraction of Armenia's territorial claims to any territories belonging to Azerbaijan; the repudiation of actions taken in the name of Armenian government and parliamentary organs, including the annexation of the NKAO and the election of representatives to Armenia's parliament from territory belonging to Azerbaijan; and the repatriation of the some 250,000 Azeris driven out of their ancestral homes and off Armenian territory and compensation for the possessions and jobs which they lost as a result of this expulsion from Armenia.

The Armenian immigration to the present-day NKAO

Armenia has put forth an unjustified historical claim to the territory of Nagorno-Karabagh. But according to a census taken by the Tsarist administrator Yermolov in 1823, the ethnic composition of the present territory of the NKAO was 78 percent Turkic and 22 percent Armenian. One of the conditions of

THE TREATY OF

Turkmenchay, which ended the Russo-Persian War in 1828 was that Armenians from Iran received permission to resettle in the Russian Empire. As a consequence, 8,249 Armenian families (= approximately 50,000 people) moved into the guberniya of Irevan, the province of Karabagh and the Shamakhy district, all in the area of modern Nagorno-Karabagh. A second wave of Armenian immigrants followed during and after the Crimean War, and a third wave following the events in Turkey in 1915. By the time Soviet power was established in the region in 1920, Armenians constituted slightly more than half of Karabagh's population. At present, they total more than 75 percent of Karabagh's population.

An understanding of the pattern of the Armenian movement into the NKAO and the fact that it has only taken place over the last two hundred years is critical when evaluating the Armenian claim that Nagorno-Karabagh is part of a "Greater Armenia". This claim is not backed by the demographic history of the region. In fact, the Armenians are in Karabagh as a result of nineteenth century Russian colonial policy. Unfortunately, however, Armenia's dubious claim has been, and is, bruited about in the Soviet central media by partisans of the Armenian cause. This general belief has been carried over into Western reportage on the current conflict.

Armenia's official (and illegal) annexation of the NKAO

In the context of Armenia's historical claim to the region (cited above), the Armenian Parliament has issued a decree announcing its annexation of Nagorno-Karabagh. To this end, a slate of peoples deputies from the NKAO were illegally elected to Armenia's Parliament. In Azerbaijan, this is viewed as blatant interference in Azerbaijan's internal affairs. It must be borne in mind that Nagorno-Karabagh does not even border the Republic of Armenia. Even Moscow, which has played a relatively passive role in the Armenian-Azeri dispute, maintains that the annexation and the illegal parliamentary elections in the NKAO run counter to the law.

The last time Armenia annexed a large portion of Azerbaijan's territory, the effort was successful. Following the Second World War, three of Azerbaijan's rayons were tacked onto Armenia. This effort was backed by Stalin. In the aftermath, 100,000 Azeris were expelled from the newly acquired Armenian territory and forced to take refuge in an Azerbaijan economically unprepared to receive them.

Azeri refugees from Armenia

In the first months of 1988 a wave of Azeri refugees from the then Armenian SSR began to arrive in Azerbaijan. By the end of December 1988, this number had grown to 130,000. They had

been forced to leave behind them their houses, jobs and land. These were not Azeris who had moved onto Armenian territory over the last few years, or in the Soviet period, but people who had populated the same villages and lands for centuries. Their sudden arrival, and their plight began to be covered widely in an Azeri press which had hitherto suppressed, in the Soviet style, any hint of the potential for ethnic conflict. As the number of refugees swelled, so did incidents of Armenian-Azeri ethnic violence. Armenians also began to leave Azerbaijan, justifiably afraid for their lives and property. The Azeri refugees from Armenia, homeless and without jobs, tended to congregate in urban centers like Baku and Sumgait and turned into powerful and potentially violent mobs. An additional problem is that, for the most part, these are rural workers, peasants, lacking the skills to easily accomodate themselves to urban conditions. As of this writing, there are approximately 250,000 Azeri refugees from Armenia.

Under these circumstances, it is only natural that one of Azerbaijan's demands in ending the conflict is the repatriation of these refugees to their ancestral homes and that they be compensated for their losses.

5

The Christian-Muslim conflict: Myth or reality?

Efforts have been made, in Armenian, Soviet and, hence, the Western media, to portray the Armenian-Azeri territorial conflict as one of Christianity versus Islam. This has no basis in fact, although there can be little doubt that it appeals to basic Western insecurities about Islam's intentions. The Christian Armenians and Muslim Azeri Turks of Nagorno-Karabagh have coexisted in peace for years. It is only when attempts to instigate ethnic conflict have been made from outside the region that old, and perhaps antiquated, passions have flared up.

There has also been a strong effort to equate that Azeri Turks with those who committed the atrocities against them in the Ottoman Empire in 1915. But Azerbaijan was never part of the Ottoman Empire. This is only an appeal to depict the Azeri Turk as the enemy. It is regrettable that in Western reportage on the Armenian-Azeri CONFLICT that myths have often replaced concrete facts.

Unlike Armenia, Azerbaijan has no large or well organized diaspora in the West shich supports its interests. This has meant that it can only with great difficulty present its own interpretation of the cause of the current conflict, much less expect a fair and impartial hearing.

Testimony of Nadir Mekhtiyev, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan before the Helsinki Commission, October 23, 1991

Distinguished Chairmen, Members of Congress, Baroness Cox, Elena Bonner, Members of the Russian Parliament, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the sovereign democratic Republic of Azerbaijan I would like to thank the Helsinki Commission of the United States Congress for inviting me to testify before you today. My name is Nadir Mekhtiyev and I am here today in my capacity as Chair of the Human Rights Commission of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan.

Forces who manipulate the issue of Nagorno Karabakh for their own ends, especially the Center, have sought repeatedly to keep the region an unstable one thereby creating an excuse for Moscow's constant and unhelpful intervention. The conflict in Nagorno Karabakh was unleashed by anti-democratic forces who are opposed to goodwill among all peoples of this earth. The people of Azerbaijan consider their multinationalism a national treasure, historically inherited, and an indispensable condition of our existence and of our true democratic development. Unfortunately, the conflict in Nagorno Karabakh has become a trump card for those who wish to create and manipulate tension in the region to achieve political and economic goals.

By way of historical background I would like to tell you that between 1918 and 1988 there were three distinct deportations of Azeri Turks from Armenia.

From 1918 to 1920 more than 280,000 Azeri Turks were deported from Armenia. Fifteen thousand people were killed and Azeri Turk villages in the Erevan, Zangezur and Ejmiadzin regions of Armenia were completely destroyed.

From 1948 to 1951 more than 100,000 Azerbaijanis (Stalin prohibited the name "Azeri Turks") were deported from Armenia at Moscow's insistence. This was to provide space for Armenians returning from abroad, from Syria, Lebanon, France and other countries.

In 1988 more than 200,000 Azerbaijanis were forced to leave Armenia. More than 100 people died during this tragic moment in our history, including women, children, and the elderly.

In 1989 the situation worsened. More than 1000 Azerbaijani families were forced to flee their native villages in Nagorno Karabakh; they came to Baku and in an ironic twist they became refugees in their own country. These 1000 families (numbering close to 10,000 individuals) were joined in Baku and in other places in Azerbaijan by more than 50,000 Mekshetian Turks who were forced to leave their homes in Central Asia. Azerbaijan has

a refugee problem of enormous dimension.

I am deeply saddened to say that certain groups in Azerbaijan and elsewhere used the anger and frustration of these displaced persons to further their own ends, and in February of 1988 the tragedy in Sumgait occurred. This left more than thirty dead, Armenians and people of other nationalities, as a result of unspeakable barbarous acts. On January 13, 1990 these atrocities were repeated in Baku and more than seventy Armenian lives were lost. All the world knows that on January 19th and 20th of 1990, Soviet troops invaded Baku and more than one hundred and fifty citizens of different nationalities were murdered: Azerbaijanis, Russians, Jews, Lezgins, and others. The legacy of this tragedy will never leave our people. The tragedies of February 1988 and January 1990 are still under investigation and the results of that investigation have yet to be made public.

The situation in Nagorno Karabakh today is to a great extent complicated by heavily armed terrorist groups which are beyond the jurisdiction and control of the President of Armenia or any official government body. These terrorists act not only against the native Azerbaijani population but at the same time target Armenians who actively seek an end to the conflict. Following negotiations with Armenian leaders from Nagorno Karabakh in Baku earlier this summer one member of the Armenian negotiating team was gunned down in the streets or Stepanakaert.

I believe that the solution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict lies in the creation of a democratically determined autonomous region in the framework of a sovereign Azerbaijan. This would grant equal rights for all individuals, regardless of nationality, politics, or religion, in accord with all international human rights laws.

Neither fire and bloodshed nor ethnic and religious hatred will solve the problems of the innocent people, both Azerbaijani and Armenian, who inhabit Nagorno Karabakh. Any attempts to characterize the situation as Muslim versus Christian are clearly political provocations and will only exacerbate the conflict.

I believe that the Armenian and Azerbaijani people, each with a great history and culture, are actively seeking an end to this horrible conflict. At a meeting in Moscow on September 18, representatives of the Armenian parliamentary Human Rights Commission sat down with us, their Azerbaijani counterparts, for what I hope will be a series of talks that will lead to the peace we are so desperately seeking. Representatives of the Andrei Sakharov Congress took part, including Baroness Cox who presided at this initial meeting. I must tell all those present that we are extremely grateful for her help. At this meeting we agreed to the following:

--an immediate ceasefire and end of military operations
--withdrawal of illegal Armenian military groups and Azerbaijani OMON troops from the region
--return of refugees from both sides
--start of direct negotiations between the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities in Nagorno Karabakh with the participation of independent international observers

These points were delivered to Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev and were included in the joint communique issued by Presidents Yeltsin, Nazarbayev, Ter-Petrossian and Mutalibov at their historic meeting in Jileznavodsk on September 23. As you know, these talks are continuing with the aim of developing concrete measures to settle the conflict.

I believe that history has given us a chance to negotiate an end to this tragic and bloody conflict. The Yeltsin-Nazarbayev initiative, the continuation of talks between the Human Rights Commissions of the Armenian and Azerbaijani Parliaments, and now the attention of the Helsinki Commission of the U.S. Congress, give us the first glimmer of hope for the first time in the four years of this ordeal.

I am confident that the people of Azerbaijan as well as the people of Armenia find support and understanding in the country of Jefferson and Lincoln. You have inspired so many peoples of the world to strive for that precious thing we call freedom. You will continue to inspire us and we are grateful.

I would like to conclude my remarks by inviting the distinguished members of the Helsinki Commission of the U.S. Congress to travel to Azerbaijan at the earliest opportunity. We welcome your presence in Nagorno Karabakh which will be seen as a confidence building measure and like these hearings, will give hope and encouragement to the people who live there. Thank you very much.

Testimony of Elena Bonner Before the Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe of the U.S. Congress

23 October 1991

Today's hearings before the U.S. Congress on the problem of Nagorno-Karabagh is an important event in the history of the bloody conflict there -- now more than three years old -- which the West has either failed to take note of or has interpreted as an ethnic conflict. But it involves violations of human rights by a state, in this case the USSR, which in combination with Azerbaijan, has been conducting a policy of forced deportations of the Karabagh Armenians under the guise of verifying passports and disarming "terrorists." The deportations are being carried out in order to alter the historic, demographic structure of the region, in which Armenians are the majority and in that manner to solve the problem of Karabagh.

The deportations are accompanied by bombardment of villages, taking of hostages, robbery, murder and violence, burning of homes and crops, and cutting off of supplies of water, electricity, foodstuffs and medicine.

What is happening today differs from Stalin's deportations of ethnic groups only because it is proceeding in slow motion and because there is resistance -- self-defense -- which the Azerbaijani side interprets as aggression. President Mutalibov stated on the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet that " the people of our republic, on the verge of despair, may oppose any treaty or agreement if we do not safeguard them from aggression . . . And the Supreme Soviet has demanded the creation of armed forces sufficient to defend our own territory. this is why Azerbaidjan will sign the Union Treaty only when the army turns over to us everything we need for the creation of these forces" (Izvestia, 12 October 1991).

Precisely because the tragic events in Karabagh are a consequence of government policy, all the attempts at mediation made by independent organizations and people's deputies are futile. And the peace-making trip to the Transcaucasus by the presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan has for the time being produced no result. Since the communique was signed in Zheleznovodsk a month ago, the violence on both sides has only grown. I request that my open letter to Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev, which was delivered to them on 3 October and published in Moscow's Independent Newspaper, be included in the record.

A situation similar to that of Karabagh -- when a government is engaged in the violation of fundamental rights of individuals and

peoples -- has also developed in Ossetia and is imminent in the Dniester republic (region of Moldavia). These situations, as well as similar events in other parts of the world, have been assessed incorrectly and have become insoluable by peaceful political means, because in international law two concepts have become confused: the principle of inviolability of borders and the principle of self-determination of peoples. Stalin combined the two principles in his Constitution of 1936. But the first principle applies to a state's right to peaceful existence adjacent to other, more powerful states, while the second deals with human rights.

Two examples. The coalition forces not only had the right but indeed the obligation to defend Kuwait from Iraqi aggression. But by the same token, they had to defend the right of Croatia (like that of any people) to independence without worrying about the dissolution of a united government. The state structure can be decided only by the population of the given area by democratic means. In such a case, most that should be demanded by outsiders is access for observers to ensure the absence of fraud.

Situations similar to that of Croatia will become possible in the former USSR if the new states taking shape after the disintegration of the Union are not recognized. In this regard, President Bush's remark that the U.S. will recognize the independence of secession states only that the center of an already non-existent USSR recognizes them is distressing.

The European Community at the Moscow Conference on the Human Dimension once again clearly confirmed that protection of human rights is not a state's internal affair. Today, as formerly, taking as a base on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular the third paragraph of the Preamble, we must find the courage to defend the right of peoples to self-determination as resolutely as we defend the rights of the individual. Only thus will humankind be able to escape bloody tragedies like Yugoslavia, Ossetia, and Karabagh and to discover the means for their political resolution.

Open Letter to the Presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan

Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev

Many people in the country feel grateful to you for having been the first leaders of high rank to exert personal efforts to resolve the tragedy of Karabagh, which has already lasted three

years. However, the hope occasioned by your trip to Azerbaijan, Armenia and Stepanakert has quickly given way to an anxiety that increases daily.

Eight days have passed since the Zheleznovodsk Communique. Its first point -- a cease-fire -- was violated during the night of September 24-25, when six people were killed in the village of Chapar in Mardakersk District. Their bodies were found in mutilated condition. Among them was a 13-year-old Armenian boy, whose ears had been cut off. In all, more than 30 people have died during the last eight days. About 100 have been wounded. Many villages in the Shusha, Askeran and Shahumyan districts have been fired on by armored cars, howitzers and helicopters. The village of Karachanar was fired on by tanks. More than 200 homes have been destroyed.

Three hundred twenty people of Armenian nationality are detained in prisons in Gyandzhi (Kirovobad), Shusha, Baku and Bailov. And neither the Armenian community in Karabagh nor their families know anything as yet of the 30 people taken as hostages. Fourteen hostages who were passengers on a train going through Nakhichevan have not been freed. Thus, point 5 the communique, providing that all hostages were to be freed by week's end, has been violated. In this connection, four people's deputies from Russia and Moscow are conducting a hunger strike in Yerevan. The agreement does not call from transfer of those hostages against whom criminal charges were brought to prisons in a neutral republic and this creates the threat that many hostages will be classified as criminal offenders. Our country has much experience in falsifications during investigations, experience obtained both in the era of the cult of personality and stagnation and during perestroika. Azerbaijan is no exception in this regard.

The overall situation in Nagorno-Karabagh and the adjoining regions is catastrophic. Almost no foodstuffs are getting in, since communications with Armenia are constantly disrupted, and Azerbaijan has long maintained a blockade. Crops have been burned. Anyone working in the fields risks being killed. Medicines are almost entirely lacking. In the village of Karachanar an epidemic of jaundice broke out because of the lack of water. The water supply of Stepanakert and other settlements is constantly disrupted. Electrical service is at this time cut off.

According to information from the Karabagh deputy group, a major operation is being readied to deport and destroy villages in Askeran, Shusha and Shahumyan districts. As General Sokolov, Commander of the 4th Army, stated back in 1989, the Soviet Army had handed over to Azerbaijan 100 armored cars, 30 tractors converted into armored cars, and other military equipment. Since

Iranian-Soviet border posts were destroyed, a great many weapons have entered Azerbaijan, according to press reports (Pravda and Izvestia, March 1990). Other reports indicate that the flow of Soviet-produced arms from Iran is increasing. A week ago an explosion took place in Azerbaijan in a big army depot. And on 3 October it became known through the Fourth Army staff that 100 heavy trucks had been removed from the depot before the explosion.

Esteemed Presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan: Having taken on the function of conciliation and peace-making in the Nagorno-Karabagh region, you must find mechanisms to carry out the agreement you have signed. Having signed it, you have assumed responsibility for the well-being and lives of all the people in the area. And after your trip to the Transcaucasus, you are also awaited in South Ossetia, where the bloodshed has not ceased and people are dying every day. Today you are the last hope of both those in Karabagh and the inhabitants of South Ossetia.

October 3, 1991 Elena Bonner

Statement of Robert A. Kaloosdian

Armenian Assembly of America
122 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 393-3434

Before

The United States Commission on Security
And Cooperation in Europe Hearing On

The Nagorno-Karabakh Crisis:
Prospects For Resolution

October 23, 1991

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission I am the Chairman of the Armenian Assembly of America, a national, non-profit organization with offices in Washington and Armenia to represent the views of the Armenian-American community. The Assembly, Armenian-Americans, and all people who advocate universal respect for human rights appreciate all this Commission has done to improve the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh.

This hearing represents another significant contribution the Commission has made to drawing public attention to the atrocities being committed against Armenians in that region. I regret that I cannot be present for this hearing. We also appreciated the appointment of Van Krikorian, the Assembly's Director of Government and Legal Affairs, as a member of the United States delegation to the recent Moscow CSCE meeting on human rights and Ambassador Kampelman's public condemnation at the Moscow CSCE meeting of the atrocities, deportations, and persecution Armenians suffer at the hands of Azerbaijani and Soviet forces.

In this statement, I would like to focus the Commission's attention on two questions: (1) Why has there been such an excessive use of force against Armenians' peaceful, legal attempts to exercise self-determination? and (2) What can the United States, other countries, and non-governmental organizations do to promote respect for human rights and a peaceful resolution of the conflict?

There can be no other characterization of the use of force against Armenians than barbaric. On September 13, in conjunction with the Moscow CSCE meeting, the Armenian Assembly arranged a program for delegates, NGOs, and the general public on human rights violations in Nagorno-Karabakh. Lady Cox, Yelena Bonner, Russian and Soviet parliamentarians and others spoke. The Azerbaijani Permanent Representative to Moscow and other Azerbaijani officials also attended. In addition, eyewitnesses to the deportations of Armenians from the villages of Getashen and Martunashen spoke. Eva Medzorian, a Trustee of the Armenian Assembly and President of the Armenian International Women's Association interviewed and videotaped some of these eyewitnesses, and transcripts of those interviews are attached. Let me just quote from the testimony of one eyewitness, Nina Yatsenko Hosepian, an ethnic Russian married to an Armenian:

> "On April 30th our village and Getashen were surrounded by about 500 tanks which then started shooting. The children were all crying. There were about 500 Omon and 500 Soviet soldiers that came along with dogs. They surrounded the first house in the village and made the owner get out of the house and sign a document that he wanted to leave the village of his own free will...(the same thing happened to all the other houses). But those people did not want to leave their homeland. They were told that to refuse would mean death....

> Khachik Davidian and four other neighbors were shot to death. After they stripped the house they set it on fire. They ripped the clothes off the neighbor's wife. They wanted to take her earrings and cut her ears off at the same time. The wives could not recognize their dead husbands because the tanks had driven over them and leveled their bodies with the earth and their homes were crushed....
>
> The soldiers made fun of the neighbors daughters...they stripped them naked and raped the 14-15 year old girls. They tortured the pregnant woman who was going to deliver her baby in three days...slitting her belly...with the dead mother lying next to the alive new born still attached to its mother on the ground."

Armenians have been suffering from these kinds of atrocities for years now, and, to date, the use of force to resolve the "Nagorno-Karabakh" issue has only escalated. We can suggest at least two reasons why.

First, since Stalin's rule, Soviet nationalities policy has always included the exacerbation of tensions between ethnic groups with a totalitarian Soviet government interposed as the only way to maintain peace. As Armenia rapidly moved to democracy, a free-market economy, and independence - and the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh called for self-determination - the central Soviet government had an incentive to escalate tensions and violence in the region.

With the failure of this summer's coup in Moscow, however, many of the Soviet totalitarian leaders who pursued this policy are no longer in power. This group included Interior Minister Pugo, KGB Chairman Khruchkov, Defense Minister Yazov, and Supreme Soviet Chairman Lukianov.

(For example, Azerbaijani President Mutalibov regularly cited Minister Pugo's false situation reports concerning alleged "Armenian terrorism" when troops attacked and then deported Armenian citizens. It was also noteworthy that one of the leaders of the coup publicly stated that one of their top priorities was to "resolve" the Nagorno-Karabakh issue and that Azerbaijani President Mutalibov was the only Republic leader to praise the coup.) The fall of these leaders in Moscow and the rise of leaders such as Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev have been a positive development for the Nagorno-Karabakh situation. Indeed, these Presidents have personally initiated a framework for resolving the issues which bears more promise than any other initiative to date. Russian and Kazakh observers and mediators are at work in the region, and history has taught us that the presence of observers almost always has a chilling effect on human rights violations.

The second major reason for the escalation in violence we have identified is Azerbaijani ultra-nationalism. Despite the fact that Karabakh is historically (as attested by centuries old churches and monuments), demographically (consistently eighty to eighty five percent) and geographically (as part of the "Armenian Plateau") Armenian, both communist and non communist Azerbaijani leaders have made control over this territory and these Armenians synonymous with being a true Azerbaijani. When his popularity was low, President Mutalibov raised it

by escalating the rhetoric, deportations, and atrocities against Armenians. The Azerbaijani Popular Front does not fare much better on this score, since it began its rise to public prominence on calls for violent retaliation against Armenians in Azerbaijan and crippling blockades against Armenia itself.

This ultra-nationalism and pattern of violence is a difficult problem to address and contrasts sharply with the Armenians' initiation of a peaceful, legal movement for self-determination. Stalin arbitrarily placed Nagorno-Karabakh under the jurisdiction of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic and then cut the region off from Armenia's borders by inserting an artificial six kilometer land corridor in the 1920's. These actions were taken in spite of Azerbaijan's December 1, 1920 formal, prior decision recognizing Nagorno-Karabakh, Zangezur, and Nakhichevan as parts of Armenia. Starting at the end of 1987 and the beginning of 1988, the approximately eighty-five percent Armenian majority of Nagorno-Karabakh began an entirely peaceful, legal movement consisting of petitions, demonstrations, and appeals to apply its right of self-determination -- specifically to be freed from the almost seventy year Azerbaijani rule which Stalin had installed.

On February 20, 1988 the autonomous region's legislature overwhelmingly voted to remove itself from Azerbaijan's jurisdiction. Hardline communist leaders in Moscow and Baku immediately rejected this decision and committed to a course of action to break the region's drive for self-determination. At that time, the international community quietly viewed Nagorno-Karabakh as a test of how serious President Gorbachev was about correcting past Soviet transgressions. After the February 20 vote, Moscow allied with Azerbaijan against democratic forces within Karabakh. On February 22, 1988 mobs burned Armenian buildings and cars in Nagorno-Karabakh. on February 25, Soviet troops were deployed to Armenia, and on February 28 blood curdling pogroms against Armenians and their non-Armenian spouses, which also targeted Russians and Jews in the city of Sumgait, north of Baku.

After February 1988 and through August 1991 Azerbaijani and Soviet violence against Armenians grew and continues to grow unabated -- pogroms in Baku and Kirovabad; forced expulsions of 300,000 Armenians from Azerbaijan; jailing of the "Karabakh Committee" including the current President and Prime Minister of Armenia, Levon Ter-Petrosian and Vasgen Manukian; rail, road, airport, television, radio, phone, and gas line blockades of both Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia; property theft; destruction and desecration of churches; suspension of legal authority;

organized and continuous hostage taking; successful Azerbaijani election campaigns based on pledges to commit genocide or ethnocide against Armenians; denial of access to outside observers; rejection of United Nations, Soviet Republic, and other outside efforts to introduce peace-keeping or mediating forces; atrocities directed specifically at innocent women and children to increase intimidation; denial of cultural rights; forcing hostages to injure on another, pose with unloaded weapons for photos, sign false documents, and observe arbitrary executions and torture of fellow hostages; massive forced deportations from Shahumian District and Nagorno-Karabakh; forcing villagers to observe destruction of their homes before deportations; immediately occupying and settling Azerbaijanis in select Armenian villages following deportation; denying humanitarian assistance to victims of atrocities and actually torturing doctors attempting to treat those victims; arming anti-Armenian mobs and licensing their illegal activities as OMON troops; denial of compensation for personal and property destruction; and non-prosecution of those committing crimes against Armenians.

Most recently, starting April 30, 1991, Soviet troops and Azerbaijani OMON have forcibly deported over 10,000 Armenians from their ancestral homes in the Shahumian district and Nagorno-Karabakh, committing murder, rape, torture, hostage taking and other atrocities. Soviet artillery,

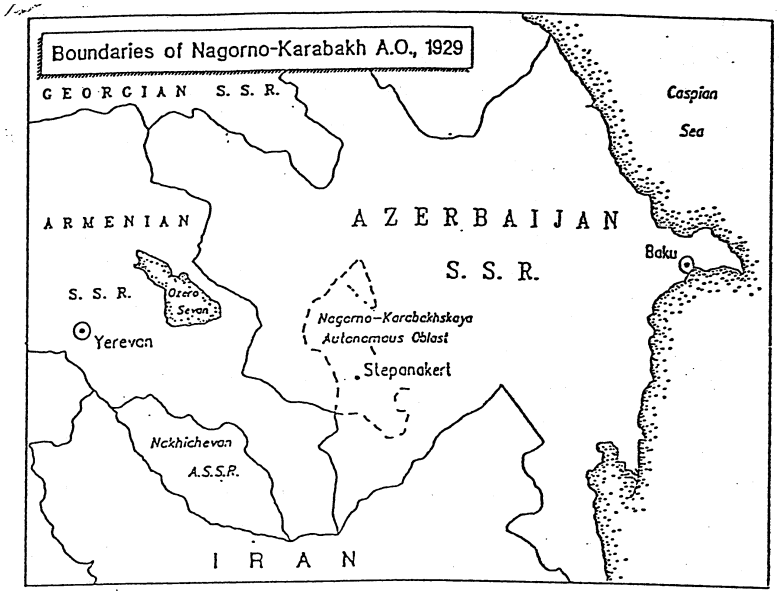
manned by Soviet and Azerbaijani troops, continues to shell Armenian towns and villages every day, and cross border shelling into Armenia itself is common. The situation has deteriorated so far and the international human rights mechanisms have been so ineffectual, that in August the Armenian mothers of the village of Haterk took it upon themselves to take Soviet soldiers hostage to be successfully exchanged for return of the mothers' sons and husbands. Only this summer has an outside human rights delegation visited some of the affected areas -- that delegation from the Sakharov Congress substantiated the human rights violations Armenians have been claiming for years.

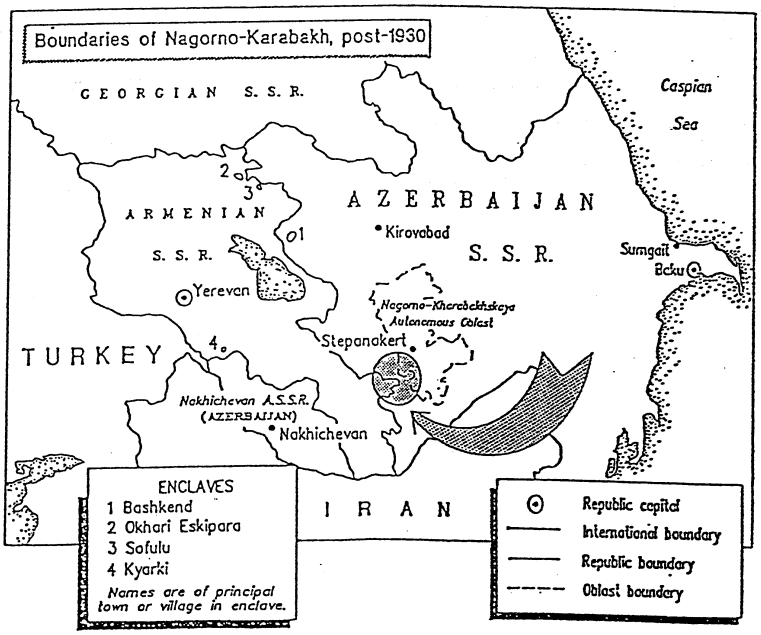
In response Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians have been forced to form self-defense units, but these citizens are no match for organized government troops. Armenia has repeatedly called for negotiations leading to a peaceful resolution of conflict, and Azerbaijan has only responded since the coup's failure. Yet as recently as this week, President Mutalibov again refused President Gorbachev's request to negotiate with Armenian President Ter-Petrosian in Moscow and the Azerbaijani government has announced that it is forming a large national army with Soviet equipment left on its territory, so the future of a negotiated settlement is difficult to predict as long as Azerbaijani politics and ultra-nationalism remain at their current levels. This brings me to the next question on which we believe the Commission should focus -- What can the United States do to help?

The United States government including this Commission have already done much to encourage a negotiated settlement in Nagorno-Karabakh and to condemn the ongoing atrocities. This course, both through public and private channels, should continue. In addition, we believe that more observers from the United States should visit the Nagorno-Karabakh region, Baku, and Yerevan and the initiative of Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev should be fully and actively supported. The CSCE should apply some of the measures adopted in Moscow to send inquiries about the region and to send a CSCE team to report on the region. Active support of United Nations involvement should take place. Azerbaijanis should be advised that their country will be held accountable for their government's transgressions, and Armenia should be treated as a country which respects human rights by having its applications for United Nations and CSCE membership granted with United States support. Whether through the Red Cross or some other organization humanitarian assistance to the Armenians of the Nagorno-Karabakh region should be funded, and the United States should take more action to stop the blockades of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

In sum, there is much room for the United States to promote peace, democracy and respect for human rights in Nagorno-Karabakh, and we encourage promotion of these principles.

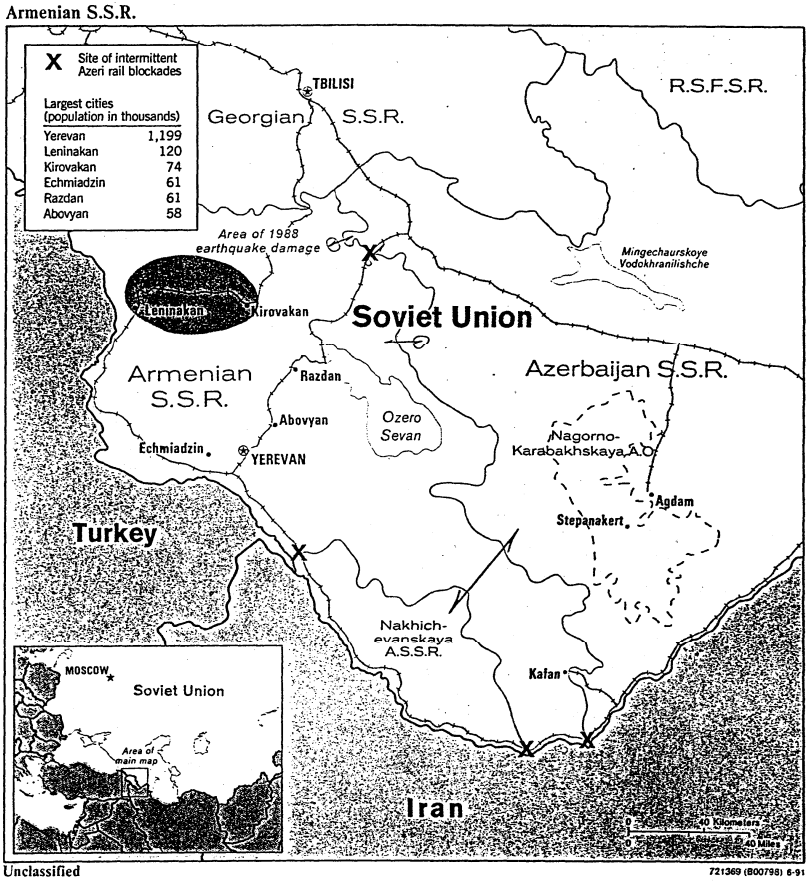
Thank you.





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF THE GEOGRAPHER

Armenian S.S.R.



6.

September 13, 1991 Friday

RE: Armenian Human Rights Violations in Mardoonashen, Karabagh, U S S R

Interview: Nina Yatsenko (Hosepian) mother of 4 children (father, Ukranian; mother German; husband Armenian .....interview in Russian and Armenian.....

PLACE: 10:30 a.m. at Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia, 2 Armianski Pereulok, Moscow

The video interview was conducted by Eva Medzorian of Winchester, Ma., President, Armenian International Women's Association.

Nina: "I am Russian. My husband is Armenian. I have lived in the Mardoonashen Village for 12 years. I have four children...two boys and two girls. On April 30th our village and Getashen were surrounded by about 500 tanks which then started shooting. The children were all crying. There were about 500 Omon and 500 Soviet soldiers that came along with dogs. They surrounded the first house in the village and made the owner get out of the house and sign a document that he wanted to leave the village of his own free will...(the same thing happened to all the other houses). But those people did not want to leave their homeland. They were told that to refuse would mean death. The husbands were first taken away. They would not let the wifes move. The first house to be thus treated was that of Khachik Davidian who was a highly acknowledged teacher. His wife offered to feed them and make tea,...but they said that they would not eat Armenian bread. They robbed and plundered the house and put all the stolen goods into the trucks they had brought with them for this purpose. Khachik Davidian and four other neighbors were shot to death. After they stripped the house they set it on fire. They ripped the clothes off the neighbor's wife. They wanted to take her earings and cut her ears off at the same time. The wives could not recognize their dead husbands because the tanks had driven over them and leveled their bodies with the earth and their bones were crushed.

I saw that the tanks were nearing my home and I took my 7 months old baby and approached the Russian Colonel to ask him to help us escape. He called me a son of a bitch and told me to disappear before he shot me. I asked him what the Armenian nation was to blame for, and that the Russians were Christian, the same as the Armenians, therefore why are you doing this thing? The Colonel stated that as long as Gorbachev was alive they were going to proceed to destroy the Armenian villages. I kneeled down in front of him with my baby and begged him to spare the children. I cried and pleaded with him not to shoot. He ordered the shooting to begin immediately,... the bullets were flying over my head,... everywhere. He then took my 7 months old child and flung it aside

2.

and kicked me onto my stomach. I picked up my baby...ran home and could not find my other 3 children. They were hiding in the backyard.

My husband was a carpenter and made the 4 coffins for the victims that were crushed under the tanks. The wives collected the undistingwishable body parts to be put into the coffins.

The soldiers made fun of the neighbors daughters...they stripped them naked and raped the 14 - 15 year old girls. They tortured the pregnant woman who was going to deliver her baby in three days...slitting her belly...with the dead mother lying next to the alive new born still attached to its mother on the ground.

Many of the villagers gathered in Ninas' house because it was located in the middle of town and thus the safest. Under fire, the neighboring house came crashing into their garden and they decided to escape into the forest with only the clothes on their backs. The tanks were following them, shooting.... just as a hunter seeking its prey. They were out to find us and to destroy us. It started to rain. For three hours in the rain we lay on the ground, hiding. I put my breast in the babies mouth so that the baby wouldn't make a sound. After two days in the mountains, from a mountain top we saw our homes were in flames...at least 25 of them were burning. We reached Getashen where we were warmly welcomed. We returned to see if anything could be salvaged from the charred ruins...we only found destruction. In Getashen a decree was issued that only mothers with nursing babies would be flown to Stepanagert. The planes came...there were many armed soldiers that started to shoot into the crowd...everybody ran...mothers couldn't find their children!!!
The planes were going to Kirovabad...nobody wanted to go.
I asked the Commandant to find out if my mother was alive in Khanlar which is only 7 km from where I lived. I still have no news. I have written to Yazov and Shatalin with no answer. They have taken many hostages. At least let them be released. We do not know who is alive and who is not.
It is the fifth month now and we are living in Tsakhgatsor. There are many refugees there. The school is far from where we live. My husband has developed heart trouble. We do not work...we have no home.

Please help release the hostages!"

c .

September 18, 1991 Wednesday 8:00 p.m.

RE: Armenian Human Rights Violations in Getashen Village, Karabagh, U S S R

INTERVIEW: Harutiun Hakobkeofian, son of Dr. Sargis
Silva Hovhanesian, wife of Dr. Sargis Hakobkeofian

PLACE: Home of son Harutiun, daughter in law Arpi and 3 grandsons (twins Roman and Sargis)....Yerevan, Armenia.

CONTENT: Description of Getashen

The video interview was conducted by Eva Medzorian of Winchester, Ma., President, Armenian International Women's Association.

Eva: "Can you tell us a little bit of the history,... the background of Getashen?"

Harutiun: "Getashen has a 1,400 year history. It was founded by Armenians from Artsakh. Visual proof shows over a thousand ancient religious stone crosses. No one except Armenians lived there. Kirovabad which was called Gandzak used to be the northern part of Artsakh. Getashen like Gandzak was Armenian land. Only until very recently have there been others....there were no others only Armenian people who lived here. My name is Harutiun Hakobkeofian, son of the chief doctor of Getashen, who are now refugees and live at my apartment. My mother also worked at the Getashen hospital as a gynecologist."

Silva Hovhanesian:
"I am the wife of Getashen's hospital's chief doctor. For 22 years I lived with my husband in his homeland. I was born in Yerevan. We rendered our services to the Armenian villages as well as to 5 or 6 Azerbaijani villages. I am a gynecologist. Although I am from Yerevan, Getashen was so beautiful and fascinating that I never looked back at Yerevan. It is impossible to put the beauty of Getashen into words. It is surrounded by forests on four sides. The Keurag River flows through the middle of town. It is so clean. It is enlightening to wake up to the invigorating fresh air of Getashen. The springs that flow down from the mountain,... the soil of Getashen produces the best and tastiest products. That is why Azeris fought for three and a half years to drive Armenians out of there. They succeeded with the help of the Soviet Army, using their helecopters, tanks and rockets...to push the Armenians out of their ancient homeland.... where they lived and industriusly worked for the last thousand years. The people escaped...naked and barefoot.

2.

The population of Getashen proper was 5,000...and with the nearby villages there were about 10,000 people. Our hospital had 4 doctors administering to the health of the people. The Azeri Omon troops burned our hospital...those flames... and the charred smell and sight of the smoke is always before our eyes and indelibly marked in our minds for the rest of our lives. We will never forget the sight of the burning hospital.

We want to return to our sacred Getashen...our clean and pure Getashen. The Azeris have desicrated and dirtied it. News has reached us that Azeris are now living in our homes. They are enjoying the fruits of our hard labor, without a twinge of conscience,...they are enjoying it with no effort.

This is a historical recurrence for them. They are used to plunder the fruits of another persons labor. It is familiar handwriting that we all recognize."

(Their son and grandson play an Armenian son on the oud and piano.)

D.

September 18, 1991

RE: Armenian Human Rights Violations in Getashen (3 Day Congress arranged by Russians living in Armenia to inform other Republics. 45 representatives from Republics.

CONGRESS CO-CHAIRS: Vatali Danielov, Deputy from Moscow and Galina Gulu Kuligova, Yerevan

INTERVIEWS: With Armenian families of prisoners taken by Azerbaijani. Interviews in Armenian.

PLACE: 3:30 p.m. at the Youth Palace in Yerevan, Armenia.

The video interviews were conducted by Eva Medzorian of Winchester, Ma., President, Armenian International Women's Association.

Gamo: "I was born in Getashen in 1967, lived there until 1991, May 6. April 30 the Soviet troops along with the Azeri Omon troops came into my village saying that they were doing passport control. This is a picture of my father...he is in a Kirovabad prison. They seized his passport and took him away. Two weeks ago we heard from the boys from Novemberian that were sitting with him in an Azerbaijan jail that he was with 13 others from Getashen. We do not have any late news. We know that they took 5 people from that prison to a jail in Baku. Why and where they took them...we do not know. All of us from Getashen plead with you to help us solve this problem. the last four years we have lived in a blockade."

Yervant: "I was born in 1963 (Getashen). Since 1978 I live in Yerevan. All my relatives lived in Getashen. Only now I understand how the Armenian Genocide occured...now that I saw how in April 30, 1991 the Soviet forces along with the Azeri Omon forces, on the pretense of checking passports, imprisoned my brother. Armenians have lived in the village for centuries. My brother is kept in the Ganja jail for 5 months. I have written letters to Gorbachev, after the coup I wrote to the deputies but I received no answer. When they started beating my father my brother steped in and asked them why would they do that to an old man? Without answering him they pushed him into the tank and imprisoned him. This is a picture of my brother...his ID card and a certificate from the lawyer in Armenia that states that my brother is in that prison. Released hostages have stated that he is in the Ganja prison. I ask all people of good will to reach out in order to help these people. All the Getashen people are

2.

homeless...Now this old woman will tell you what she has witnessed there."

Araxi: "My name is Araxi and I was born in Getashen 1934. We lived in peace in the past untill 4 years ago...now we resist the Azeris. Our ancestors are all buried here. They have been attacking us for the last 4 years. On April 30th, The Omon soldiers and the Soviet Army soldiers came into the village together. We thought the Soviet soldiers would protect us but instead they started shooting and killing us. They were smashing the homes...we tried to escape...there was no place to escape. My son had recently returned from service duty...the soldier grabed my 22 year old son. I pleaded with him to release my son but he pointed the gun at me and said he would shoot. I recognized these soldiers because even though we did not have enough food because of the 4 year old blockade we always found extra food for these soldiers....Now they had come with paint on their faces so that we would not recognize them. They took my son away and I fainted. I found myself in the hospital. My husband was beaten. I heard my son was taken to prison. Journalists that come and go. We are refugees living in Tsaghgatsor, Armenia... They have dressed these young people in Fedayin clothing, put guns in their hands and taken pictures in order to prosecute. (she is crying....) Nobody is helping us. He is in jail with 13 other young people. My son's name is Karen Grigorian...he is in Gianja (Kirovabad) prison. I am suffering here and my son is suffering in prison. Please help free these innocent hostages....!"

Gamo's mother:
"I was born in Getashen in 1956 and my husband was born there in 1950. I have 3 children and a mother in law. In the early morning of April 30 the tanks invaded the village. The soldiers came into our house...took my husband...they did not let us talk. They took him halfway down the road and stripped him naked. His name is Gevorkian, Nikolai Mekhagory. On May 2, I heard he was in the Kirovabad prison. Please find out about him and the others...they are innocent and haven't done anything but try to survive on their land in peace."

Woman in Red: "I am the wife of Melik Hakopkeogian. The disaster started on April 28th when they cut off our water and electricity. Before the invasion the helicopters were flying over the village for a long time. On April 30 early in the morning I heard dogs barking. Tanks were everywhere now. They started firing at us in all directions. I went out to find out what was going on. Tanks were coming towards our house and 4 or 5 helicopters were hovering above. Sixty or seventy heavily armed Omon soldiers came into our house, asked for passports,...but I could see the passports were not of much interest to them. They searched the house, tore everything apart and confiscated all valuables. They started to beat my husband with their weapon, cracking his forehead. They then took us all hostage, including my children. While we were

the helicopters which flew between Getashen and Yerevan. At that time there were 3 places where soldiers were in place to protect us....(or so we thought). But they all left....and the next day, 4 a.m. April 30th, the Soviet Army and Azeri Omon troops invaded our village. They took many hostages. They forced the population at gun point to sign documents that stated we wanted to leave the village in order to blame the deportation on us. Life is precious. The last day of our deportation was May 8. They took us by airplane and dumped us on the Kirovabad border after which we were picked up and taken to Yerevan. These 2 pictures of hostages that you see are 56 year old Merushian, Albert Manueli and his neighbor 32 year old Proudian, Moses Ashodovich...whose eyesight is so bad that he can hardly see. What threat is he? They killed a sick 86 year old man who was in bed. Why?"

Galaya Koharian:
"I am 39 year old and lived in Getashen. It was morning and I heard the tanks...I woke up my son to tell him. My neighbors said they were checking passports. The soldiers took my son away. I learned that they killed my father. I did not know which direction to go...to my father or my son.

Eva: "How old is your son and what is his name?"

Mother: "His name is Koharian, Alexander and he is 22 years old. He is in the Kirovabad prison. He has been seen there. I am not sure how he is...they say he is not bad. (another woman wispers,"they say that so you will not feel bad.") I have 5 children from ages 10 years to 18 years. One of them is in the service.

Zarik: "My name is Zarik Grigorian and I lived in the last house in Getashen. They destroyed my beautiful house. They started beating my 67 year old husband. I am 65 years old. They accused us of accomodating volunteers. They threw my husband into the ambulance on the bridge,...they killed people in my presence. I barely excaped in front of the tank. I saw that they kidnaped two brides in a car after they killed their husbands. Everything is done by the Omon and Red Army soldiers. What did they need a 67 year old person for? He was in the Kirovabad prison, now he is in the Baku prison...they took him there on September 6. I have children who have been tortured. One of my children is in a Kirovabad prison."

5.

Yervant: "I read interviews of the Azerbaijani chief prosecutor, Gharibov, in their Khab Gazzette and the Communist Organ of Azerbaijan newspapers. There he named five hostages from Getashen: Mezjian, Albert; Derunts, Movses; Coloyan, Alexander; Proudian, Nersik; Hakobkeoghian, Melik;.....from other regions: Danielian, Babaian, Gasparian, Kocharian....others from different regions. It was stated they were soldiers. How will the courts rule, ...capital punishment or imprisonment....it was in their 'Communist' paper #75 and in another newspaper."

ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA
122 C STREET, N.W. • SUITE 350 • WASHINGTON, DC 20001 • (202) 393-3434 • FAX: (202) 638-4904

CHRONOLOGY OF MILITARY ATTACKS AND DEPORTATIONS OF ARMENIANS IN AZERBAIJAN AND ARMENIA – April-June, 1991

Including Significant Actions by Governmental and Non-Governmental Agencies in the Soviet Union, the U.S. and Other Countries

Week of April 1

USSR Interior Ministry forces surround and blockade the Armenian villages of Getashen and Martunashen, which are just north of Nagorno-Karabagh.

April 16

The village of Getashen comes under long-range fire.

April 23

Soviet forces, acting on orders from USSR Interior Minister Boris Pugo and Karabagh Security Forces commander Stanislav Shatalin, widen their assault against the villages of Getashen and Martunashen, joined by Azerbaijani OMON detachments. Some 30-40 people are reported killed and over 300 injured.

April 25

The Armenian Parliament requests that the Supreme Soviet of the USSR be called into a special session to address the aggression being carried out against the Armenians.

April 29

The village of Khachik in the Yeghegnadzor region of Armenia is fired upon from the outskirts of the Azerbaijani villages of Avush and Yadji from 6:30 to 9 p.m. No casualties are reported.

One truck and two buses are fired upon at 7 p.m. on the Ijevan-Noyemberian road from the outskirts of the village of Khremlu. No casualties are reported.

A guard post in the village of Voskepar in the Noyemberian region in northeastern Armenia is fired upon at 7:20 p.m. from the Azerbaijani village of Nerkin Aksipar. No casualties are reported.

The village of Kirants in the Ijevan region is fired upon by machine guns and tanks at 7:30 p.m. from the village of Khremlu in the Ghazakh region of Azerbaijan. The assault stops at 9:10 p.m.

The villages of Chinar and Choratan in the Taush region are fired upon from the outskirts of a bordering Azerbaijani village. No casualties are reported.

Authorities from Meghri in southern Armenia and Ordubad in Nakhichevan meet and agree not to start shooting and to provide continuous movement of trains.

April 30

The villages of Sarigiugh, Tsaghkavan, and Kirants in Armenian are fired upon from the outskirts of the Azerbaijani village of Khremlu starting around 1 a.m. The shelling from tanks ends at 4:30 a.m. The bombardment completely stops at 5:05 a.m.

The village of Voskepar in the Noyemberian region comes under tank and machine gun fire at night by Azerbaijanis and soldiers located in the villages of Verin Aksipar and Nerkin Aksipar. The bombardment continues until 4 a.m. At least 12 people are killed, many are seriously wounded, and others are reported taken hostage. The inhabitants of Voskepar start to evacuate women and children from the houses on the outskirts of the village, but the Azerbaijanis fire upon the road to block the evacuation.

USSR Internal Affairs forces and Azerbaijani military enter the homes of Armenians in Hadrut (in Nagorno-Karabagh) and demand that they sign the following document: "I promise to live under the laws currently in force in the USSR and Azerbaijan, not to keep arms, and not to hide extremists." People in the region reportedly refuse to sign the document.

Azerbaijanis attack the village of Dev and drive away 340 head of cattle. A villager is wounded during the attack.

A bridge on the Aghdam-Fizuli road in the Martuni region of Nagorno-Karabagh is exploded.

The village of Martuni in Nagorno-Karabagh is fired upon in the evening from the outskirts of the Azerbaijani villages of Amiralar and Khodjavend. No casualties are reported.

The Armenian Parliament approves a declaration repeating its request that a special session of the USSR Supreme Soviet be convened immediately to resolve the crisis. The declaration also appeals to all the peoples of the world, the governments and Parliaments of all the nations, to "use all possible means to put an end to the aggression against the Armenian people."

May 1

In Yerevan, the Armenian police take control of the Armenian Communist Party's Central Committee Building. They escort

First Secretary Poghosian and other personnel from their offices to the sidewalk in front of the building and lock the gate. This action implements the Armenian Parliament's recent decision to nationalize the property of the Armenian Community Party. The Armenian government will move into the structure.

The village of Berkaber in the Ijevan region of Armenia is bombarded by Soviet tanks. No casualties are reported.

His Holiness Vazgen I sends a telegram appealing to the Diaspora Armenians: "We ask you to bring this to the attention of the world and all men of goodwill, urging them to stand up against the attempt to annihilate the Armenian people in the area."

Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-KS) sends a letter to Jack Matlock, U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, urging the Embassy to send personnel to the region to confirm the reports that Soviet and Azerbaijani forces have been committing coordinated acts of violence against Armenians.

The Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe sends a cable to Azerbaijan signed by co-chairmen Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ) and Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) urging that Azerbaijan "observe humanitarian norms in resolving the conflict with Armenia."

May 2

The U.S. State Department reports that it has advised Ambassador Matlock to go to the Soviet Foreign Ministry to register the U.S. government's "grave concern" over Soviet and Azeri attacks.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian speaks by telephone with President Mikhail Gorbachev and demands that:

1) All military operations against Getashen, Martunashen, Shahumian, and Karabagh cease immediately;

2) Relief helicopter flights be allowed into the above-mentioned regions; and

3) Any deportation of inhabitants of the villages of Getashen and Martunashen be prevented.

The village of Voskepar in the Noyemberian region, encircled by Azerbaijani special militia and Soviet internal forces, is bombarded all day.

The villages of Aravus and Khundzoresk in the Goris region in southern Armenia are fired upon.

The villages of Ajarkut, Tsaghkavan, and Kirants in the Ijevan region in Armenia continue to be fired upon.

The Aigepar-Movses road is fired upon from 11 a.m. and is occupied by Azerbaijani special militia.

Khachik Stamboltsian, President of the Armenian Benevolent Association "Gtutiun," sends a letter to the President of the International League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies asking that they appeal to President Gorbachev to allow medical assistance to reach the people of Getashen. He reports that in Getashen 40 Armenians have been killed, and over 100 have been wounded. He says a relief helicopter from Yerevan, that landed in nearby Shahumian village due to bad weather, was denied landing in Getashen for two straight days by Soviet armed forces, resulting in the deaths of six of the wounded.

May 3

Rep. David Bonior (D-MI) expresses his outrage at official Soviet acts against Armenian villages in a statement on the floor of the House of Representatives. Six other Congressmen join Bonior in making statements on the House floor.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian and Azerbaijani President Ayaz Mutalibov meet separately in Moscow with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. According to Azerinform, Mutalibov asks Gorbachev to stop the "Armenian intrusion in Azerbaijan's internal affairs" and to ensure the "territorial integrity" of his republic. Ter-Petrosian asks Gorbachev to halt the deportation of Armenians from their ancestral villages which are now located in Azerbaijani territory and to allow helicopters to evacuate the wounded.

Two Armenians, Armen Manucharian and Balaban Chibukhjian are killed when their car is blown up by a Soviet tank near Kirants, Ijevan.

Emilio Castro, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, sends a letter to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, asking him "to take immediate steps to ensure the safety of the Armenian people in the region."

May 4

A national day of mourning in Yerevan. At noon, an estimated 50,000 people fill Liberty Square (formerly known as Opera Square) to witness the public funeral of five youths who were killed in Getashen.

Three helicopters fly from Getashen to Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabagh, carrying children and wounded.

Seventeen Soviet military helicopters carrying 500 special troops, equipment, and a kitchen arrive in Yerevan, reportedly to upgrade the defense of Soviet military outposts and equipment throughout the region.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian holds a news conference for the foreign press in Moscow and accuses Soviet troops of waging "undeclared war" against the Armenian republic. He

says Moscow is engaged in acts of state terrorism against his democratic country.

May 5

A delegation of members of the Russian Federation Parliament, sent by the federation's leader, Boris Yeltsin, arrives in Yerevan.

May 6

Near Voskepar, in the Noyemberian region, a bus carrying 24 Armenian policemen is stopped at 3 a.m. According to Commissar Vahak Sarhatyan, 11 of the passengers are executed. Five are taken hostage and eight are unaccounted for.

USSR Interior Ministry forces start shelling the Armenian village of Voskepar around 10 a.m. The shelling follows a demand by the USSR forces presented to the village leadership for the surrendering of any weapons carried by the local militia. The village comes under intense attack by USSR helicopter gunships, artillery, armored vehicles, and automatic weapons when the village refuses to disarm its militia.

The border villages of Kornidzor, Tegh, and Aravus in the Goris region are bombarded by three Soviet army helicopters from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The delegation from the Russian Federation Parliament goes to Voskepar. Through its mediation, 10 Armenian policemen of the Noyemberian Internal Affairs Department are released. They also bring out from Voskepar the bodies of eleven police officers who have been killed. The delegation originally tried to reach Voskepar by helicopter, but the military warned them by radio that if they tried to fly into the village it would be blown from the sky. They reached the village by ambulance. A representative of the troops showed them artillery directed toward the Ghazakh region. Anatoli Shabad, one of the members of the delegation, stays in Voskepar and declares that he will not leave until there is a just settlement of the problem.

According to Tass, 200 paratroopers are flown by helicopter into Yerevan to protect military personnel and installations, including the nuclear power station at Medzamor, near Yerevan. Later in the day, Soviet armed forces take direct control of Medzamor.

Interior Minister Boris Pugo says Soviet military helicopters airlifted 300 women and children out of Getashen and Martunashen over the weekend of May 4 and 5. He says they were evacuated, not deported.

The Armenian Parliament approves an appeal to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations and to U.N. Secretary General Perez de Cuellar. The appeals ask for observers to be sent to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh to study the local situation. The appeal to Secretary General de Cuellar also asks for observers to be sent to witness the preparation and holding of Armenia's September 21 referendum on independence.

The Armenian Council of Ministers announces that it has established a Defense Committee headed by Vahan Shirkhanian and two other Armenian military authorities. The Council says that all military movements within Armenia must have the Council's prior approval.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev pledges to help settle the conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, according to an Associated Press report. But, he reportedly says that "political measures cannot be implemented when there are armed bandits" on both sides and warns that Soviet troops will continue to go "hamlet to hamlet" to enforce his order to disarm Armenians. He also says that "Nagorno-Karabagh's autonomy should be fully restored" and that Azerbaijan should go along to reduce tensions.

May 7

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian holds a press conference in Yerevan for foreign correspondents which is televised in the evening. He reports that the villages of Getashen and Martunashen have been burned and razed, their residents murdered, tortured and brutally deported. As many as 2,000 of their residents have been forcibly deported or evacuated to Stepanakert, and that only 500-600 persons remain in Getashen. He says these actions have been prepared and carried out by Soviet internal troops and Azerbaijani special militia. He also says that the government has a document which confirms that the actions were previously planned. The document was taken from Colonel Mashkov who headed the operation and was taken hostage. Call-signals of all units which took part in the operation, as well as specific field operations, were mentioned in the document.

Artsvashen, a 140-year-old Armenian village with about 2,700 inhabitants, is surrounded by 32-40 tanks and 18-23 helicopters of the Soviet military who demanded by loudspeakers that the villagers relinquish their weapons by 10:00 a.m. the next day.

The villages of Kornidzor, Shurnukh, Aravus, Khnadzakh and Tegh in the Goris region in Armenia are surrounded. When Soviet troops arrive in Shurnukh, they take hostage 9 men, including Ignat Beglarian, the deputy police chief of Goris, five policemen, and the director of the village council. They are taken to Azerbaijan. In Shurnukh and Aravus, buildings are blown up and automobiles set on fire. Roads leading into these villages from the region's center are blocked.

The village of Kirants in the Ijevan region in Armenia is attacked by Soviet internal units. These special forces demand that the inhabitants surrender their arms. K. Parsadanian, head

of the village council, and two other villagers are taken hostage. They are released in the evening.

Soviet troops enter the town of Meghri in southern Armenia. No fighting is reported.

The village of Ghazakhchi in the Martakert region of Nagorno-Karabagh is fired upon by Azerbaijani invaders. Two people are reported wounded.

The villages of Mets Shen and Yeghtsahogh in the Berdadzor region of Nagorno-Karabagh are fired upon by a military helicopter at 10 a.m.

The village of Hin Shen in Nagorno-Karabagh is fired upon in the afternoon.

People working in a field in the village of Berdashen in the Martuni region of Nagorno-Karabagh are attacked at 3 p.m. by Azerbaijani bandits. A truck is stolen, and the driver robbed.

The military search the village of Berkadzor in the Askeran region of Nagorno-Karabagh in the evening, under the guise of passport regime control.

A public funeral is held in Liberty Square in Yerevan for Moushegh Mkhoyan, who was killed in the village of Movses in the Shamshadin region.

Sixteen to eighteen Soviet military helicopters capable of carrying up to 85 soldiers each arrive in Yerevan.

The USSR Supreme Soviet in Moscow votes 261-8 to reject a request by the Armenian Parliament to convene an extraordinary session of the national parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies, to consider the conflict. The Supreme Soviet does instruct the national prosecutor's office to send investigators to the region.

May 8

The villagers of Artsvashen relinquish 10-11 hunting rifles. Again, prior to 10:00 a.m. the commander of the Soviet forces announces through loudspeakers that, "If you do not give us the rest of your arms, we will send in the Azerbaijani OMON to take them from you." At 10:01 a.m., the tanks and helicopters open fire on the outlying areas. At 10:05-10:10 a.m., the limited number of Armenian policemen also relinquish their automatic weapons.

Over two days, May 7 and 8, Soviet troops, the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry's troops and the Azerbaijani OMON in the Goris region take 47 people hostage, including 16 officers of the Armenian special militia, 26 civilians, and 5 police officers of the Goris Internal Security Department.

Cows and sheep are driven away in the early morning from the villages of Tarishan and Gyoal in the Kubatlu region in Azerbaijan to the village of Ujanist in Azerbaijan. The "herdsmen" are armed Azerbaijani special militia.

Soviet expeditionary forces block the only road between the villages of Kirants and Ajarkut in Armenia.

A truck on the Goris-Ghapan road is fired upon by Soviet soldiers. The driver and two passengers are reported wounded.

A farm in the village of Kurtakulakh in the Ghapan region of southern Armenia is attacked and three people are wounded. Two buildings on the farm are set on fire.

A military helicopter hovers over the village of Voskepar in the Noyemberian region. Four trucks carrying soldiers arrive in the village of Verin Aksipar.

The entire work force of Nagorno-Karabagh adopts a resolution that protests the deportation of the Armenian population from Getashen and Martunashen.

The Armenian Parliament issues a demand for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Armenian soil.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian sends letters to President George Bush and Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole describing the military operations and the policy of depopulation of Armenians from Azerbaijani territory. He says "it is my hope that the government of the United States will consider carefully the implications of Soviet policies with regard to Armenia and other democratic republics of the USSR and that it will undertake whatever means it considers necessary and proper to ensure that the principles of collective security, peaceful conflict resolution, and self-determination are respected within, as much as without, the USSR."

At a press briefing, U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher condemns the violence and urges the Soviet central government to act quickly to stop the fighting. The statement says: "We have conveyed to Soviet authorities our concern over the situation and have urged that steps be taken quickly to prevent further bloodshed. We deeply regret the loss of life and hope that all parties to this dispute will step back from confrontation and rely upon reason and restraint."

May 9

This day is a national holiday, World War II Victory Celebration Day. The military temporarily pull their forces back into Azerbaijan.

At 3:10 a.m., three military helicopters and two YAK-40 planes land at the Erebuni Airport in Yerevan, carrying more than 100 inhabitants of Getashen.

At about 11 a.m., three military helicopters invade the airspace of the village of Vardenis from the Kelbejar region of Azerbaijan. They hover over the village and return to the territory of the neighboring republic. At 3:40 p.m., a delegation of the region's authorities meets with Major Gusev at the border of Kelbajar. He tells them that his men are carrying out the USSR President's order on disarmament of illegal units.

Four armored vehicles and one helicopter attack a gold-mining plant in the village of Zod. The vehicles and helicopter approach the plant office, fire at it, and return in the direction of Kelbajar.

The Ghapan-Goris road continues to be blocked, preventing travel from Yerevan and other parts of the republic to the Meghri and Ghapan regions.

A cattle farm in the village of Karmiravan in the Martakert region of Nagorno-Karabagh is attacked at 4 p.m. by the Azerbaijani OMON from the village of Gharadagh in the Aghdam region of Azerbaijan. Two people are reported wounded.

Lithuania's Parliament issues an appeal condemning the Soviet aggression against Armenians.

Thirty congressmen in Washington sign congressional letters to U.S. President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev condemning the Soviet attacks.

May 10

The U.S. Helsinki Watch Committee issues an appeal calling for "an end to the violence."

May 13

A diplomat from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow arrives in Yerevan. Plans to go to Baku, Azerbaijan the next day.

Pogroms and deportations of Armenians begin in the territory of Nagorno-Karabagh.

May 14

During the night and into the morning hours of May 15, the Armenian village of David Bek along the Ghapan-Goris road is bombarded from the direction of the Azerbaijani village of Akn (Ayin) in the Kubatlu region for about one hour. No casualties are reported.

May 15

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian issues a statement to the press. He reports that pogroms and deportations of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabagh began on May 13, and asserts that "Soviet troops and the Azerbaijani SSR Internal Affairs Ministry's special troops (OMON) have carried out large-scale operations under the guise of passport regime control."

At 5:00 a.m., under the guise of passport regime control, the Berdadzor region and the Armenian villages of Badara and Dashbulagh are encircled by Azerbaijani security units and Soviet Internal Affairs Ministry troops. All the men from 16 to 50 are taken out of the region by buses. From Dashbulagh alone 30 men are deported. The total number of deported is more than 100.

Azerbaijani OMON from the Jebrayil region of Azerbaijan enter the Hadrut region of Nagorno-Karabagh, demanding that the inhabitants of Dolanlar and Aragiul leave their homes. They force the Armenians to sign papers that they will leave their homes by their own free will and move to Armenia. The Hadrut region's Armenian policemen try to respond to alarming calls from the villages of Jilan and Biniatlu, but are fired upon by the Azerbaijanis. Gharib Harutiunian, deputy police chief, and Vilen Verdinian, a police officer, are arrested.

The villages of Scisulan, Yarmjian, Karmiravan, Leninavan, Talish, and Getavan in the Martakert region of Nagorno-Karabagh are encircled by the Azerbaijani OMON. The region's policemen are disarmed. Large numbers of people are arrested.

The village of Jilan in the Hadrut region is fired upon.

The same situation exists in the village of Jartar in the Martuni region.

A member of the Armenian Parliament, Hamlet Grigorian, and others are arrested in Stepanakert.

The U.S. Senate approves a sense of the Senate resolution that urges President George Bush to give Moscow $1.5 billion in agricultural credit guarantees, but at the same time expresses its grave concerns about the use of force in Armenia, the Baltic states, and elsewhere in the Soviet Union.

May 16

A cattle farm in the Armenian village of Hartashen is attacked from the direction of Azerbaijan. Tania Harutiunian, Shavarsh Khachatrian, and Masnik Aghaian are reported killed, and 310 sheep are driven away. During and after the attack, a military helicopter maneuvers along the roads leading from this village to Azerbaijani territory.

The Presidium of the Latvian Parliament adopts a declaration on the situation in Nagorno-Karabagh, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, condemning "the use of the USSR armed forces, which abets the genocide against the Armenian people in Nagorno-Karabagh. Violence and force cannot help the peaceful settlement of the conflict."

May 17

The Presidium of the Ukrainian Parliament adopts a declaration on the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The declaration describes the use of USSR military forces as "unacceptable" and calls for the immediate initiation of peace negotiations. "Releasing of hostages, providing of medicine aid to the wounded, creating the conditions for people to return to their native places, helping of those people whose houses are destroyed or damaged will be the action of humanity," it states.

The Leningrad City Council adopts a statement condemning the use of military force in Armenia and Azerbaijan and the illegal violence, deportations, and pillaging of Armenian villages.

The U.S. Senate unanimously approves a resolution condemning the use of force and intimidation against Armenians in Nagorno-Karabagh, Azerbaijan, and Armenia and calls for dialogue among all the parties involved. Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI) and Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole (R-KS) worked together on authoring the resolution and obtaining bi-partisan support for it.

May 19

The Azerbaijani OMON invade the villages of Yeghilu, Dudukchi, and Aghbular in the Hadrut region and demand that the Armenian population leave their homes within two days.

May 20

The last several hundred residents of the villages of Yeghtsahogh, Kirov, and Hin Shen in the Berdadzor region of Nagorno-Karabagh are reported to have been deported over the weekend to the Armenian border near Goris. Seventy women and children accompanied by armored vehicles were transported to Stepanakert from Kirov. Forty men remain in prison in Shushi and Lachin. Some of the deportees join nearly 500 Armenian deportees from the Nagorno-Karabagh region of Hadrut, who had earlier been bused by the Azerbaijani OMON and dropped off near the border. The refugees have spent the last several days and nights in three makeshift tent camps struck in open fields.

The inhabitants of the villages of Tsor, Banazur, and Aragiul try to return to their villages with the help of Soviet internal troops, but the Azerbaijani OMON do not allow them to do so.

Seventeen people are reported to have been arrested in the Martuni region of Nagorno-Karabagh, including the mayor, the district attorney, and other officials. A wine factory is fired upon by the Azerbaijani special militia.

The Russian organizations "Democraticheskaya Rossia" (Democratic Russia movement) and "Memorial" sponsor a demonstration in Moscow to protest Soviet and Azerbaijani actions in Nagorno-Karabagh and Armenia. Some 50,000 Muscovites attend.

The Presidium of the Armenian Parliament approves an appeal to the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Presidiums of the Supreme Soviets of all the Soviet and Autonomous Republics calling for observers to be sent to Nagorno-Karabagh and adjoining districts, for all possible means to be taken to assure the return of deportees to their homes, and for steps to be taken to prevent future atrocities from being committed against the Armenian people.

The Presidium of the Armenian Parliament issues a second appeal to the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet for measures to be taken to obtain the release of over 500 Armenians -- members and leaders of local councils, policemen, doctors, and innocent citizens -- who have been detained in Azerbaijani prisons by the authorities as "armed bandits." The appeal also urges that legal proceedings against any of the detainees be administered by a third party.

May 21

Soviet internal troops and Azerbaijani OMON break down the door of the monastery of Amaras in Nagorno-Karabagh, enter it, and defile and pillage it.

The coordinating committee of "Democraticheskaya Rossia" is reported to have adopted a declaration which states that it has already been two weeks that there is an undeclared, widespread war against Armenia, which has chosen the road to independence.

The Russian organization "Memorial" is reported to have adopted and disseminated a statement that says "Soviet troops are again involved in bloody massacre. It was once Afghanistan; now it is Armenia and Azerbaijan...The USSR Internal Affairs Ministry, the Defense Ministry, and KGB troops are involved in the destruction of villages and the killing and deportation of the native population."

Canadian parliamentarian Barbara McDugall announces that Canada has officially conveyed its outrage to the Soviet central government over the actions of Soviet and Azeri forces in Armenian villages. Canadian and Dutch government representatives are also said to have dispatched a fact-finding delegation to Armenia and Azerbaijan.

May 23

President Levon Ter-Petrosian, in an op-ed article published in the *Washington Post* entitled "Armenia Emerging," says "Soviet policy decisions and large military operations could not have been implemented without the knowledge and approval of Mikhail Gorbachev himself."

May 25

More Soviet troops (Red Berets) land in the evening in Yerevan.

The Soviet central bank cuts off the Republic of Armenia's access to the bank.

An international delegation of 15 people, led by Baroness Caroline Cox, a Deputy Speaker of the British House of Lords, leaves Moscow for Yerevan on a fact-finding mission. The members of the delegation were in Moscow to participate in the first International Andrei Sakharov Memorial Congress. On the basis of interviews and observations at 16 different sites in both Armenia and Azerbaijan, and of interviews within Yerevan with hospital patients, relatives of prisoners, and government officials, the delegation issued a statement to the press on May 29 stating, "we believe that serious violations of human rights and of Soviet and international law have occurred and are still occurring."

May 28

Armenian Independence Day is observed officially throughout the republic.

The Soviet commandant of Nagorno-Karabagh, Mr. Zhukov, and Azerbaijani representatives hold negotiations. The Azeri side insists on the deportation of the Armenian population from the Shahumian region.

Rouben Badalian, the director of the dairy farm in the village of Khanabad in the Askeran region of Nagorno-Karabagh, is killed in his office.

May 29

Paratroopers land in the Shahumian region and set themselves up in the forest. Troops of the Internal Affairs Ministry are removed and replaced by Red Berets. Passport regime control is carried out. All farm/field work is suspended.

May 30

The President of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, publicly offers to act as a negotiator between representatives of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The military guard post in the Stepanakert railway station is bombarded.

The Armenian village of Artsvashen is fired upon by the Azerbaijanis.

More than 90 members of the U.S. House of Representatives, led by Rep. David Dreier (R-CA) and Rep. Mervyn Dymally (D-CA), jointly send letters to President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev condemning the Soviet attacks against Armenians.

May 31

A Russian delegation of People's Deputies and correspondents from Leningrad fly from Yerevan to Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabagh, to analyze the situation in the region. They are met at the Stepanakert airport by the Azerbaijani OMON and are transported to Baku. They are prevented from having meetings with Armenian residents or leaders.

June 2

The village of Khtsaberd in the Hadrut region is fired upon at 7 p.m.

Stepanakert is fired upon at midnight from the outskirts of the predominantly Azeri-populated Krkjan district. The military unit located not far from there is also bombarded. Four people are arrested in the Krkjan district.

June 3

The guardposts of the troops of the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry are removed from the villages of Karaglukh, Hin Taghlar and Dolanlar in the Hadrut region. Helicopters maneuver over Karaglukh and open fire, wounding three people. Three shepherds are taken hostage, with two later released.

Soviet Army soldiers begin bombarding the village of Jeebiklu in the Ghapan region at 7 p.m. Five shells hit the villages of Andarashad and Okhtar, near a water reservoir. From 8 to 9 p.m., Ghapan's sanitary station is bombarded again from the village of Saydlar. No casualties are reported.

A portion of the Goris-Ghapan road is fired upon by Soviet troops and Azerbaijani OMON at 7 p.m. Two passengers in a car are wounded. About 20 minutes later, another car is targeted and hit. The driver escapes, but the car later catches fire.

About 100 families return to the villages of Aragiul, Arpagiuduk, Khtsaberd, Spitakashen, Tsor, and Banazur in the Hadrut region.

June 5

Twenty-four Armenians who had been taken hostage primarily from the village of Shurnukh in the Goris region are released, five of whom are policemen.

The military guard post is removed from the village of Tsor in the Hadrut region. At 9 a.m., the deportation of the inhabitants of the Hadrut region continues.

June 6

An Observers Committee, made up of USSR People's Deputies Valdimir Poteev, Oleg Vostroukhov, Vladimir Kirilov, and Mikhail Sokolov, arrives in Stepanakert. After 1-2 hours, they travel to the Lachin region. They are to go to the Hadrut region, but in the end do not go.

The villages of Khtsaberd and Hin Taghlar in the Hadrut region are surrounded by Azerbaijani OMON, who demand that the inhabitants leave their homes.

June 7

The Azerbaijani OMON invade the villages of Khtsaberd and Hin Taghlar in the Hadrut region at 10:45 a.m. The school building in Ghoshaghadj, which is several kilometers away from Khtsaberd, is set on fire. The inhabitants of Hin Taghlar are seen leaving their homes.

Cars are stoned and roads closed in Martuni in Nagorno-Karabagh, near the Azerbaijani village of Varsalu.

The director of a collective farm in the village of Berdashen in the Martuni region, who had been arrested earlier, is released.

June 10

Four soldiers armed with machine guns, 6 civilians in military uniforms, along with a lieutenant colonel and a captain, invaded the Nagorno-Karabagh Regional Council building in Stepanakert at 2:30 a.m. They check the watchguards' passports and ask for the home phone number of the Council's Chairman, Simeon Babayan. In the evening, they arrest Stepanakert's furniture store owner, Valeri Barseghian. They also search and ransack his apartment. The accountant of a consignment house, Grisha Danielian, is also arrested. They also try to arrest Aliosha Gasyan, the owner of a jewelry shop, but the neighbors come to his rescue.

The Azeri-dominated Shushi District Council passes a resolution that the Armenian population should leave the village of Karintak. They are given a certain amount of time to leave. The inhabitants of Karintak reject the resolution and state that they are ready to defend their homes.

June 13

The U.S. House of Representatives unanimously approves a resolution that condemns the use of force and intimidation against Armenians in Nagorno-Karabagh, Azerbaijan, and Armenia and calls for dialogue among all the parties involved. The initiative was led by Rep. Wayne Owens (D-UT) and Rep. William Broomfield (D-MI) and was approved as an amendment to the House Foreign Aid Authorization Bill.

June 14

It is reported that the Azerbaijani authorities have refused the President of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, as a potential negotiator between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

From the beginning of May until June 14, the Armenian populations have been deported from 13 villages in the Hadrut region – Arpagiuduk, Spitakashen, Petrossashen, Tsor, Tsamdzor, Khandzadzor, Dolanlar, Karaglukh, Mitkiudara, Jilan, Biniatlu, Aragiul, and Banazur. The villages of Dolanlar, Karaglukh, and Banazur are populated with Azeris, several families in each village.

June 15

It is reported that a meeting was held in Moscow recently between the leadership of the Armenian and Azerbaijani law enforcement bodies – the Office of Public Prosecutor, KGB, and Internal Affairs Ministry. During the meeting, which was the second one convened, they discussed the problems of the Armenian hostages in Azerbaijan, people deported from the territory of Nagorno-Karabagh, and security in the border regions and Nagorno-Karabagh. In the course of the meeting, it became clear that the Azerbaijani side understood that the problem of deported Armenians is not a legal problem, but a political one. Both sides came to the conclusion that the problem must be immediately resolved in a political way. The Azerbaijani law enforcement bodies promised to release a group of hostages by the next meeting. However, both sides were convinced that the final resolution of the problem would be connected with the result of a meeting between the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

On June 14 and 15, 75 Armenian hostages were released and were taken from Shushi to Stepanakert.

June 18

The village of Geghanush in the Ghapan region, and the road leading to it, are bombarded by a variety of artillery from the villages of Ghazanchi, Aghgend, and Saydlar in the Dzangelan region of Azerbaijan for four hours. At the same time, the village of David Bek also in the Ghapan region comes under fire from the village of Akn in Azerbaijan. No casualties are reported.

A car is fired upon by unknown persons in the vicinity of Shushi on the road leading to Stepanakert at 10:30 p.m. Major Alexander Khomich, technical assistant to the commander of the internal affairs battalion, is reported killed. Senior lieutenant Vadim Polmanovich, company commander deputy on political affairs, is reported seriously wounded and taken to the hospital.

June 19

The women and children from the villages of Khtsaberd and Hin

Taghlar in the Hadrut region are being returned to their villages, and military checkposts have been established.

Pillaging by Azeris is reported to be continuing in the villages of Petrosashen, Spitakashen, and Arpagiuduk, also in the Hadrut region.

June 20

Additional steps are reportedly being taken to promote the President of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, as a potential negotiator between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

June 21

Hamlet Grigorian, member of the Armenian Parliament and senior lecturer at the Stepanakert Pedagogical Institute, and Rafael Gabrielian, a foreman at a furniture factory, are released from prison in Baku and taken to Nagorno-Karabagh. They are in the regional hospital now. According to the hospital's surgical department, the two were subjected to brutal violence during their month in prison and it will take a long time for them to rehabilitate.

Harutiun Ghazinian and Samvel Mamian, two villagers who had been taken hostage from Voskepar, are released. Thirty-eight hostages from Voskepar remain.

Units from the Soviet 7th Army, deployed in Armenia, arrive in Zangezur in southern Armenia to control the border area. While the military commanders supervise the installation of equipment and placement of troops, Azeris successfully drive away the villagers' cattle.

June 22

The participants in the All-Union Congress of the Ukrainian political prisoners send a letter from Kiev to President Mikhail Gorbachev and to Armenia's Parliament that condemns and protests "the new genocide of the Armenian people."

June 27

A vehicle traveling on the Noyemberian-Voskepar highway is fired upon at 11 p.m. by the Azerbaijanis. Thirty-three-year-old Ivan Khechumian is seriously wounded and taken to the hospital.

June 29

The Azerbaijani OMON enter the village of Tsamdzor in the Hadrut region and cut the telephone wires between the center of the region and the villages of Hin Taghlar and Khtsaberd.

June 30

A military helicopter with 14 civilian passengers aboard from the village of Leninavan crashes near the village of Noravan in the Sisian region. The passengers are slightly wounded.