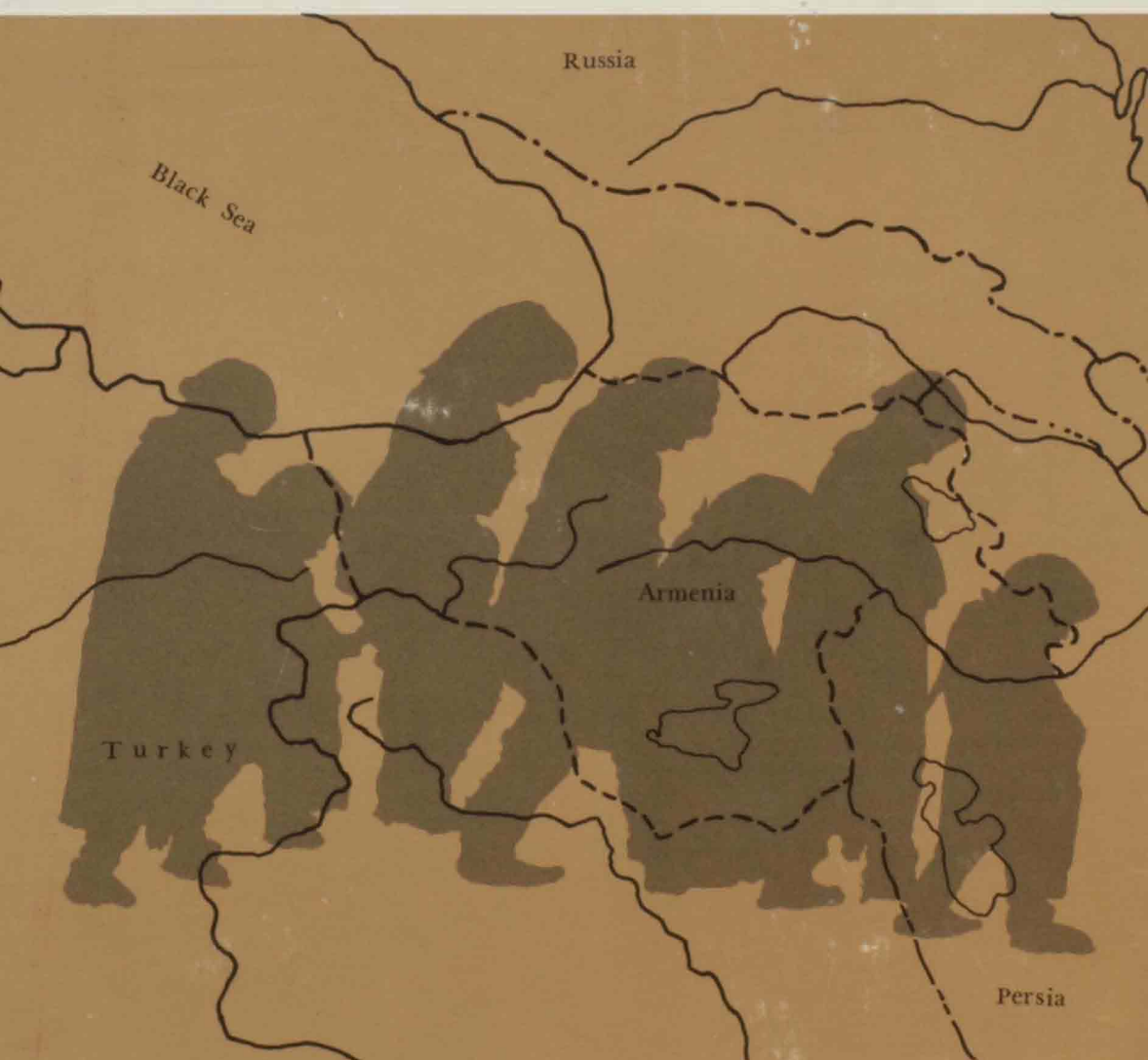


ARMENIA

THE CASE FOR A FORGOTTEN GENOCIDE



By DICKRAN H. BOYAJIAN

B L A C K S E A

D J A N I K

T R E B I Z O N D

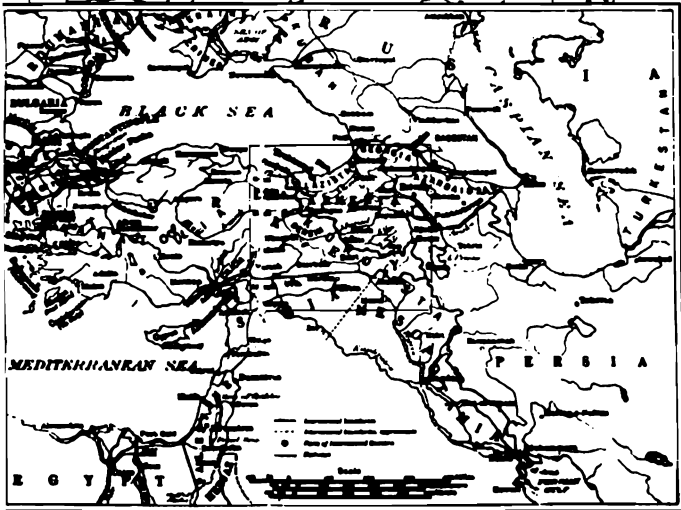
T U R K E Y

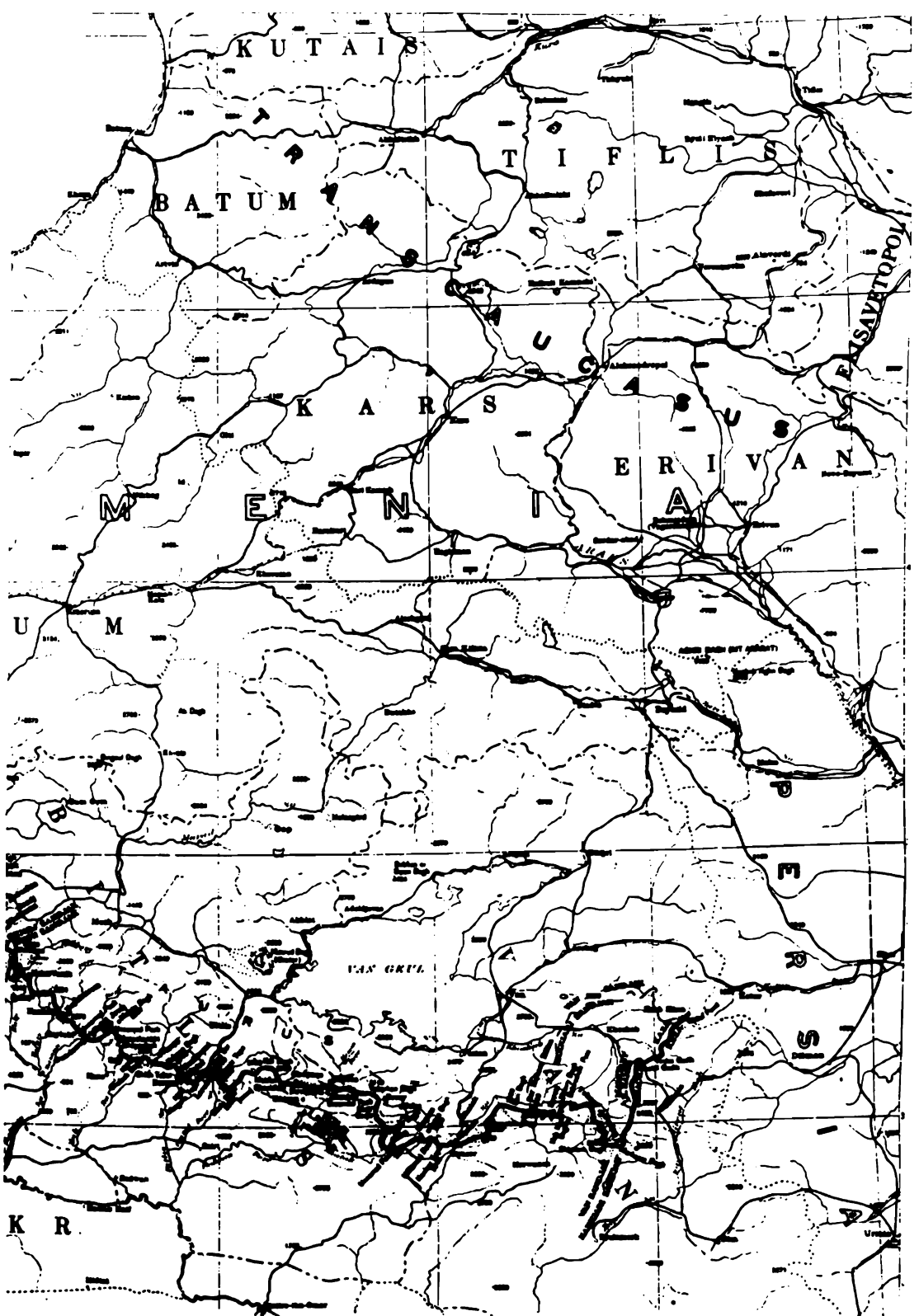
S I V A S

M A M U R E T

U L A Z I Z

D I A R B E





BOUNDARY BETWEEN TURKEY AND ARMENIA

AS DETERMINED BY
WOODROW WILSON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Woodrow Wilson

MESOPOTAMIA

ARMENIA

THE CASE FOR A FORGOTTEN GENOCIDE

DICKRAN H. BOYAJIAN, LL.M.

EDUCATIONAL BOOK CRAFTERS, WESTWOOD, NEW JERSEY

Preface

Two purposes have guided me in writing this book. The first has been to assemble as much of the best testimony regarding the massacres of the Armenians as possible. Thereby I hope I shall awaken at least in part the dormant conscience of the civilized world with respect to what may well be its worst piece of unfinished business, the redress of a monumental grievance.

My second, and more important, purpose has been to press the case for the establishment of an Armenian homeland along the lines of the Israeli homeland. The reasons for such a settlement are clear: the territory I envision as the Armenians' future homeland has been theirs—barring the past few decades—for thousands of years, almost indeed since pre-history; the Armenians, a smaller group than the Jews, suffered under the Turks an even greater decimation of their total numbers on a proportional basis than the Jews did under the unspeakable persecutions of the Nazis; the plan for an Armenian homeland was not merely taken for granted in the years just after the terrible events of 1915–1916 and later but was embodied in state papers of the highest authority, emanating from the American presidency and the victorious councils of post-World War I Europe.

There are other reasons, practical as well as humanitarian, why an Armenian homeland inside Turkey should be established, not the least of them being that it would be good for the Turks themselves. I hope and believe that the material presented here will make all these reasons clear.

History is full of stories of persecution, massacres and murders. The strong have always forced their will upon the weak. Tyrants have invaded countries far and wide, tortured and killed their inhabitants, devastated their lands, outraged

their women or carried them into captivity, and caused irreparable damage to life and property.

The stories told about Jenghiz Khan, Tamerlane and, in our own time, Hitler, are not fantasies of the imagination. They are facts amply recorded in history. For it is true that enemy invasions have created havoc in the lands they have invaded, and that horror, destruction, and desecration have inevitably followed each invasion.

But until the second decade of the twentieth century, one cannot find in any history the record of a plan comparable in savagery to the one set in motion by the Turks beginning with April 24, 1915.

A quarter of a century later, after the extermination of the Jews, the word *genocide*—the murder of a race—was coined. The word unquestionably applies to the Armenian massacres, for it was the murder of their race.

It was 1908 when a small group of men, ruthless in character and diabolical in the methods they applied, wrested power from an already corrupt and sick Turkish government, with the false promise that in the establishment of the new order all races and peoples of whatever religious beliefs would enjoy the same privileges, the same freedom and the same opportunities for progress and the same means for spiritual, cultural and material attainments.

Less than ten months after the young Turks came into power in July 1908, the falsity of the slogan of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity they had adopted for their government became evident. A dreadful story of massacres in Adana and its environs shocked the world and crumbled the hopes of the Armenians and other Christian minorities. Beginning on April 14, 1909 and within a matter of a week or two, about 30,000 Armenians of all ages were ruthlessly massacred. Heartless as it was, that event became a mere harbinger for even more horrible ones, soon to be unfolded, events which were meticulously planned to exterminate the Armenian people.

April 24, 1915 followed April 14, 1909.

April 24, 1915, one of the blackest of all days ever recorded in the history of mankind, was the day when "man's morality sank to the very depth in mire and blasphemy."

It was on that day when sinister men in the dark of night knocked on the doors of some three hundred unsuspecting victims, aroused them from their peaceful sleep and led them away from their homes and their families, never to be seen again. These men represented the cream of the Armenian intellectuals—writers, poets, journalists, clergymen, artists, professionals, businessmen, all men of culture, erudition and refinement.

Thus one of the most hideous crimes ever to be recorded began to unfold in Constantinople, and in the course of several months was repeated thousands of times in every nook and corner of Asia Minor. Hell broke loose upon an unfortunate people.

This publication, although it documents the events of that disaster, is not intended to rekindle old hatreds or arouse feelings of vengeance, but to remind the leaders of the civilized world of a crime which they may already have forgotten.

The world must be told of the events which in their magnitude and horror were far beyond the comprehension of man at the time of their occurrence. A people whose glories had penetrated the darkness of a barbarous age and imprinted on it their courage, their civility and their creative impulse, were brought near to total destruction.

In the pages that follow, the reader will see churches demolished, cultural and educational institutions torn asunder, whole cities, towns, villages and hamlets emptied of their inhabitants and laid waste. The reader will follow endless caravans of defenseless and terror-stricken men, women and children, gradually dwindling to the point of extinction.

Such was the fate of the Armenian people following April 24, 1915.

A group known as the American Committee on Armenian Atrocities was organized by a number of eminent humanitarians to render relief to the stricken thousands. In its first

public report the Committee wrote: "A systematic attempt to uproot the peaceful Armenian population had been decided upon. [News of] torture, pillage, rape, murder, wholesale expulsion and deportation and massacres came from all parts of the Empire and was due not to fanatical or popular demand, but was purely arbitrary and directed from Constantinople."

An American physician holding an important position in one of the most important institutions of learning in the Turkish Empire wrote about only one episode: "I cannot describe the terrible sorrow of the past week, the utter despair of those people passing through here—refined, educated, wealthy, delicate people—women and girls, all treated worse than animals—beaten, robbed, outraged. It is too awful to think of."

The genocide of the Armenian people cannot be explained or justified either by logic or morality. For centuries the Armenians had suffered insults, endured hardships, tolerated indignities, and had been subjected to atrocities. There were, of course, many glorious instances when they courageously resisted attacks by their ruthless rulers in defense of their faith, their pride, their honor, their dignity, and their property rights.

The world does not know, or may have already forgotten, that more than one-and-a-half million defenseless and helpless Armenian men, women, and children suffered death in every form which "the most depraved nature, the most cruel instincts, the most bitter and fanatical hatred could devise," in the dreadful period covered in this book.

A sympathetic reader will find in this documentation a reminder of the crime of genocide, which the perpetrators and even their descendents, the new generation of Turks, have rarely acknowledged. Rather, the opposite is true. They have spared no effort to deny the truth of their crime. They have even gone so far as to distort history by blaming their victims as the cause of their own miseries.

The documented facts disprove their contention about the

guilt of the Armenians. Virtually all sources relied on are non-Armenian and no bias can be attributed to them. The authenticity of their statements is above reproach. One will even find among them a number of Turks who feel shame for their leaders and deplore their ruthless behavior.

It is the hope of this writer that the evidence herein presented will utterly convince men that Turkish authorities deliberately planned to exterminate the Armenians, and will thus set the historical record straight once and for all. This writer makes no apology for offering to the world the true story of the horrible crime committed by one race against another.

There are some who claim that the basic character of the Turk has changed for the better. There is evidence to refute that contention and to show that the Turk of today is no different from the Turk of 1915, that the so-called democratic state established by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk with its basic objective of Pan-Turanism remains the same.

The incident of September 6, 1955, in Istanbul, cannot be lightheartedly dismissed. It was on that day, some forty years after the Armenian massacres and deportations, that a Turkish mob, composed of men and women, young and old, numbering approximately 20,000, "armed with crowbars, pick axes and clubs," looted and destroyed the stores of many Greek and Armenian Christians. This was done under the condoning eyes of the police, and according to a predetermined scheme. One of the foreign correspondents of the *New York Times* reported that the "destruction was extensive and unrestrained."

Frederick Sondon, Jr. writes in the May, 1956 issue of the *Readers Digest*: "In six terrible hours, the frenzied Turkish crowds wrecked 2,000 houses, 4,000 shops, burned 29 churches to the ground and badly damaged 31 others. Before it was over, 100,000 people were made jobless." And all that was done when Turkey was a respectable member of the United Nations. What justification was offered by the Turks for this demonic act? Greek terrorists had defiled Ataturk's

birthplace, was their answer. The Greeks and Armenians had to be taught a lesson.

As so often in the past, the civilized nations closed their eyes and ears and tacitly condoned the act as a disciplinary measure within the borders of a sovereign nation. No one, in short, had the right to interfere.

I will have succeeded in my mission if, by this documentation, I shall have been able to arouse a "more vigorous moral indignation" against an unspeakable crime and thereby to have assisted in the creation of a sympathetic and just attitude toward the case of the forgotten genocide.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For the preparation of this volume I am greatly indebted to Mr. Antranig Antreasian, editor of *Nor Or*, an Armenian semiweekly published in Fresno, California, a distinguished author and speaker for co-authoring the Epilogue of this book; to Dr. A. O. Sarkisian, of the Library of Congress, Dr. Vahakn Dadrian, of the State University of New York, Miss Zabel D. Tahmizian, of Brookline, Massachusetts, Dr. Stephen G. Svajian, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Mrs. Maritza M. Depoyan, widow of the late Rev. Hagop M. Depoyan, of Providence, R. I., for generously furnishing source material; to Prof. Marjorie Housepian, of Columbia University, author of *A Houseful of Love* and *Smyrna Affair*, Prof. William H. Thompson, of Harvard University, Mr. Manoog S. Young, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Mr. Jack Antreasian, of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, for their invaluable assistance in the choice and classification of the material for this volume; to Mr. X, a notable Armenian who wishes to remain anonymous, Mr. Edward Mardigian, of Detroit, Michigan, Mr. Hagop B. Barsamian, of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, Mr. Dadour Dadourian, of New York, and Mr. Charles Janjikian, of Detroit, whose generous support made possible the publication of this book, and many others, too numerous to mention, for their moral and material assistance and encouragement. A special debt of gratitude to my publisher, Mr. Harold Miller, President of the Educational Book Crafters, and to Mr. Frederick Highland, editor, for his collaboration and advice in the preparation of this book.

**“Who, after all, speaks today of
the annihilation of the Armenians?
The world believes in success only.”**

**Adolf Hitler, 1939, as quoted in
Louis Lochner, *What About Germany?***

Chapter 1

The Origins of Genocide

In February and March 1915 and for some months thereafter, the Turkish Minister of the Interior, Talaat Bey, issued a series of directives to officials of Turkey's eastern provinces that were to culminate, by early 1916, in the first real genocide of the modern age. By the time Talaat's orders had been carried out, a number of Armenians variously estimated between 800,000 and two million had been slaughtered in the cruelest manner conceivable, and Turkey had solved what Talaat ominously called the "Armenian Question."*

Talaat's directives to the government delegate in Adana, a city already infamous for previous atrocities against Armenians, express the intention "to exterminate all Armenians living in Turkey" with a minimum of delay and with no compassion whatsoever. They are thus the first modern record of an official policy of genocide, a genocide that has not yet had—and may never have—its Nuremberg. The orders for this crime could have had no higher authority, for Talaat, together with Enver Pasha, the War Minister, and Djemal Pasha, the Minister for Marine, shared absolute power in the Turkish dictatorship.

The consequences of Talaat's directives were incalculable. The deaths of as many as two million people—many of them children—the expropriation of their homeland, and countless acts of bestiality followed. The Armenians were indeed

* See Appendix, Chapter 1.

very nearly exterminated, for women, children, and men of sufficient youth to propagate the race were slaughtered with a systematic coldness not to be matched again until Hitler's concentration camps.

In some ways, the Turkish action against the Armenian minority was a prototype of the Nazi genocide. Talaat even bears some resemblance to Himmler, for he insists that compassion has no place in the necessary work to follow, as Himmler exhorted the SS to be strong enough for the disagreeable tasks of "the final solution." Like Himmler also, Talaat's private personality gave little indication of his murderous singlemindedness in the public sphere.

These then are the documents that brought about for the first time in modern history the systematic destruction on racial and religious grounds of an entire people by the highest officials of a legally constituted government.

February 28, 1915

To Delegate Jemal Bey of Adana:

The only force in Turkey able to frustrate the policies of *Djihad*¹ and *Terakki*² are the Armenians. Periodic news arriving from Cairo recently indicates that the *Dashnag-tzoutiun* (the Armenian Revolutionary Federation) is preparing a decisive attack upon the *Jemiyet* (the Turkish Committee of Union and Progress, that is, the Turkish ruling party).

If we examine all the historical events in detail we shall see that all the agitations that have obstructed *Jemiyet*'s patriotic efforts have been the result of seeds of turbulence sown by the Armenians. . . . *Jemiyet* has decided to free the fatherland from the covetousness of this accursed race and to bear upon its shoulders the stigma that might attach itself to Ottoman history.

Unable to forget the disgrace and bitterness of the past . . . *Jemiyet*, hopeful for the future, has decided to exterminate all Armenians living in Turkey, without allowing a single one to remain alive, and for this purpose has granted the Government extensive authority.

The Government shall give all necessary instructions to

the governors of provinces and the commanders of the Army for the arrangements concerning massacres. All delegates of the Ittihad and Terakki will be responsible for this matter in their respective localities.

All properties left behind will, for the time being, be seized and kept in the manner deemed best by the Government, with the understanding that they will be sold later for the expansion of the Jemiyet and for other patriotic purposes. . . . Should you find any evidence of misappropriation of funds, you shall make appropriate reports to the governors and to us.

Minister of the Interior
Talaat³

Between the foregoing directive and the next occurred an event that truly altered the course of history, the attempt of British and French naval forces to break through the Straits of Gallipoli and to subjugate Constantinople itself. The failure of the campaign, which stemmed from an Allied failure of nerve as much as from the gallant Turkish defense, effectively crippled Russia's participation in the war and contributed to the Revolution of 1917. It may well have lengthened the war by two years, postponing the defeat of Turkey and the Central Powers until 1918 and thus insuring the slaughter of the Armenians.

At the time of Talaat's first directive, with the Allied fleet within sound of Constantinople, the entire Turkish government was preparing to flee to the interior. Indeed, Talaat himself had packed his papers and other belongings for this desperate removal. There seems little doubt that one more Allied naval thrust would have penetrated the Turkish defenses and brought about the speedy surrender of Turkey, perhaps with the sparing of countless Armenian lives.

As it was, the withdrawal of the Allied naval force and the disastrous landings on the Gallipoli peninsula, constituted Turkey's chief victory in the war. The fear that dictated Talaat's original directive was replaced by a feeling of triumph in the second, which was issued just a week after the withdrawal of the Allied warships.

March 25, 1915

To Delegate Jemal Bey of Adana:

It is the duty of all of us to realize . . . our intention to wipe out of existence the known elements who have obstructed the political progress of our State for centuries. . . . We must accept the full responsibility, and fully appreciating that the Government has entered the global war with great sacrifice, we must strive to carry to success all the activities that have been undertaken.

As was stated in our letter of February 28, 1915 the Jemiyet has decided to . . . annihilate various opposing forces that have obstructed our way for years, and for that purpose it is obliged, unfortunately, to resort to bloody means. Rest assured that we are also affected by the thought of these horrible means; but Jemiyet finds no other way to secure its eternal existence.

Ali Riza is criticizing us and appeals for compassion. This degree of naivete is stupidity. Go to Aleppo, try to convince him and work together if you can. Should that be impossible we will find a suitable place to play on his heart-strings. Until the successful completion of the activities undertaken for the Armenians, it would not be right to bother ourselves about the *others* (Greeks, Arabs, Syrians) I wish to remind you again about the abandoned properties. It is very essential. Their disposition should be under your very eyes. Examine the accounts and means of performance at all times. Let us also know the date of your departure.

Minister of the Interior
Talaat

On April 15, 1915, Talaat was joined by Enver Pasha and Nazim Bey in a more general order of the Committee of Union and Progress (the Jemiyet):

April 15, 1915

To the Excellent Governors, Honorable Mayors, and
Esteemed Town Authorities:

You are familiar with the cruel political reasons which forced the mighty Ottoman Empire and the great Turkish

people to enter the war on the side of Germany and Austria against "The Triple Alliance." In order to emerge victorious from this fateful war, we repeat, every Mohammedan and Turk . . . should stand together as one man against our monstrous and infidel enemies and become a support to our valiant and wise leaders and to our army, which [is] waging a victorious war against treacherous foes.

. . . . In the event of victory [for Britain and Russia] they may agree upon a third competent inheritor, by finding a people that could serve their interests. . . .

And that third inheritor can only be the Armenian people. May God prevent it, but in case of our defeat, there will come to the fore during peace negotiations that "Armenian Question" that for more than half a century has been given an international character. . . .

Therefore, in order to protect our country, our nation, our government and our religion against the possibility of such a danger, the government which represents Islam and the Turkish people, and the Committee of Union and Progress, intending to forestall the presentation of the Armenian Question in any place and in any manner, taking advantage of the freedom which the war has granted us, has decided to end that question once and for all, by deporting the Armenians to the deserts of Arabia. . . .

The following serve as a justification for that plan:

- (a) The Armenian voluntary forces serving in the enemy armies;
- (b) The Armenian parties in the interior of the country, which have been organized to give a body blow to our Army;
- (c) The uncountable firearms and war materiel discovered and confiscated everywhere in the country.

With that justification we, the Government and the Central Committee of Ittihad appeal to you and to your patriotism and command you to assist with the means at your disposal the local organs of the Union and Progress Party, who at the sunrise of April 24th will undertake the implementation of this order, in conformity with secret instructions.

Any official . . . who opposes this sacred and patriotic work and fails to discharge the duties imposed on him