

## The Armenian Question and the Republic of Armenia in Reports of the British Parliament in February - April, 1920

One of the important negative peculiarities of the Armenian Question was, that it had been settled in the frame of the most complicated and the least favorable for us multilateral diplomatic negotiations. From the very beginning, this question rather served as an instrument to pave the way for international compact, than as an object of main concern. In the process of negotiations, all leading European Powers, so spontaneously and to the uttermost, subordinated solution of the Armenian problem to their own needs. In the second half of the 19th century Armenians as a nation neither exercised their franchise, nor possessed any possibility to impact on the whole course of backstage talks. Besides, N.Adontz pointed out, that European multilateral diplomacy contained inner contradictions and activity decays, but its Ottoman adversary led its course with unswerving determination and rigidity.<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of 1920 situation had changed to some degree. Armenians had created republic, and their Government had been recognized de facto on January 19. At the same time, exhausted nation restored economy of the new State under unspeakable trying conditions, and the Western Armenia was practically wiped out and annihilated, with native population massacred or exiled. Revival of this country required military and economic assistance of some principal Allied Power; because Armenians agreed to collaborate with either mandatory without restrictions. However, the problem was channeled time and again into realm of multilateral talks. And if the Supreme Council of the Paris Peace Conference confined itself to three principal parties (England, France and the USA), then their new establishment, the League of Nations, was envisaged for much wider circle of participants. This standing body for multilateral cooperation still should be created, it had possessed neither money, nor armed forces; the USA declined its membership on November 19, 1919. Nevertheless, the Armenian problem was entrusted to the League at once.

Official representatives of the Republic of Armenia were apparently confined in their ability to track and to effect discussions; they had not yet got a chance to divide multilateral talks into several pairs of bilateral British-Armenian, French-Armenian and American-Armenian work. Without due experience and sufficient information, spokesmen of the Armenian national interests once and again found themselves in the most intricate and the least favorable for them sphere of the multilateral politics.

In 1920, when the London conference (February 12 - April 10) tackled the //20 Turkish peace agreement in real earnest, members of the House of Commons - this distinctive and ponderable government body of the British Empire - frequently specified state of Armenian affairs, situation in Russia, role of Great Britain and resources of the League of Nations. Debates in this House of Parliament from February 10 till April 16 form volumes 125-127 of the 5<sup>th</sup> series of Official Report;

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<sup>1</sup> Ադոնց Ն., Հայկական հարց: Եր., Հայագիտակ, 1996, էջ 66:

they were used at the present article as the main research issue.<sup>2</sup> It should be emphasized, that interpretation of the Armenian Question in the context of Russian and Turkish affairs was an important trait of debates. When it was a question of the Republic of Armenia, its new boundaries or refugees, debates often concerned future treaty with Turkey, the Straits, Kemalists, or English policy towards Russia.

It was only two days before the London conference of the Allied Ambassadors and the Foreign Ministers, when D.Lloyd George had announced to legislators on February 10, that his soldiers were out of the whole Russia except Batum; although authorities of independent Georgia and Azerbaijan prayed to evacuate this city.<sup>3</sup> The Prime Minister withdrew forces to the Straits' area. With regard to the Soviet power, chief of the Government admitted, that they could not restore Europe without natural resources under Soviet control.<sup>4</sup> And although he pronounced, that horrors of Bolshevism and the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk prevented him from restoration of trade, the orator stressed: Bolshevism was not democracy, but it was efficient. They could not crush this regime by force of arms. New Russian rule would be consolidated as early as 1919, - confessed the Welsh, - it was only British equipment that made further struggle of all anti-Bolshevist factions possible.<sup>5</sup>

It was quite achievable to relight the fires of civil war, but regiments of the Red Army were more formidable, more numerous and better equipped; they were better led and better disciplined. Besides, the Volunteer detachments managed to alienate the population of the Southern Russia.<sup>6</sup> And who was to pay for their waging war? France and America had refused. British taxpayers had a lot of problems, too. It could well be, that they should resist Soviet rule not by force, but by means of trade.<sup>7</sup> Machinery, locomotives, lorries and wagons could be given in return of wheat, timber and other raw materials; that was what both sides needed. And the civil strife had taken away as many Russian lives, as World War I did. New fights in Europe could not bring any success because Poland and Central Europe were deprived of provisions.<sup>8</sup> The East was devastated; people starved in the mountains of Armenia. No one was obliged to wage war for the oil of Baku, this fuel could be simply bought. More remote places, such as Persia, were in similar conditions. So, there was no reason to conquer them.

Before the War, Russian export had constituted one-fourth of the wheat trade of the world, 80 per cent of the flax sale, one-third of the total supply of imported butter to Great Britain. Without this delivery, prices in the foreign market were constantly growing, while suitable for removal goods remained intact.<sup>9</sup> D.Lloyd George had confessed, that it was not a question of recognizing or not-recognizing the Soviet power; England was merely compelled to deal with the people, who

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<sup>2</sup> Great Britain Parliament. House of Commons. The Parliamentary Debates, 1920. Official report, 5<sup>th</sup> series, vols. 125-127. Lnd., HMSO, 1920 (following: Hansard).

<sup>3</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.40.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., col.41.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., col.42.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., col.43.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., col.44.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., col.45.

were ready to sell and to exchange. Our Government, - responded H.Cecil, - had been following ambiguous policy, and he hoped that it was high time to make choice and consistent actions.<sup>10</sup> A.Balfour replied to his accusations, that in permanently and sharply changing circumstances the Government didn't have any alternative. The British had never been the masters of the internal fortunes of Russia; but they had considerable effect on events, when supported anti-German elements there. Their involvement had surely intensified Russian disorder; however, Bolshevism had not been exclusively an internal affair of this vast Power, it was closely linked with its foreign policy.<sup>11</sup> In a month, on March 9, the Prime Minister added to their controversy, that disregarding Russia, Britain was contributing to high prices and augmented profits of the U.S.<sup>12</sup>

As R.Cecil had observed at the opening day of the London conference, since April 1919, the House supported the anti-Soviet offence of White armies.<sup>13</sup> He was not of the opinion, that foreign policy of the Crown should depend on capability of foreign armies; therefore, the vacillation between support of these forces and non-intervention should be at an end.<sup>14</sup> After all, the Paris Peace Conference had already greatly lost its prestige in Europe; and had not got, as before, the same degree of obedience.<sup>15</sup> To get out of Russian, and many other difficulties, the English needed new international authority with a kind of universal esteem. Such an authority could be invested into the League of Nations. This institution should be charged to define the boundaries between Russia and the border States.<sup>16</sup>

After retort by W.Mitchell-Thomson on behalf of new organization, A. Balfour reminded, that leaders of the main Powers had agreed in Paris to settle Near Eastern problems by the use of the League's mandatory principle. Everybody hoped there that America would accept full burden; now that hope //22 was shattered. Waiting for America was one of the weighty reasons of so harmful delay with negotiations; however, it was wholly America's responsibility.<sup>17</sup>

Could the League be more effective in improvement of existing conditions? - asked the deputy. - It was filled up by the same participants of the Paris Peace Conference. They had the same objects, the same intentions, and the same scarcity of funds.<sup>18</sup> We had heard, - noticed S.Hoare, - that delay with the Turkish treaty was inevitable. And, although at the outset we had decided that the principle of self-determination would not be applied to Allied terrains, later we did apply it to Russia, and now it was extended to the enemy - Ottoman territories.<sup>19</sup>

Besides, - put in J.D.Rees, - we manipulated emotions of the Indian Moslems.

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<sup>10</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.46.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., col.308.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., vol.126, col.1167-1168.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., vol.125, col.282.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., col.283.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., col.284.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., col.285.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., col.307.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., col.312.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., col.324.

Actually, they cared nothing about possible enlargement of Armenia.<sup>20</sup> They fought in the British ranks; and now they were merely asking, if the British were to move Sultan from Constantinople, just in order to please Montenegrins, Armenians and other small peoples. The delay in negotiations was dangerous in the East. Members of House had no confidence in America as Armenian mandatory a long time ago, since there should be implemented direct administration and permanent occupation. "The attitude of the United States [toward Armenian problem was] one as to which there ought to be no excuse."<sup>21</sup> Some single Power should be charged with Armenian Question; while international per se League could not be of use.<sup>22</sup>

Lieutenant-Colonel A.Murray agreed with his colleague when he talked about no excuse for diplomatic delays. He acknowledged that there was very little hope of the American mandate. Besides, implementation of the British foreign policy should be removed from the Cabinet (i.e. D.Lloyd George) under the jurisdiction of G.Curzon.<sup>23</sup> Our trade with Russia, - had entered Lieutenant-Commander J. Kenworthy, - would compel our Army to cease operations against Soviet power. However, in order to halt its advance into the Caucasus, would our country recognize the independence of Georgia and Azerbaijan without restrictions?<sup>24</sup>

As to the Turkish themes, then W.Ormsby-Gore had inquired in the House of Commons, how much weapon was kept in the forts on the Gallipoli and Dardanelles, and what amount of arms had been stolen by the Nationalists. W.Churchill mentioned guns with removed breech-blocks; he told that 8,5 thousand rifles, 30 machine guns and 0,5 million rounds of small arms //-23 ammunition were stolen from under French guard.<sup>25</sup> J.D.Rees had immediately asked about the state of Armenian refugees in Bakuba; he had learned from the Secretary of State for War, that they would not be repatriated till spring, and, in general, their fate was entirely humanitarian question, not a political one.<sup>26</sup>

With respect to Armenia and Turkey, A.Herbert envisioned two possible policies that might have been pursued: Turks could be told that they fought the Allies and committed atrocities in their country. England had won; and Turks were obliged to quit Constantinople.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, as early as on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1918, D.Lloyd George promised freedom for the Armenians, but present capital and Asia Minor were at that time called the homeland of the Turks. The second version led to no trouble in the area. However, the Prime Minister said neither of these two things. He delayed in signing peace treaty, that's why society was accumulating disadvantages of both possible, but unfinished policies.<sup>28</sup>

The next day Sir A.Steel-Maitland had reverted to the cost of the British war with Turkey. He had equated this sum with the amount spent up on A.Denikin, i. e.

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<sup>20</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.329.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., col.330.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., col.330-331.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., col.336.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., col.344-345.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., col.261.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., vol.122, col.428.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., vol.125, col.348.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., col.349.

to £100 million a year.<sup>29</sup> That was the cost of diplomatic ambages. Then, on February 16, J.Swan and J.Wedgwood asked in vain the head of the Cabinet, what steps in particular would be taken by the Allies to encourage the border states to come to agreements with Soviet power; and whether Britain would defend them, if these republics under her surveillance would begin war on Bolshevism.<sup>30</sup>

On the same February 16 A.Williams for the first time asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs C.Hardinge whether he has received news of the massacre of Armenians, organized by Nationalists in Marash on January 21 - February 11, 1920; and of two Americans, murdered on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February near Aintab.<sup>31</sup> H.Greenwood confirmed data adequacy; however, he could say nothing bearing protection against these continued outrages. T.P.O'Connor tried to extort, whether English and French authorities at the spot were not warned about impending massacre; whether they were not asked for armed support or provision for self-defense. These appeals were addressed to, and neglected by the authorities of both countries. Whether these assaults had not confirmed, continued the member of Parliament, "that none of the Christian subjects of Turkey, like the Armenians, [should] be any longer under the new arrangements with Turkey, be subjected to the possibility of massacre as in the past?"<sup>32</sup> Was "it not a fact, - continued A. Williams, - that Armenians went back // -24 to these districts under the encouragement of the British authorities?"<sup>33</sup> Both members of the British Armenia Committee had not got an answer. A bit later, and with the same result, R.Cecil by private notice had asked the Prime Minister whether it was true "that the Allies have decided to leave the Turks in possession of Constantinople and a large part of Armenia including Cilicia?"<sup>34</sup>

This enquiry had been made the next day after the resolution of the London conference, and at the same moment when this resolution was wired to the British Commissioner at Constantinople.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, A.Bonar Law alluded to a secrecy. This wording put his audience on its guard: victors were afraid of informing their deputies, the whole society and defeated enemy on dimensions of future losses. Meanwhile, members of the House of Commons openly claimed that saving of time reinforced the Nationalists much more than the Republic of Armenia. W. Ormsby-Gore mentioned that only the previous week 1,5 thousand people had been killed. His interlocutor did not see "how a discussion on a possible treaty was going to help" those, who were threatened by massacre.<sup>36</sup>

The next day A.Williams (in writing) and D.Maclean (verbally) made a quotation from the morning "Times" that 50-thousand troops of M.Kemal attacked the Armenians at Findijak, Zeitun and Frnouz, bringing the number of victims till

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<sup>29</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.401.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., col.502.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., col.503.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., col.504.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., col.520.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., col.1681.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., col.521.

7,000.<sup>37</sup> Events in the case had taken place 115 kilometers from the French troops at Alexandretta;<sup>38</sup> and on February 18 J.Wedgwood inquired about a prospect to take several British battleships from the Black Sea and send them to the Cilician coast, so as to save thousands of lives there.<sup>39</sup> First Lord of the Admiralty W.Long said no: his 12 battleships and one sloop should protect Batum.<sup>40</sup> In the course of discussion it turned out that the House desired to discuss the issue of Constantinople, which "of course linked up the Armenian question."<sup>41</sup> S.Hoare and Colonel P.Williams had addressed the head of the Cabinet inviting him to reassure the inviolability of all those pledges of freedom, which were given to Armenians and other Christian nations of the Turkish Empire. Were recent massacres and expulsions of Armenians sufficient reasons for leaving their districts under the Turkish sway? - joined his colleagues T.P.O'Connor. And of course, all Christians, which were to be left in former subjection, should be secured the right of carrying arms and protecting themselves, as part of the treaty, - insisted A.Williams.<sup>42</sup> //-25

As Leader of the House of Commons had narrated, following the tragedy of Marash, the British Commissioner at Constantinople was authorized to announce that the Great Powers meant no alteration in political affiliation of that city. However, "unless the massacres ceased, the decision of the Peace conference would probably be modified, to the detriment of Turkey."<sup>43</sup> W.Ormsby-Gore had specified that the massacre was being carried by detachments of M.Kemal, and heard of "connection between the Nationalist movement and the Turkish Government."<sup>44</sup> Wouldn't it be appropriate to announce the fate of metropolis form here, from the Parliament, demanded R.Cecil; after all, declaration at issue was cabled to the Viceroy of India just on the same February 18. It was at Constantinople alone that such announcement could prevent the massacres, his opponent retorted. Did this announcement really restrain Turks in the interior of the Empire, the matter is not revealed. However, it undoubtedly had appeased metropolitan folk and facilitated the landing operation, accomplished by Englishmen on March 16, 1920. And the fact, that later D.Lloyd George was not in a hurry to leave the Straits' zone and did his utmost to secure it for the British Empire, is beyond any doubt.

On February 19 the delegates reverted to the problems of A.Denikin. D. Lloyd George arrived at the House and notified all present that military supplies for the South Russia would be sent up to March 31<sup>st</sup>. As regards the Ottoman Empire, Britain spent for its occupation £3 million a month.<sup>45</sup> The Prime Minister had responded to interpellation on conditions of the Cilician Armenians by a request not to discuss that subject at once; and on February 23 Major R.Glyn brought the head of the Cabinet back to his Turkish policy once more. A.Bonar

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<sup>37</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.718.

<sup>38</sup> Now: Iskenderun.

<sup>39</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.865.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., col.866-867.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., col.867.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., col.868.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., col.869.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., col.1023, 1026.

Law had commented that the Government based itself on the Anglo-French declaration of November 8, 1918. Sir F.Hall specified that if that was the case, shouldn't they make arrangements for the surrender of Turkish war criminals? More so, since the Government Committee had drawn up four reports on the breaches of war laws.

This subject, had explained the Leader of the House, was to be incorporated as part of the Peace Treaty. Otherwise, nobody would surrender specific persons.<sup>46</sup> His remark meant that Turkey was not respecting the Mudros Armistice any more; and the Allies as a whole, including England, could do nothing about that. W. Ormsby-Gore attempted to precise anew, will the status of Constantinople be modified, if Turks continue to assault Armenians?<sup>47</sup> The reply was confirmative; although the legislator was reminded that England had been expressing the general opinion of all Allies.

Any pressure on the Turks, had noticed A.Herbert, was immediately creating danger for Armenians in Asiatic part of Empire, because they were the weakest and the least protected segment of society. A.Bonar Law had admitted that the Allied forces were insufficient to stabilize situation in the area.<sup>48</sup> "We do not know when peace with Turkey will be made," and what degree of consent it will command from the Ottoman society, added W.Churchill: "We do not know what aggressive action the Russian Bolsheviks may take in this sphere."<sup>49</sup> If we talk about strategy, amplified F.Acland, the British Empire has two solutions: to restrict itself to the Mesopotamian oil, or to expand till the Black Sea, the Caucasus, the Caspian and beyond, into Persia and Central Asia. To expand northward of this line was unreal. Could the Parliament "push [British] forces forward until they got into contact with the Bolsheviks, who [were] pressing around Caucasus?"<sup>50</sup> Such a task was beyond their strength, had confessed the talker.

New topic had appeared in the House debates on February 24. W.Ormsby-Gore tried to determine: did his Government give de facto recognition to the republics of Transcaucasia; and whether the boundaries of these States were fixed provisionally?<sup>51</sup> If it is so, he would like to see the corresponding map. Sir H. Greenwood advised that a telegram was sent to Yerevan on January 21. All three republics had their accredited representatives in London. They had provisionally defined the border lines between themselves; although "a great deal of territory was in dispute."<sup>52</sup> Regarding the map, it would be exhibited, showing approximately defined borders. J.Kenworthy had immediately asked about the attitude of his Government towards the Treaty of London, 1915, published by Bolsheviks. Had its text been accurate; and would Britain respect it? (The last circumstance implied

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<sup>46</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.1278.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., col.1279.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., col.1290.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., col.1346.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., col.1372.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., col.1467.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

that Italy should join in the partition of Ottoman Empire, too.)<sup>53</sup>

A. Bonar Law had validated the Treaty; and passed to the Russian question. Amenably to his report, the Allies had decided to convey to the Transcaucasian nations that their aggression or waging a war against Bolsheviks would be detrimental to the Republics at a spot. If, however, these Republics are attacked, they will be promised every possible support, although "commerce between Russia and the rest of Europe, which is so essential for the improvement of economic conditions... in the rest of the world, will be encouraged to the utmost degree."<sup>54</sup>

In a day, D. Maclean had repeated R. Cecil's question, "whether it was true that the Allies had decided to leave the Turks in possession of Constantinople // -27 and a large part of Armenia including Cilicia?"<sup>55</sup> May be yes, may be no - answered the Leader of the House. "We owe nothing to the Turks, - he continued. - They came into this War gladly with no provocation from us."<sup>56</sup> Every effort was made to prevent such a development; however, 10 years of German policy brought their results. "Probably it [was] no exaggeration to say that the alliance of the Turks with the Central Powers put a year or two on to the War. What happened, as a consequence, with regard to the alien races under Turkish domination? As soon as the Turks were reasonably certain that the menace of the British fleet need not be feared, in 1916 Talaat and Enver started, with, as far as I can gather, the glad acquiescence of the Kaizer, to massacre the Armenians. In round figures, about one million of them were swept out of human existence."<sup>57</sup> For generations past, the Ottoman Empire had dilapidated all subjugated peoples and withered the most beautiful regions of the world. And with entering into war "the Turkish Empire had committed suicide."<sup>58</sup>

In a dispatch with covering note to the United States the Foreign Secretary E. Gray had written: "A Turkish Government, controlled, subsidized and supported by Germany, has been guilty of massacres in Armenia and Syria more horrible than any recorded in the history of those unhappy countries. Evidently the interests of peace and the claims of nationality alike require that Turkish rule over alien races shall, if possible, be brought to an end."<sup>59</sup> D. Maclean concluded, that, since the genocide of Armenians, hostilities of the Turkish army and blocked up Straits had substantially prolonged the world war fighting, Turkish rule over the victimized nation must be brought to an end. Besides, the Straits should get some reasonable status.<sup>60</sup>

On the eve of the war, had returned E. Carson, we all knew that Russia was to gain foothold at the Straits. But who would take her place now? Who should drive the Turks out? If the situation becomes acute, it will pose new hazard to Armenians

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<sup>53</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.1485.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., col.1502.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., col.1949.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., col.1952. Similar appraisal by D. Lloyd George see: col.1998; speech by C. Oman: col.2026.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., col.1952. See also: col.2014, 2048.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., col.1952. Similar thesis by W. Ormsby-Gore: col.2008.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., col.1953.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., col.1954.



and will require to commence another, not a local war. Meanwhile, the Parliament demands to cut down the Army, though it would like to obtain Constantinople. And who could govern this city?<sup>61</sup> D.Lloyd George added that, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had freed the Allies from all their Russian commitments. The fact was not merely that the British were not ready to entrust the Straits to Bolsheviks. The fact was that they were not prepared to undertake such responsibility.<sup>62</sup> Meantime, the Prime Minister by no means backtracked on his pledge of December, 1919, that the sea "gates will never be closed by the //28 Turk in the face of a British ship again."<sup>63</sup> The Straits themselves should become internationalized and neutral. Though the USA was not included in a list of claimants to this area or upon the guardianship of the Armenians any more.<sup>64</sup>

Then, the head of the Cabinet used an interesting technique: as far as India had sent nearly 1,5 million volunteers into the Imperial Army, and without them the British "could not have conquered Turkey;" and as far as among them "there were Mahomedan divisions that fought brilliantly through the whole of the Turkish campaign,"<sup>65</sup> - now everybody ought to care for Ottoman adherents of Islam, who would lose more than half their Empire. At the same time, it was not mentioned that all losses covered those regions, which Britain took an interest in; and these losses very little protected or helped Armenians. Wasn't it, that according to D. Lloyd George's elucidation, only those areas would be freed now, where Greeks, Armenians or other communities had a majority of population.<sup>66</sup> And what depended on Cilicia, that issue was totally out of discussion.

At the same time, the subject of genocide was not concealed at all. The Prime Minister shared A.Williams's and R.Cecil's appraisals made by A.Williams and R. Cecil, that "every one of the Armenian massacres and other Turkish outrages has been carried out by direct orders from"<sup>67</sup> the Ottoman capital. What depends on assaults in 1896, added the head of the cabinet, "there was no doubt at all,"<sup>68</sup> where the orders came from. And perhaps the British fleet could prevent the Abdul Hamid's decree for the massacre. In this case, would the Turkish authorities order again "massacres and murders and outrages, Constantinople could be laid in ashes."<sup>69</sup> That was the main guarantee of safety for Armenians. What depended on liberty, it could be obtained only by separate, compactly residing communities.

Nevertheless, R.Cecil reminded, there is a great Armenian population in Cilicia. Meanwhile, its destiny remained obscure. And no one succeeded in finding out whether there was going to be an enlarged Republic of Armenia, or not. As to

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<sup>61</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.1956-1957. See also: col.2006, 2012.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., col.1959-1960.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., col.1960. See also: col.1967.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., col.1968.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., col.1964. See also: col.1983-1984, 2002; appreciation of General J.Seely: col.2047-2048; remark of C. Edwards: col.2057.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., col.1966. See also a statement of A.Bonar Law: col.2052.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., col.1969. See also speeches of T.P.O'Connor: col.1984-1985; W.Adamson: col.2018; A.Williams: col. 2030.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., col.1969.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., col.1970.

the talker himself, he had demanded a considerable expansion of border lines of the Republic, and its access to the Black Sea. Otherwise, it would have noticeable difficulty in living.<sup>70</sup> Besides, an outlet to the sea had also implied free access of the British fleet to the new State. What was more, the deputy had added that both Armenians and Greeks did not consider auditing // -29 of the capital to be an effective measure of their guard.<sup>71</sup> Who could pin his hopes on Western influence, if preceding centuries of that influence resulted in the genocide of 1915?<sup>72</sup> Formerly used methods will result in new assault, - asserted Sir Robert.

Still, if E.Carson with A.Bonar Law didn't believe in efficacy of the League of Nations concerning Ottoman problems, then R.Cecil, T.P.O'Connor, E.Winter-ton, W.Adamson, H.Nield, S.Hoare, J.Seely and J.Kenworthy would direct to this organization the future of the Straits.<sup>73</sup> Let's remark, that likewise the Armenian Question, the Straits' issue hadn't benefited of transition to the methods of multilateral diplomacy, too. At that, the latter of the listed deputies had noted, that Russia could not be ignored. Otherwise the sea route would lose its economic worth.

It is notable, that when estimating general alignment of forces, T.P.O'Connor pointed out a prevalence of Young Turks in the Sultan Cabinet; and a fact that they gave new orders to attack Armenians. Who would be consoled by the explanation that England could do nothing in 1896? The reluctance of Russia and the hostility of Germany had created an easy-to-use triangle for Abdul Hamid. The very same factors played their part in 1915. Hereafter, they could exert their ability, too.<sup>74</sup> England saved the Turkish regime "after the Crimean war; ...in 1878, and now we [were] saving [it] a third time, ...taking a very grave responsibility upon ourselves,"<sup>75</sup> - established the member of the House. - It was necessary to make "a really powerful, independent and autonomous Armenia."<sup>76</sup> This opinion had been supported by Lieutenant-Colonel W.Guinness and General H.Surtees. The first of them had drawn the audience's attention to the Turkish dominions in Asia. As this deputy had reported, Christians lived everywhere, but it was "only in the Eastern part of Armenia that they ever in recent times outnumbered the Moslems. The Armenian plateau, with its civilization, [was] to be united to Russian Armenia as the Republic of Erivan."<sup>77</sup> And as to Cilicia, it was detached for the French mandate.

Lieutenant-Colonel had learned at first hand that by 1920 Catholics, Jacobites, Chaldeans were living as slaves in Kurdish villages of Asia Minor and in the South of Empire. Besides, "before the War everywhere there were large numbers of Christians of the Armenian and the Greek race; they lived in their separate villages

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<sup>70</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.1971. See also speech of S.Hoare: col.2039.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., col.1980.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid..

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., col.1982, 1986, 2015, 2017-2018, 2028, 2041, 2043, 2045, 2054-2055, 2059.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., col.1985-1986. Similar opinion of Young Turks was expressed by S.Hoare: col.2040.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., col.1987.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., col.1988. See also: col.2019.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., col.1991.

and towns in the mountains of Cilicia."<sup>78</sup> W.Guinness, then A.Herbert and S.Hoare had reminded that Allies had never supervised inner districts; and "the control of the Central Turkish Government, owing to //30 the delay in the announcement of the Peace terms, [was] very rapidly decreasing."<sup>79</sup> To a certain extent, owing to this delay 17-thousandth contingent under M.Kemal gained a foothold in the interior and had already proved itself by the massacres in Marash, Hajin and Zeitun. As to the victors, they had so limited potentialities, that could not keep under their control anything but the railway line and would only watch manoeuvres of their adversary.<sup>80</sup>

We should hurry, had appealed the first deputy, otherwise the situation would be beyond control. "After the Armistice it would have been comparatively easy to ensure drastic reforms in Turkey,"<sup>81</sup> that's why it had been essential to collaborate with its War Office and to encourage Armenians to join Kemalists, - was heard in the House. As A.Williams objected to W.Guinness, England had announced it would yield in Constantinople issue on the very day after the Marash massacre.<sup>82</sup> Our adversary would take this announcement as a result of its attack. Meantime, he had been committing its assault just to intimidate the Allies. It had been heard at first about 15 hundred killed. Afterward it was 2,000 and 7,000. Then the deputy pointed to a telegram, he had obtained from A.Aharonian that crimes were going on. 20 thousands had already been slaughtered in the district of Marash, evacuated by the troops; the city of Adana was in imminent danger.<sup>83</sup> And now, after an attack, the Prime Minister seemed ready to declare that Armenians were not in a majority any more; and that Cilicia would not be separated. "We are not going to put a premium on clearing countries by means of massacre. The Christians in that part of the country... were the great majority and the Turks themselves were only about 15 per cent of the population, although the Moslems, as a whole, may have been about 30 per cent."<sup>84</sup>

"Neither in Cilicia, nor in the other part of Armenia do the Armenian people ask for any special privilege for men of their race," - continued A.Williams.<sup>85</sup> They asked for decent government and equality for all races and religions. Besides, they requested that "districts of Van and Erzerum, and others round about, should be attached to the Armenian Republic of Erivan, which is on what was formerly

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<sup>78</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.1991, 2002.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., col.1992.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., col.1992, 2002. See also: col.2040.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., col.1994.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., col.2032; including tragic march of the refugees from Marash to Islahie on February 11-14, 1920.

<sup>83</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.2033. See also: col.2040; reference of A.Williams to a telegram, sent from Alexandria on 24.04.1920 and offered him by the head of delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the London conference A.Aharonian: col.2061, D.Lloyd George's response: col.2062. Additional data is available in the memorandum by the Chief British Commissioner in Transcaucasia J.Wardrop of 7.03.1920: The Republic of Armenia. The National Archives (Yerevan), fund 200, register 1, file 556, part 1, folio 29 (following: NAA).

<sup>84</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.2034.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

Russian territory."<sup>86</sup> These people need "that the two great //31 fortresses, of Erzerum and Erzinka,<sup>87</sup> which are distinctly Armenian places, should be made part of the new Armenia."<sup>88</sup> Passing ahead of Armenian proposals and memoranda, submitted to the Foreign Office on March 8 and 20; A.Williams correctly pointed out that the Republic of Armenia invited British military advisers of the higher rank; while it provided sufficient personnel of soldiers and gendarmerie. Noteworthy, that in memorandum by G.Korganian, written somewhat later, in March, he stated that Army of the Republic of Armenia needed foreign specialists only in the Air Forces, motor detachments and at wireless telegraphy. It could accept artillerymen only in the case if new, modern guns would arrive with them. Therefore, advisers were invited merely to join the War Ministry and to serve as observers in acting forces, so that the aforesaid units would not be charged of war crimes.<sup>89</sup>

And second, A.Williams had been talking about historical obligations of England and France towards the Armenian nation from 1853-1856 on. He had reminded how the French asked Armenians to provide volunteers for recent fighting, not in Cilicia but in Palestine. During negotiations Foreign Ministry of this country pledged to liberate Armenia, and "that pledge, he believed, existed today still in writing."<sup>90</sup> Only four days before R.Cecil had reminded Boghos Nubar that the latter did not have any written document at his disposal.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, retrial, made by his colleague, could scarcely be assumed as an isolated instance. //32

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On March 4 members of the House adverted to the violations of the war laws. H.Greenwood informed the audience that from March 29 till September 21, 1919, seventy-eight Turkish war criminals had been deported to Malta; they were charged with being implicated in massacres and the cruel treatment of British prisoners of war.<sup>92</sup> D.Maclean, Major D.Davies, A.Williams and T.P.O'Connor questioned the Prime Minister about the state of affairs with regard to protection of Armenian population against further outrages. The latter had referred to the Conference's decision of appropriate obligations of France.<sup>93</sup> Henceforth, when General H.Surtees cast doubt on validity of their anxiety, D.Lloyd George answered, that all evidence as to the danger was really valid.<sup>94</sup>

Four days later, when His majesty King George V was receiving the Patriarch of Constantinople Zaven, R.Cecil asked in the House of Commons, what exactly had been doing for Armenians. He had heard that French reinforcements and fleet

<sup>86</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.2034.

<sup>87</sup> In the text: Erzngan, now: Erzinjan.

<sup>88</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.1991, 2034.

<sup>89</sup> NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 556, pt.1, fol.151-153.

<sup>90</sup> Hansard, vol.125, col.1991, 2035.

<sup>91</sup> Ահարոնյան Ա., Սարդարապատից մինչեւ Սեւր եւ Լոզան: Քաղաքական օրագիր 1919-1927: Եր., ԵՊՀ, 2001, էջ 55:

<sup>92</sup> Hansard, vol.126, col.612.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., col.633-634, 744.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., col.635.

had been sent to Cilicia. However, the greater part of the Allied fleet did not leave the Straits and was not advancing to easy-accessible Mersin.<sup>95</sup> T.P.O'Connor had made it certain, whether the head of the Cabinet had received the latest telegram from Marash.<sup>96</sup> It was dispatched from the Patriarchate of Constantinople on February 25 and sent to the chief of the Government in the Boghos Nubar's letter of February 27.<sup>97</sup> The Prime Minister had acknowledged its receipt, as well as his awareness of the facts it contained. It is notable, that when his Secretary of State for War responded, what was the death-rate among the British prisoners of war in different countries, it proved to be 38,4% in Turkey, 8,4% in Germany and 5,2% in Austria.<sup>98</sup>

On March 9 Major D.Davies raised anew the issue of safety for Armenians. In the reply to his question what was the date of the last massacre, A.Bonar Law had not revealed any knowledge of events in Urfa, which was withstanding a siege at the moment.<sup>99</sup> The Leader of the House had neither been able to //19 answer the queries on March 10, when deputies demanded about the Turkish peace treaty, the future of Kurds and about general losses of genocide in the Ottoman Empire during World war. On March 11 Captain C.Coote, W.Ormsby-Gore and T.P.O'Connor tried to specify the role of the Turkish Government in unceasing annihilation of Armenians. The second deputy had directly pointed out M.Kemal's connections with the Young Turks, Constantinople's parliament and its Ministry of War.<sup>100</sup> For his turn, J.Tudor-Rees had been asking the Prime Minister without result, how exactly the burning of Marash would effect the Allies' position regarding Constantinople and if anything had been done to prevent further offences.<sup>101</sup> Coming one day ahead of resolution of the London conference, R.Cecil tried to find out whether it wouldn't be worth to raise the mandate matter before the Council of the League of Nations. He had heard from D.Lloyd George that mandates were already distributed in the summer of 1919 in Paris; and now it remained to define their final terms.<sup>102</sup>

Meanwhile, everyone for a long time knew that the USA as a nominated mandatory refused on November 19, 1919, to join the League of Nations. The next vote on mandates in the Senate had been scheduled for March 19. Besides, when they talked about build-up of armaments, for example, for Air Forces, or spoke for other attractive projects, the deputies immediately recalled Armenians and started to worry about them. The Air Forces, - announced General J.Seely and C.Bellairs, - could reach the interior of Cilicia with a range of 300 miles (480 km.). "Thousands of Armenian lives could have been saved."<sup>103</sup> With all this, they seemed to forget that on February 18 J.Wedgwood already demanded to dispatch

<sup>95</sup> Hansard, vol.126, col.892-893.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., col.894.

<sup>97</sup> NAA, fund 430, reg.1, file 1049, fol.2-4.

<sup>98</sup> Hansard, vol.126, col.927.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., col.1121.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., col.1511.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., col.1534.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., col.1535.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., col.1601. See also: col.1603, 1605, 1643.

the Navy to the shores of Cilicia, but had been refused by the First Lord of the Admiralty. On March 11 the Secretary of State for War W.Churchill carried on the course of his colleague; he complained of great intermixture of the Armenian and Turkish population. In his opinion, their close juxtaposition led to frequent massacres, though it strongly prevented the air bombings.<sup>104</sup> At the same time, he had no objection to application of the Air Forces in Palestine, Egypt and Mesopotamia.

J.Kenworthy and W.Benn had rejoined that lake Van or the Republic of Erivan didn't yield at all to the mentioned areas. As to Adana, it was easily accessible from the coast.<sup>105</sup> The first deputy conveyed a complaint of his interlocutor from the Republic of Armenia, that "if one-tenth of the expenditure that has been lavished and wasted in Russia had been used to support the //20 Armenians, we should have had none of those massacres and outrages."<sup>106</sup> Besides, the Air Forces could operate against the military camps of M.Kemal, which were accessible from the Black Sea shores; and Trebizond is located much nearer to the Western Armenia than the Straits are. Otherwise all disputes over new expenditures manifested ferocious militarism. The Ottoman territories, H.Barnes continued, had always been an apple of discord. And "it would not be unfair to presume that probably the real cause of the War was the determination of the German Empire to obtain supremacy in this part of the world."<sup>107</sup> As far as at the current situation Great Britain had neither rivals, nor might to control all accessible to her regions, it had to be better to delegate control and responsibility to the League of Nations.<sup>108</sup>

On the eve of the British occupation of Constantinople, on March 15, A.T. Davies, E.Winterton and A.Williams appealed to the Parliament with new interpellations on Marash; in that connection the third deputy had reminded that at the time of British occupation its Commanders required to disarm local inhabitants.<sup>109</sup> The Prime Minister had responded that detachments, camped at Bosphorus, had been increased significantly. R.Cecil had complained that the Minister representing the Foreign Office at the Parliament rejected both the Kemalists' plot to annihilate Marash, and their connections with the Government of Sultan. Meantime, the very same day, on March 11, head of the Foreign Office G.Curzon stated, that "the trouble in Cilicia was part of a definite Nationalist program directed in the interest of the Young Turk Party, designed with the object of seizing any occasion for massacring the Armenians, and that there has been a constant interchange of communications between the Capital and the Nationalist Forces in Asia Minor, and that Mustapha Kemal, as official governor of Erzerum, was a link between Constantinople and Asia."<sup>110</sup>

It would be proper to add, that on March 16, the very day of occupation of

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<sup>104</sup> Hansard, vol.126, col.1621.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., col.1638, 1644. See also opinion of M.Kemal, expressed by J.Seely on March 18: col.2445.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., col.1639. See also: Ibid., vol.127, col.159.

<sup>107</sup> Hansard, vol.126, col.1653.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., col.1653-1654.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., col.1804.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., col.1810.

Constantinople, in the response to the direct question for D.Lloyd George if he would make a statement in the House on the Turkish question, A.Bonar Law responded that he could not add anything.<sup>111</sup> The Government did not "contemplate any use of force at this moment."<sup>112</sup> At that time, British army of the Black Sea comprised of 24,5 thousand men.<sup>113</sup> It was noteworthy that importance of the Straits had been stressed at the days, when they had been losing Batum and had known about A.Denikin's withdrawal from Ekaterinodar. It was also remarkable, that being deprived of the capability to control Baku, they started to specify their Persian oil interests. //-21

Next day after the occupation and concurrently with the Kemalists' ultimatum, addressed to the defenders of Hajin, A.Williams raised a question as to conditions in that city.<sup>114</sup> Couldn't we help these people, if they are not protected by French, - the deputy worried. Sir H.Greenwood expressed his confidence, that the French forces did everything they could. And H.Asquith had been interested what exactly was happening on Bosphorus. "In consequence of the atrocities which have occurred in Anatolia and of the hostile attitude, persisted in by the Turkish forces and authorities,"<sup>115</sup> - A.Bonar Law explained, - we were forced to capture this city. It would be seized till the Turks duly executed the terms of the Peace treaty; and if they commit new outrages against the Christians, the terms of the peace would be made more severe.<sup>116</sup> D.Lloyd George added, that only the Allies would determine the future of the taken away Ottoman territories. This phrase gave concern, as far as Cilicia was not protected and there was no one to detach the ruined Western Armenia away from the Empire.

On March 22 T.P.O'Connor reverted to the situation in Hajin and to the debility of the French forces.<sup>117</sup> C.Harmsworth had referred to the report, drawn up by R.Cecil the very same day; he had promised to make inquiries and then to give an account. General J.Davidson added, that Allies' activity would not disturb Kemalist detachments in the interior of Anatolia.<sup>118</sup> His colleague General G. Cockerill made it certain, that comparing with 1914, British forces had increased after the war by 20 thousand men. When useful, growth of the military expenditures had been immediately justified by the necessity to defend Armenians<sup>119</sup> and peace on the planet by means of the League of Nations. Creation of the League was interpreting precisely as a necessity to increase military personnel, as far as collective security demanded additional efforts.<sup>120</sup> W.Ormsby-Gore had supplemented, that such a task implied intervention and elaboration of tactical schemes all over the world. The deputy had remarked large sums, fixed at the budget for the

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<sup>111</sup> Hansard, vol.126, col.2016.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., col. 2041.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., col.2200-2201.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., col.2211.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., col.2215.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., vol.127, col.51-52.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., col.94.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., col.132-133, 154-156.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., col.96-97, 107, 110, 127.

Near East; he had asked at once, what was the specific purpose to keep a battalion of imperial Indian troops in Adana.<sup>121</sup>

W.Ormsby-Gore noted both a bulk of weapons in the area, and anarchy, evoked by so long conduct of negotiations for the Treaty. The deputy appealed: "We shall not attempt to take up more than we can chew."<sup>122</sup> It was true, that Armenians of the Diarbekir province were in peril. "Let us supply them with arms and the means of self-defense, but do not let us make promises to them // -22 unless we are prepared to send the necessary military force to them to protect them."<sup>123</sup> The deputy proposed to keep the British garrison in Batum instead of Diarbekir, and laid stress on stabilizing role of the first. Lieutenant-Colonel W.Guinness seconded his colleague: M.Kemal could not be quelled without application of force; and that might require reinforcements and common efforts of the whole Cabinet.<sup>124</sup>

Peoples, which turned out to be at the break-up of the Turkish and the Russian Empires, [first of all - Armenians], had fall a prey to actions that we completed in the past, - A.Williams developed this subject. "The troops which were stationed in the caucasus ought never to have been withdrawn... There has been a great deal of fighting between the three new States of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, which might have been prevented, and would have been, I think, if our troops had been kept there doing what was practically police duty."<sup>125</sup> British regular troops were substituted for military missions, subordinated to the Foreign Office, - A. Williams continued. They were sent "to guide, and in some sense, control those three States and bring about peace between them, and arrange differences as to frontiers and make treaties of arbitration one with the other. It is through the influence of those British officers that to some extent good results have been brought about. I earnestly hope we shall see more British officers in those three States, because I am quite sure if serious bloodshed is to be avoided, it is absolutely necessary that there should be some power there or somebody with great influence to guide those new States."<sup>126</sup>

We can add, that border arbitration had been nonrandom topic in the British Parliament. In parallel with formation of the Armenian-Turkish boundary, on March 5 J.Wardrop enquired A.Khatisian from Tiflis, what kind of the Caucasian frontiers was acceptable for the Republic of Armenia;<sup>127</sup> and leaders of Armenian delegations in London had informed D.Lloyd George that their State was ready to admit military and civil advisers.<sup>128</sup> In order to influence the border issue, on March 12 G.Curzon transmitted in London a letter for A.Aharonian; it charged Armenians with use of violence against Tartars in the Republic of Armenia. Three

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<sup>121</sup> Hansard, vol.127, col.102.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., col.104.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., col.118.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., col.154-155.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. col.155.

<sup>127</sup> NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 556, pt.1, fol.42-43, 46.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., fund 430, reg.1, file 1050, fol.4.



days later Boghos Nubar sent to the head of the Foreign Office and to D.Lloyd George denial of this accusations;<sup>129</sup> and on March 18 he received an answer,<sup>130</sup> that Britain was ready to furnish Armenia with arms. The next day leaders of two Armenian delegations and H.Khan Massehian decided to offer to the London conference arbitration of the // -23 Transcaucasian border lines.<sup>131</sup>

On the same March 19 "The Times" published an article with a figure of 198 damaged Tartar villages in Armenia.<sup>132</sup> And on March 20 G.Korganian submitted to the secretariat of the Conference already mentioned memorandum on "Activities of the foreign military mission in the Republic of Armenia." Simultaneously, "The Times" printed an article on the threath of massacre for Hajin, Urfa, Birejik, and Aintab,<sup>133</sup> together with the text of Turkish-Azerbaijan military convention.<sup>134</sup> At last, on March 23 A.-M.Topchibashev met, at his desire, with A.Aharonian, Boghos Nubar and H.Khan Massehian in London,<sup>135</sup> learning their opinion on arbitration issue. And on the same March 23, responding to the English blames, Azerbaijan forces in common with irregular bands, massacred Shushi; from 8, up to 9 thousand of souls were killed in its clashes.<sup>136</sup> Along with this city, 40 villages had been annihilated, too.<sup>137</sup> Notwithstanding this fact, on March 26 A.Khatisian sent a letter to J.Wardrop, which contained Caucasian frontiers of the Republic of Armenia; he had noted that the border line should embrace Kazakh, Zangezour and the great part of Karabagh.<sup>138</sup>

What depended on the British Parliament, here J.Kenworthy continued debates on March 22. He called to enlarge the Army, because "we had a peace to end peace; such Peace Treaties as we seem likely to have are not Peace Treaties at all, but unless they are modified, means to lead stright to another war,"<sup>139</sup> - proclaimed the Colonel. "The cause of unrest in Turkey is simply owing to the delay in the Peace Treaty given to the Turkish representatives who went to

<sup>129</sup> NAA, fund 430, reg.1, file 1047, fol.12.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., file 1050, fol.14.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., fund 200, reg.1, file 290, fol.83.

<sup>132</sup> "Times," Lnd., 19.03.1920, stored at: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 427, pt.1, fol.146. A.Aharonian's account of this article for A.Khatisian see in: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 290, pt.1, fol.81.

<sup>133</sup> "Times," Lnd., 20.03.1920, stored at: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 427, pt.1, fol.147.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. A.Aharonian's account of this article for A.Khatisian: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 290, pt.1, fol.91. Another article with the similar content see in: "Times," Lnd., 26.03.1920, stored at: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 427, pt.1, fol. 155. Inquiry regarding this convention was made at the 2<sup>nd</sup> conference of the republics of Transcaucasia in Tiflis on 16.04.1920: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 576, fol.3.

<sup>135</sup> NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 290, pt.1, fol.89-90.

<sup>136</sup> See the telegram by A.Khatisian for J.Wardrop and other representatives of the Allies in Tiflis, dispatched a week later: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 486, pt.2, fol.143. Intelligence news summary of 5. 04.1920 on activities of the official Baku: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 427, pt.2, fol.250-250 reverse. Protests of the Armenian delegation at the 2<sup>nd</sup> conference of the republics of Transcaucasia in Tiflis on 17, 19.04.1920 see: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 576, fol.5 rev. - 7 rev., 11 rev.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., file 576, fol.4 rev.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., file 556, pt.1, fol.62. On the similar position of the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia in Yerevan and of A.Aharonian in London see accordingly: NAA, fund 200, reg.1, file 486, pt.2, fol.140-141 and file 290, pt.1, fol. 90.

<sup>139</sup> Hansard, vol.127, col.159.

Paris."<sup>140</sup> "The Armenians had always asked for means of self-defence, however, the British "were so engaged in interfering with other countries, which did not want [them], that [they] left the // -24 Armenian problem alone, and failed in [their] duty there."<sup>141</sup> Hence. A lot of people were suffering.

Rejecting his words, W.Churchill conveyed, that with the spring warning Bolsheviks would arrive at the borders of "the doubtful Republics of Azerbaijan and Georgia," and would come into contact with the Kemalists.<sup>142</sup> Even so, it was not excluded that they would prefer an opportunity to propagate their ideology to territories. The next day, on March 23, A.Buckley enquired, to what extent British military stores in the South Russia were valuable. W.Churchill answered that they were of considerable value;<sup>143</sup> although munitions for the Armenian Army had been conveyed neither from there nor from Constantinople, but from London.

As regards the defeat of A.Denikin, N.Maclean consoled the presents: Soviet Russia needed rails, locomotives and goods of every description. This merchandise would be helpful in its development and was profitable for England.

Adverting to the matter of Cilicia, General H.Surtees had unsuccessfully attempted to clear out the role of the Oriental legion; and whether the French had not provoked Turkish assaults in Marash, when they hoisted their flag over the citadel. On March 24 J.Kenworthy proceeded with this issue; he had been interested in capability of Greece to exert pressure on the Western flank, and to what extent Great Britain was prepared to assist such an operation. A.Bonar Law answered him: "We have come under no obligation of any kind."<sup>144</sup>

Instead, from September of 1919, the State had assumed an obligation to sustain its foreign commerce. Now British exporters could sell their wares by installments, spreading accounts over 3 years. 80% of commodity's cost was paid them back by the Treasury at once. For his turn, purchaser should make a deposit and pay annual interest. Taking into account, that this scheme was applicable to the Southern-Eastern areas of Russia, C.Malone proposed to recognize Republics of Transcaucasia de jure, and then to allot credits not to individual exporters, but to the Governments of these States.<sup>145</sup> His discourse was of practical significance, because forms of the payment by the Republic of Armenia for the British weapons were discussed at the same time.

On March 25 J.Kenworthy interpellated, if A.Denikin had parleyed with Georgia and Azerbaijan (with Armenia he did negotiate); and whether British employees participated in adjustment of Caucasian disputes. It had been revealed, that representatives of A.Denikin worked with all regional Governments.

Afterwards, A.Williams reverted deputies' attention to the fate of Christian women and children in Turkish harems; and also to the possibility to protect people of diverse races in the Ottoman Asia. "There is no part of the world in which the

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<sup>140</sup> Hansard, vol.127, col.159.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., col.186.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., col.268. See also: col.1920.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., col.401.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., col.564.

continuance of unsettlement is more pregnant with trouble and even //25 with danger,"<sup>146</sup> - H.Asquith replied and immediately centered their dispute on Europe. The continuance of the Ottoman rule here had been called a dangerous anachronism. "The control of the Straits... is no longer to be in the hands" of this Empire. "I think it is an open secret, - the man, who was the Prime Minister in 1908-1916 confessed, - that His Majesty's Government for a long time, almost up to the end, were in favor of the actual expulsion of the Turk from Constantinople."<sup>147</sup>

That confession was in sharp contrast with the statements, reverberant before the occupation of the city. It serves an argument for submission to the readers my conclusion about gravity of the British intentions towards the zone of Bosphorus. After all, H.Asquith added, Moslem sentiment in India was a matter of secondary importance. "The Sultan joined the Central Powers in this War without justification, and indeed without provocation."<sup>148</sup> It had led the Empire to well-deserved defeat; and Caliph could not escape his share of liability. The more, since the Allies had agreed to internationalize and to neutralize the Straits.

Afterwards, the orator turned to the future status of Armenia and to the matter of its border delimitation. H.Asquith asked, where exactly did Armenian or Christian population preponderate in Cilicia after the recent massacres? Actually, what was wanted, was "a liberal extension westwards, and perhaps south-westwards, of the present limits of the new Republic of Erivan; and at the same time, though I am afraid it is not in a position to stand entirely upon its own legs and to live entirely upon its own resources, the provision for that Republic of more effective means of self defence."<sup>149</sup> Giving proper weight to terrible events of 1915 and of January-February of 1920, weapons and European officers should be dispatched without delay, otherwise "the recurrence of massacre and outrage [would be] only a question of time."<sup>150</sup> Meanwhile, the ex-Premier told that military and political strategy compelled to advance to the shores of the Black and Caspian seas.

In response to this speech, his successor D.Lloyd George had reminded validity of reason, why the British waited for specification of the US position. Wasn't it that the United States were offered to undertake a trusteeship of all Armenians, Cilicia included; to guard Constantinople and the Straits; and to execute control over the Turkish authorities throughout the Asia Minor.<sup>151</sup> President of the USA had asked to wait till August-September of 1919. However, it had been March of 1920 already; and "the delay had undoubtedly aggravated unrest in Turkey and had intensified the whole of our difficulties //26 there."<sup>152</sup> Till now, the Cabinet preferred to deteriorate the situation but not to worsen relations. Meanwhile Armenian population was much scattered. "There is only one part of

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<sup>146</sup> Hansard, vol.127, col.640.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., col.641.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., col.643.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., col.644.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., col.656.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., col.657.

Turkey where you can say that the Armenians are in the majority. By no principle of self-determination can you add to the Republic of Armenia territories like Cilicia."<sup>153</sup> The operating Premier was of the opinion, that after recent massacres at Marash Kemalists gravely upset the balance of population for benefit of Moslem inhabitants.

He had produced for retorting H.Asquith figures of 130 thousands of Armenians, 36 thousands of Greeks and 18 thousands of other inhabitants of Cilicia in opposition to 548 thousands of Moslems there.<sup>154</sup> His opponent called these proportions unbelievable and not conceivable. After several reservations D.Lloyd George added that now the Armenians, and the Christians in general, had become a minority. Hence, they could not be granted self-government without strict control. In the reply to A.Williams's interpellation, whether it was possible to recognize the majority created by the massacres, head of the Cabinet retorted, that he ought to proceed from the facts as they were; although he "had no doubt that the horrible massacre upset the balance of population."<sup>155</sup> The USA had not accepted responsibility; and Britain "cannot police the whole world."<sup>156</sup> It was true that their Empire possessed navy; however, such a service cost considerably; this was defined as the main trouble with regard to Cilicia. Therefore, England ought to content itself with control in the Straits area.

At the same time, the head of the Cabinet passed over in silence, that 200 thousand ready to move refugees had gathered on the shores of Bosphorus alone. Let's also remark, that Cilicia had been rejected its Armenian identity not before, but after the landing operation in Constantinople; also the latter was carried out with the alleged aims to punish for Marash and to help survivors.

We can not give any pledges that we would sent forces into Anatolia, - continued the spokesperson. "With regard to the Republic of Erivan, which is Armenian, it depends entirely on the Armenians themselves, whether they protect their independence. They must do so; they must begin to depend upon themselves."<sup>157</sup> The Republic of Armenia could draft an army of 40 thousands of men; and British would "be very happy to assist in equipping their army,"<sup>158</sup> including advisor-officers. Whereas continuous appeals and applications provoked Turks to new crimes. Afterwards the Prime Minister went on to the points of Mosul and the League of Nations, but R.Cecil had turned to Cilicia again. The situation there had deteriorated badly, because "the Turks shot down so many of the Armenians that there no longer was a majority or even an // -27 equality."<sup>159</sup> for them. This region could not be handed back to Turkey. Such a solution would urge the Kemalists to put an end to the Armenian presence there. His critic made a reference to the League, which would protect Armenians, once again. Sir Robert tried to concretize

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<sup>153</sup> Hansard, vol.127, col.659.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., col.660.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., col.661.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., col.669.

this reference; he proposed that League could collect money from all its members. After all, to leave Cilicia completely unaided meant to evoke disaster there. He himself compared this region with Mesopotamia.

A.Murray had broken into a debate. He could not understand why they should expect for the US participation after the month of October, 1919, when this country had refused the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations with its mandate system. The deputy concurred with H.Asquith, that his Empire had to establish Georgia and Azerbaijan as firmly as possible and to create an independent Armenia in order to fortify its own positions in Mesopotamia. Nevertheless, ascertained J.Kenworthy, in spite of promises made in the past, "we have nothing left now for the Armenians."<sup>160</sup> Great Britain could not afford anything to help them. The language of the Prime Minister with regard to his speech, had aroused T.P.O'Connor's misgiving; wasn't it that the Armenians themselves preferred the European control of Cilicia to Constantinop;e. "One cannot see how a people should be willing to regard a butchery, which makes a minority still more a minority as a justification for a continuance of the rule of the people responsible for the butchery."<sup>161</sup> Leaders of the British Empire had substituted the Treaty of Berlin for the Treaty of San Stephano and exposed the Armenians to new butchery, - T.P. O'Connor continued; - and responsibility for this nefarious policy rests with our country .

After a short adjournment, A.Hailwood examined on March 29, if the British promises to allot weapons to the Republic of Armenia were in force; and the next day A.Williams interpellated about Hajin. He investigated, if the French recommended to evacuate the women and children from there without suitable escort; if they didn't direct a detachment to the city, thus leaving its inhabitants to their fate; and whether Armenians enrolled volunteers, although all communications out of Adana were severed since March 19; and whether women and children were moved from Sis to Adana, while the fights were taking place in its vicinities. Besides, what steps would be taken by his British Government, as far as large numbers of refugees were sent back to Cilicia by its efforts?

C.Harmsworth replied, that the nearest French forces were at Marash, 80 kilometers distant of Hajin; situation at the second city caused anxiety, but no definite menace existed at the moment. Besides, the French could not dispatch protectors, but they addressed the proper demands to the Turkish Government at Constantinople. A.Williams added that he had received several hours ago terrible news about inactivity of the French Command and about further spread of massacres. Would the Porte be told that, in accordance with our warnings, they were going to lose Constantinople for the continuous extermination of Armenians? Reminding, what arguments in particular were used to substantiate the seizure of the Straits, deputy tried to clarify the whole pattern; however, he had heard that territory of Cilicia was outside the jurisdiction of English authorities.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Hansard, vol.127, col.711.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., col.718.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., col.1091-1093, 1341.

At the same time, envoys from Hajin, city where 5-7-storeyed buildings were raised, reached on March 5 Adana to plead for help. Group, headed by the Archbishop P.Sarajian, had informed that 8 thousands of Armenian lives were under threat. On March 9 these people, who elected K.Chalian their chief, already found themselves in close siege. Although they did not possess French troops, and hence Kemalists had no argument to ground their attack, on March 17 dwellers of Hajin received an ultimatum. On April 1-12 they went into fierce actions. Led by S. Jebejian and Kaitzak Aram (Terzian), 1200 participants of self-defense repulsed the enemy attacks on April 30, May 20-23, June 8-9, 25 and on July 11-13. On September 20 they even organized successful counter-attack. Hajin managed to remain intact till October 14-15; nevertheless, none of the Allies had sent him reinforcement. As a result, 6 thousands of persons were massacred without distinction to their sex and age. Only 378 members of defense managed to break apart the ring of death and come out of encirclement.

On March 31 A.Williams talked once again of ruined Marash, and of imminent danger for Aintab and Hajin. He cited data which came within the last two days and applied to the founded by dwellers of Hajin and massacred village Shar.<sup>163</sup> The deputy reported that thousands of Armenians were asking arms of the French to go and relieve the people besieged. He had read a letter from Adana, dated March 10; it testified the planned character of Turkish actions. Taking this city in a semi-circle, drawn from Selefke till Islahie and cutting the railway in several places, organized into bands the regular military moved towards the metropolis of Cilicia. Only giving arms to the Armenian population could give some hope, but "what [had] happened in the past, caused... the greatest possible anxiety as to what would happen in the immediate future."<sup>164</sup> Wasn't it, that without guard of mountainous Cilicia there was no way to provide safety for Mediterranean districts. Meanwhile, having sent on insufficient number of troops, the French didn't cooperate with native Christians. A.Williams warned that at the next session they could "hear that 10,000 people had been massacred at Hajin or... somewhere else, that possibli Adana itself was seized."<sup>165</sup>

He reminded that in November of 1919, when the British handed over Cilicia to the French, they had not asked consent of the native population. R.Cecil //-29 had assisted the statement, made by A.Williams. Sir Robert had mentioned, that Armenians fought in the French Army because they obtained a pledge to be liberated from the Ottoman yoke.<sup>166</sup> The Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs C.Harmsworth responded that telegrams and information, cited by A. Williams, were "usually ample and extraordinarily accurate."<sup>167</sup> And though the cabinet shared deputy's anxiety, "whatever [their] past obligations might have been, to individual Armenians in Cilicia, or large bodies of Armenians for that

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<sup>163</sup> Hansard, vol.127, col.1341.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., col.1342.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., col.1343.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., col.1345.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., col.1349.

matter,"<sup>168</sup> at the present situation he had no power to be able to help inhabitants.

Colonel H.Greig had reminded him, that there were two Armenias. The Northern one probably would be made independent and autonomous; as to Cilicia, it had been transferred to France and should have nothing to do with the other Armenians. C.Harmsworth approved the suggested wording. He had accepted that the French were not in a position to repulse the Kemalists' attacks, but had promised retaliatory measures in the Straits.

After the adjournment, the Parliament resumed its work on April 12. The London conference had just come to an end; and on April 14 H.Asquith saw it off with several noteworthy avowals. He had announced, that it was exactly the British pro-Turkish policy of 1913, which urged Bulgaria to join the enemy coalition; while Turkey could not receive German munitions of war without Bulgaria and was not able to keep Gallipoli during the war.<sup>169</sup> It meant that Britons antagonized potential ally, so as to reinforce an adversary of Entente at the precious for them Turkish flank. And they, of course, intended "to punish" after the war, this, discontented by their efforts State, for its unwarranted joining the Central Powers.

As a result, we may generalize that members of British Parliament gave publicity to many notable facts and political confessions at their sessions of February - April, 1920. First of all, their debates testified extensive and very unbounded utilization of the Armenian Question, which was easily recalled, when deputies had to ground an increase of Army manpower or military expenditure, occupation of Constantinople or to justify annexation of the Straits. At the same time, numerous speeches on Cilicia and on distress of Armenians, who repatriated there with assistance of the Allies, did not lead to any definite actions. Desperate situation in Cilicia was used as a pretext for occupation of Constantinople; afterwards this country was left to its cruel fate and to openly admitted feebleness of the French Command. Equally, Britons made no secret, that they reinforced independent Republic of Armenia against Soviet rule at a time, when military potential of White troops was exhausted.

As such, Parliamentary debates had been giving an opportunity to make scores of useful political observations, which were worthy of notice in 1920; and merit attention now. //-30

### Summary

Debates at the British Parliament in February-April of 1920 testify quite unbound manipulations with the Armenian Question on a large scale. It had been commonly recalled to minds when increase in the Army strength or in the military expenditures, occupation of Constantinople or justification of the Straits' annexation should be proved. At the same time, plentiful speeches on Cilicia and distress of Armenians, who returned there at request and with assistance of the Allies, did not lead to appropriate measures. Terrible ordeal, underwent by Cilicia, was merely a pretext to occupy Constantinople, afterwards it was abandoned to its fate and openly confessed helplessness of the French Commandment. British did not

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<sup>168</sup> Hansard, vol.127, col.1349.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., col.1707.

conceal that they strove to reinforce an independent Republic of Armenia with the anti-Soviet purpose. Besides, it was done at a moment when military potential of the White Armies had been already exhausted. As such, the Deputies' statements contain many useful political observations, which deserved attention in 1920, and do deserve it nowadays. //-31

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