

American University of Armenia — Celebration

The establishment of the American University of Armenia has been acknowledged as an important project by various representatives of the U.S. government. Senator Paul Simon, in a letter to Mr. Bury Zorlian, Central Board member of the AGBU and member of the Board of Trustees of the American University of Armenia Corporation (AUAC), writes: "The American University of Armenia sounds precisely like what is needed, and I want to be of help." In the month of October, the University received Mr. Cesar Boltran and Ms. Immi Gourell, Cultural Attache and Exchanges Officer, respectively, of the Embassy of the United States in Moscow, who came specially to Yerevan to visit the University. Mr. Boltran said: "I have heard of many projects being planned or talked about, in the Soviet Union, but here is the only American educational institution of higher learning that is in existence in this part of the world, and it is flourishing beyond our expectations."

Ms. Judith Latham, Current Affairs Officer of the U.S. Information Agency, after interviewing Dr. Mihran Aghabian, the President of the University, for a Voice of America broadcast, said: "American-style universities are catching on in formerly communist areas of the world. With the opening of the American University of Armenia and the American University of Bulgaria, students in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe will have access to their own institutions of higher learning, fashioned on an American model."

These observations support President Bush's declared policy of providing long term assistance to the Republic of the Soviet Union as they embark on the restructuring of their economic and social programs. These declarations are also supported by members of the government of Armenia.

REMARKS BY ARMENIAN GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

At a reception and celebration of the establishment of the American University of Armenia that was held on October 28, 1991 in the auditorium of the University, where more than 700 persons were present, Mr. Gagik Haroutunian, the newly elected vice president of the Republic of Armenia and former deputy president of the Parliament, declared: "In the entire Soviet Union, Armenia is setting the stage for educational reform by establishing the American University of Armenia. We believe that by looking to this University as it develops its program, our educational system will also go through its transformation to meet the new challenges that our new Republic will face."

Dr. Vahk Haroutunian, the former Minister of Higher Education and Science, who led the Armenian team in the founding of the University, talked about the broad mission of the University as the Republic moves in the new direction that the people of Armenia have mandated. He said: "I see the role of the American University of Armenia as a partner in meeting the new challenges that independence has presented to us." He singled out management, industry, agriculture, health, and public policy as areas in which a university education in this new institution will have its important impact. He concluded by saying that success will depend to a large extent on how Armenia uses its own resources in partnership with this new institution of higher learning.

The third speaker was Dr. Rafael Chazarian, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Education, Science and Culture.



Dr. Alexander Glockner, Assistant Professor in computer application, chatting with the students during the reception.



Left to right: Dr. Vahk Haroutunian, Minister; Dr. Zovak Avakian, deputy minister; Dr. Mihran Aghabian, President of AUAC, and Louise Manogian Simone reviewing plans for the program.

He acknowledged that a first important step has already been taken, but he said he envisions the American University of Armenia to be a center of learning and dissemination of knowledge by creating in a campus atmosphere the nuclei of science and education programs around which would grow a network of scientific, economic and social projects that would envelop Armenia's needs and aspirations.

THE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY

The October 28 celebration was conducted by Dr. Mihran Aghabian who explained the University's current program in Business Management and Engineering and its plans to expand into major fields of learning that will grow in tune with the needs of Armenia and its surrounding regions. He praised the motivation and commitment of the 101 graduate students who are enrolled in preparatory classes of English, Computer Applications, Business Mathematics, and Introduction to Business Management, and he announced that the University has encouraged the students to form a Student Council and to elect their own leaders through a democratic process. This has created a lot of enthusiasm and an election campaign is already in progress.

THE AGBU AS A FOUNDER OF THE UNIVERSITY

The students, their parents as well as guests from Armenia and abroad were among the audience. Dr. Aghabian introduced Ms. Louise Manogian Simone who, as president of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, has played a key role in the establishment of the University. Her personal commitment to sustain Armenia in its time of great need prompted AGBU to make the important decision of financing the University.

In cooperation with the University of California, AGBU established the American University of Armenia Corporation (AUAC) that, together with the Ministry of Higher Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, operates the University.

GUESTS ATTENDING THE CELEBRATION

Dr. Aghabian also acknowledged the presence of Mr. Papken Araktsian, the vice chairman of the Parliament, and Mr. Vazken Manogian, the former Prime Minister, who have given their strong support to the University. The rectors of the State University of Armenia and the Polytechnic Institute of Yerevan, Dr. Norair Arakelian and Dr. Yuri Sarkisyan, and rectors of other Institutes of Higher Learning as well as Ministers Ashot Yessayan, Mihran Nazaretnian, Karen Simonian, Robert Evoyan, as well as Mayor Galatyan of Yerevan and deputies of the Parliament were also present to join the celebration. Dr. Aghabian mentioned Recor Yuri Sarkisyan's continuing cooperation and support of the University starting from the time in 1989 when the idea of the University was just beginning to take shape.

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UAF Sends 28th Airlift

GLENDALE — The United Armenian Fund dispatched its 28th airlift to Armenia from New York on November 23. The chartered Boeing 707 cargo plane carried 78,000 lbs. of humanitarian aid valued at \$575,000.

The largest donation was \$230,000 of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies weighing 11,000 lbs. from Direct Relief International of Santa Barbara, California for the medical projects of the Armenian Relief Society's Earthquake Relief Fund for Armenia at the Second Surgical/Trauma Hospital and Third Polyclinic in Gumri.

The Armenian American Medical Society of California sent fetal monitors and accessories worth \$38,000 for the Maternity Hospital in Gumri. Project Hope donated 5,000 lbs. of medical supplies valued at \$33,000 for its projects in Yerevan. The Armenian Health Alliance of Boston obtained from Americare 2,000 lbs. of intravenous fluids for patients at the Infectious Disease Hospital in Norik. The AHA also arranged for the donation of \$18,000 of botulinum antitoxin provided by Connaught Labs in Toronto, Canada.

The Eastern Diocese donated 18,000 lbs. of winter clothing urgently needed by the destitute refugees from the Karabagh region temporarily housed in the border villages near Vardenis in Armenia.

The Armenian Missionary Association of America shipped on the UAF airlift 8,000 lbs. of foodstuffs to be distributed to the orphanages in Armenia. The AMAA also sent 2,600 lbs. of powder milk for infants. Another 4,000 lbs. of nutritional bars were donated by Incedra Meal for the Orphaned Children's Fund of UNSD.

More than \$60,000 worth of construction equipment weighing 15,000 lbs. were shipped by the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee of New York for its rehabilitation center in Gumri. The Eastern Diocese also shipped \$10,000 worth of construction equipment for its housing project in Stepanavan. Thomas Chanchian of Sunnyvale, California donated a micro remote automatic weather monitor worth \$17,000 to the Yerevan Polytechnic Institute.

**FAX NUMBER OF
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University of Armenia

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FACULTY AND STAFF

"The dedicated work of the faculty and staff, nine American and twelve Armenian, keeps the daily work of the University on course," the President said. Although they were not able to be present, Dean Armen Der Kiureghian of the College of Engineering and Dean Stephan Karamardian of the College of Business and Management, as well as Dr. William Frazier, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of AUAC and Senior Vice President of the University of California, and President David Gardner of UC were thanked as members of the team that has led the University through its formative steps.

The celebration ended with a symphonic concert by the "Armenia" Symphony Orchestra led by its conductor, Ara Bedrossian. Those attending had time to get acquainted with each other during the buffet reception, and they left with a better understanding of the program of the American University of Armenia. In a parting statement, Minister Karen Simonian said to Dr. Aghabian, "This University is helping start a new golden age in independent Armenia."



The audience listening to Dr. Haroutunian's address.