

AUA. Yerevan. June 28, 1994

TO: Sona Hamalian
Director of the Extension Division
American University of Armenia

FROM: Khachig Tololvan
Editor, Diaspora
Wesleyan University

Dear Sona.

I have read the documents you gave me concerning "Armenia in the Year 2010." You asked that I identify what elements of the plan -- the one in English as well as Vosganyan's response in Armenian -- might usefully be included in a grant application to the Peace Foundation. Not having read a detailed mission statement of the PF and not knowing what sorts of things they have funded in the past, it is difficult for me to speak with any degree of assurance about such things. That said, let me offer a couple of suggestions.

1. In the West, it is well known that one of the pressures that led to the collapse of the USSR was the arms race, which placed a disproportionate burden on the economy. In any application to the PF, I think it would be important to say, early on, that Armenia and Armenian scholars remain deeply aware of that disaster, and that there is widespread anxiety that nothing less than a fair and full peace, or just peace, is needed to enable Armenia to develop. Anything less, and Armenia's economic development will be crippled. Argue that the war is even more crippling than the earthquake, and that just as earthquakes remain a permanent threat which the AUA is dedicated to combatting by establishing seismic engineering as a pillar of its technical programs, so also the prevention of war is going to be an essential area of study here. (Pn this you will see more in section 3).

What is more - I think you must say this - the development of the economic potential of the region as a whole, especially Azerbaijan's, would inevitably suffer should an arms race or a state of no-war-no-peace develop between Armenia and its neighbor to the East. In saying all this, you will be telling two truths: without a real peace, we collapse deeper into the pit, and (b) we take Azerbaijan with us.

2. Attached to this and following it, there should be an emphasis on the term that Vosganian uses, Collective Security. The grant writer should affirm that the Conference organizers consider measures of collective security essential - therefore, that the Conference will bring in political scientists and international relations people to explore how peace in the Transcaucasian republics can be guaranteed by, or at least can involve regional actors as well as Europe and the USA.

What I am saying in points one and two is that development is primarily a socio-economic and perhaps cultural concept, but the grant proposal to the PF should give some priority to the political. Without that peace, the rest is impossible. Azerbaijan spent 300 million dollars on war last year, and we spent half that. That is a lot of manats and drams, not counting the permanent damage to the handicapped and disturbed, and the social fabric...

3. I feel that one area which would be unusual and therefore appealing to the PF would be to give a special emphasis to elements of peace that are not normally emphasized. These would be:

3a. The Conference will consider the establishment of strong communications and exchanges with neighboring countries as a contribution to peace. Thus, it will look into the technical means for improving travel, telephone and other transport and communication links with neighbors; it will consider the speedy normalization of border regulations, for example, as an essential to peace. All sorts of links between Transcaucasian and other neighbors will be considered essential to socioeconomic development of the region AND to the maintenance of peace. Here, you might want to add that one of future areas in which the AUA would like to develop is the establishment of a Department of Telecommunications and Transportation. You might mention that Armenia and the Transcaucasus are fated to become important transportation nodes in connecting the Central Asian countries to the Black Sea, and that the AUA can help peace and development both by providing technical, administrative and political skills to facilitate this. You could write separate grants to AT&T and major airline companies.

3b. Next you have another golden opportunity to also promote the University. Stress that just as the American University of Beirut worked to create an english-speaking elite that knit together the leaders of many countries in the Middle East, so also the AUA would be repared to consider this university as a potential resource for all. In this university, a certain number of Abkhaz and Georgians, and Lezgin and Armenians and yes, why not, Azeris, would be welcome to study together. The University will offer itself as a place where experts in the five major fields could be trained in English and in american methods. This, you might stress, is a contribution to regional Peace. They will give you a billion dollars and ask that you change the name to American University of Yerevan, or the Transcaucasus...

3c. You might also suggest that one of the main causes of the war has been the lack of a proper understanding of national sovereignty and the rights of minorities, and then you might suggest that the establishment of a Center for the Study of Sovereign Nations and its Minorities should be funded here in AUA as a contribution to Peace in not just the Transcaucasus but in the entire USSR and Middle East. That is to say, you create a Center funded internationally, where the language of discussion is, again, English, and to which you invite specialists from - you name it - Russia and Chechenia, Moldva and Transdniester, Mingrelia and

Tbilisi, Baku and Karabagh, Turkey and Iraki Kurdistan. This becomes neutral ground. Armenia is a middleman. And the AUA, in turn, becomes ITS middleman for regional discussions of how the nationalism of sovereign nations must be tempered by an understanding of the rights of minorities.

This is all at present. If you decide that you, Mihran, Vosganian and others want to develop it further, you know how to contact me.

As ever,

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