

California Courier Online, March 13, 2008

- From: CalifCourier@cs.com
- Date: Mon, 10 Mar 2008 19:53:25 -0700 (PDT)

The California Courier Online Edition, March 13, 2008

Commentary

A Sober and Sobering Account of Recent
Developments in Armenia by an Eyewitness

By Armen Ayvazian
Yerevan, Armenia

I have been criticizing this government and predicting such an outcome during recent years. And, by the way, where was Levon Ter Petrossian all this time and why didn't he raise his voice against any injustice during these long 10 years?!

I've been warning about the imminent breakup of the seeming stability again and again in my books, articles and interviews published in Armenian, Russian and English for the last decade. Moreover, they've been read by some of the highest representatives of the current establishment. I had a couple of chances to even personally discuss with some of them the criticality of the situation. They did not agree that the situation is as bad as I depicted it and were disturbed and irritated. All of my efforts to bring them back to reality have just resulted not only in my further isolation from the centers of decision-making, but also in attempts to silence and marginalize me. Though they've not succeeded, I'm extremely frustrated that all my work has been almost in vain. On February 19, Armenia entered into a completely new and unfavorable phase; the day "X" I was talking about in my "Strategic Gaps" has already arrived.

However, Ter Petrossian and his team did not come "to right the wrongs," but just to exacerbate the situation to the edge. I'm a first-hand eyewitness of these recent events. The major clashes happened just 300 feet from my home and I've been hearing and watching everything from the beginning to the end. That day, Ter Petrossian and his team brought Armenia to the very brink of DISASTER. No one can prove to me that it was the police who instigated the clashes. It was not just a coup attempt, it was a cold-blooded attempt by Ter Petrossian & Co. to instigate a civil war! Ter Petrossian and his team are an immediate and overwhelming national security threat!

Please look at the bigger picture, look at the world powers waging Cold War IN ARMENIA, look at the map again and follow the news about the Azerbaijan's movements and all the preparations to start a war. What if Aliyev starts it now? What would we have? A divided Armenia and a divided Diaspora! Who has pushed the situation so far? Of course, the government has to be blamed for all the corruption and its woeful methods and low level of governance. But Ter Petrossian has clearly and cold-bloodedly targeted the national unity of Armenians! He clearly and cold-bloodedly played on the hayastantzi-gharabaghtzi

artificial divide! He and his team clearly and cold-bloodedly instigated the mob to fire and throw grenades on Armenian soldiers.

My street was under the occupation of "revolutionaries" for about 7 hours. They were shouting at us: "come down, join us -- this is an uprising!" They were calling the Armenian soldiers to join them and fire on other Armenian soldiers. Now who can tell me about the facts better? Do you understand what was in stake? And what if just one battalion, or even a platoon joined this uprising? We would have ended up in a real bloody civil war with hundreds killed and mutilated and perhaps Artsakh and Syunik overrun by the enemy! What was Ter Petrossian's sick mind thinking at that time? I need neither to watch Armenian TV for the official version of events nor to read and listen about the ridiculous false versions now being circulated in the web by Ter Petrossian's supporters.

Please remember that Armenia is your only Homeland, irrespective of the government. Please do not alienate either yourselves or the diasporans from the homeland. Do not alienate yourselves from other Armenians. After reading my article, my dear friend from Canada has labeled me "a traitor of the nation"! Doesn't this remind you of good old 1937? Just one result of the Ter Petrossian's comeback into the big politics with his neo-bolshevik ideas: "Who is not with us, is against us"! But we are a small endangered nation with an endangered **HOMELAND!**

The situation is extremely difficult and there is no easy way out of it. The solution that is most often being offered -- the resignation of Serj Sargsyan and new elections -- is not a solution. We simply cannot afford months and years of additional turmoil.