

## THE ARMENIAN QUESTION AT THE LAUSANNE PEACE TALKS

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The roots of the Armenian question in the Ottoman Empire lie in the San Stefano and Berlin Treaties signed at the end of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78.<sup>1</sup> Reforms open to speculation of various kinds and the "Armenian question" relating to issues regarding the control of these reforms became significant parts of the "Eastern question".

Throughout the 19th century the power of the Ottoman Empire steadily declined, and inciting uprisings to attract the attention of the major powers and, by gaining their support, win new rights became the principal course of action of separatist and nationalist elements during this period. Separatist Armenians used the same means, taking as their example the Bulgarian rebellion of 1876.<sup>2</sup> The revolutionary Hinchag and Dashnag committees organised sporadic uprisings,<sup>3</sup> rebellions, assassinations and raids with the

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<sup>1</sup> The Treaty of San Stefano, and the Berlin Treaty which replaced it, provided for reforms by the Ottoman Government in provinces with an Armenian population and notification of these reforms to the major powers which were signatories to the treaty, and for supervision of the implementation of these measures by the major powers. For the debate on reforms in favour of the non-Muslim population in Anatolia, to which the Armenian question was regarded as central, and details of reform programmes, see: Cevdet Küçük, **Osmanlı Diplomasisinde Ermeni Meselesinin Ortaya Çıkması, 1878-1897**, İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1984.

<sup>2</sup> This uprising and events which occurred in the course of quelling it were the pretext for creating pro-Bulgarian and anti-Turkish feeling in Europe, and led to the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78 which came to create a Bulgarian state and brought an end to Ottoman rule in Rumelia. See: Ömer Turan, **The Turkish Minority in Bulgaria, 1878-1908**, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> One Armenian insurgent told Cyrus Hamlin, headmaster of Robert College in İstanbul: "The Hentchak bands would watch their opportunity to kill Turks and Koords, set fire to their villages and then make their escape into the mountains. The enraged Moslems will then rise, and fall upon the defenceless Armenians and slaughter them with such barbarity that Russia will enter in the name of humanity and Christian civilisation and take possession...We Armenians have determined to be free. Europe listened to the Bulgarian horrors and made Bulgaria free. She will listen to our cry when it goes up in the shrieks and blood of millions of women and children...We are desperate. We shall do

object of keeping the Armenian question on the agenda of the major powers and bringing about their intervention on the pretext of "supervising proposed reforms". When the Armenians collaborated with the Russians during the First World War, launching attacks on the Turkish army and civilians from behind the front and engaging in acts of sabotage, the Ottoman Government decided to relocate the Armenian population of eastern Anatolia to the southern provinces. Some incidents that took place during this relocation were, in later years, represented as genocide, and these allegations have been used from time to time against Turkey and the Turks.

Following the signing of the Armistice of Mudanya in the wake of the Turkish victory in the War of Independence, the Allied Powers invited the Turkish Government to a peace conference to be held in the Swiss city of Lausanne on 13 November 1922. As well as Britain, France, Italy and Turkey, the conference was attended by Japan, Rumania, Yugoslavia and Greece. The Soviet Union and Bulgaria sent representatives to discussions relating to the Turkish Straits. The United States of America attended as an observer.

The "Eastern question" was tackled in detail at the Lausanne Conference. Problems going back centuries were debated, and none of the parties gave up their positions without prolonged negotiations. The Allied Powers attempted to dictate conditions to Turkey at Lausanne as they had to the defeated countries at the end of the First World War. Although the conference was originally scheduled to begin on 13 November, since the Allies had not yet completed bargaining amongst themselves, the victorious parties postponed the conference for a week without consulting the Turks. This attitude prevailed in every aspect of the organisation, from the seating arrangement in the conference room to decisions concerning the speeches to be made at the opening session. Şemî Paşa (Şönü), the head of the Turkish Delegation, resisted all these attempts of psychological intimidation, acting as the representative of a state on equal terms in every way. At every opportunity he reminded the Allied delegates of the principle of equality between states and the need to respect it. When his British colleague Lord Curzon kept referring to the Armistice of Mondros during one of

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it". William L. Langer, **The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902**, 2nd ed., New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1956, pp. 157-158.

the debates, he declared, "I come here not from Mondros, but from Mudanya".<sup>4</sup>

The Lausanne Conference opened on 20 November 1922, with an inauguration speech by President Robert Haab of the Swiss Confederation. That morning, before the conference opened, the delegates of the three Allied Powers had met to discuss one another's demands. They agreed not to allow Turkey to chair any of the sessions.<sup>5</sup> At the first session held the following day, the issues to be discussed were divided into three categories, for each of which a commission was formed. The first commission dealt with frontiers and military issues, the second with foreigners and minorities in Turkey, and the third with financial and economic affairs. It was decided that the chief delegates of Britain, France and Italy should chair the commissions. Turkey was represented at the first commission by Şemî Paşa, at the second by Rıza Nur, and at the third by Hasan Bey (Saka).

Turkey's most determined opponent at the conference was Britain. Despite the fact that the British had signed the Mudanya Armistice, they still felt it to be a slur on their pride to sit down to peace negotiations with the Turks.<sup>6</sup> The Ankara Entente had been signed with France, taking the two countries halfway to peace, and Italy and Turkey had not fought at all. The Italians were not happy about the Greek occupation of western Anatolia. No serious disagreement was expected either with Japan and the Balkan states. It was under such conditions that Britain endeavoured to persuade the Allies to present a united front against Turkey.<sup>7</sup> Turkey, meanwhile, hoped to get the other Allied Powers on its side in its confrontation with Britain. Lord Curzon, aware of this, parried every move on the part of the Allies that would undermine

<sup>4</sup> Şemî Paşa, "Önsöz", **Lozan Bar Konferansı, Tutanaklar, Belgeler**, tr. Şeha L. Meray, (hereafter **Lozan Tutanakları**) T. I, C. I, K. I, Ankara, A. Ü. Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, 1969, pp. v-ix. Ali Naci Karacan, **Lozan**, İstanbul, Milliyet Yayınları, 1971, pp. 77, 78-80, 186-200; Ali Fuad Erden, **Şemî Paşa**, İstanbul, Bilgi Yayınları, 1952, pp. 167-176.

<sup>5</sup> Public Record Office, Foreign Office, (hereafter FO) 839/4.

<sup>6</sup> Marian Kent, "Great Britain and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1900-23", **The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire**, ed., Marian Kent, London, Frank Cass, 1996, p. 193; for the Lausanne talks and Turkey's stance as reported by the British press, see: Mustafa Yılmaz, **British Opinion and the Lausanne Conference and Treaty**, Ankara, Paşa Vakfı, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> **İngiliz Belgelerinde Lozan Bar Konferansı (1922-1923)**, (hereafter **İngiliz Belgelerinde**), Mim Kemal Öke, ed., Vol. I, İstanbul, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 1983, pp. 243-244, 246-247.

their joint opposition to Turkey. On 22 November, Lord Curzon held a meeting with Poincaré and Mussolini at which it was agreed that the Allies should present a unified front at the conference.<sup>8</sup>

When making their preparations for the conference, the Allies had already earmarked issues of priority importance for themselves and their expectations of the conference. Britain was most concerned with the Straits and Mosul,<sup>9</sup> France with the capitulations, Italy with the Dodecanese Islands and its mandate,<sup>10</sup> Japan,<sup>11</sup> (although not one of the decision-makers at the conference) and Rumania<sup>12</sup> were primarily interested in the Straits. Turkey, as chief delegate *şmet Pafla* put it, was "obliged to make peace so long as no vital impediment stood in the way". The government's instructions to its delegation could be described as a slightly expanded form of the National Pact of 1920. This fourteen-article protocol absolutely rejected any discussion of an Armenian state on Turkish territory or on continuing the capitulations, declaring that Turkey would otherwise cut off negotiations if necessary.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> FO, 839/4, FO, 839/14. When in the days following Italy began to deviate from the agreed Allied stance in pursuit of its own interests, Lord Curzon met with Mussolini on 8 December, and threatened that if Italy did not follow the trilateral policy of the Alliance, France and Britain would see: that Italy did not get what it wanted. FO 839/14. As the conference proceeded, unity between the Allies, which Britain was so concerned to preserve, deteriorated still further. Lord Curzon complained about this in a telegram dated 31 January, in which he said that not so much Ankara but Paris and Rome were his real enemies. See: **Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939**, W. N. Medlicott, Douglas Dakin, M. E. Lambert eds., Series I, Vol. XVIII, Greece and Turkey, September 3, 1922-July 24, 1923, London, HMSO, 1972, No. 357.

<sup>9</sup> Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, **Türk- ngiliz li kileri, 1919-1926**, Ankara, A. Ü. Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, 1978, pp. 257-259; for Britain's expectations and policy at Lausanne see: Michael Dockrill, "Lozan Konferansı ve ngiltere", **70. Y 1 nda Lozan Bar Antla mas Uluslararası Semineri**, (hereafter **70. Y 1 nda Lozan**), Ankara, *önöü Vakfı*, 1994, pp. 109-125.

<sup>10</sup> For Italy's expectations and policies at Lausanne see: Maria Antonia di Casola, "talya ve 1923 Lozan Antlaşması", **70. Y 1 nda Lozan**, pp. 15-23.

<sup>11</sup> Although Japan wished the capitulations to continue, it realised that this was impossible. Where the Armenian question was concerned, Japanese public opinion was sympathetic to Turkey. For Japan's attitude towards Turkey in the early 1920s and stance at the conference, see: Masami Arai, "Lozan Konferansı Karfııında Japonya'nın Tutumu", **70. Y 1 nda Lozan**, pp. 127-134.

<sup>12</sup> Rumania regarded the Straits "which were the heart of Turkey as the lungs of Rumania", and was closely concerned with this issue. For Rumania's stance at Lausanne see: Mihai Maksim, "Romanya'nın Lozan Konferansı'ndaki Yeri", **70. Y 1 nda Lozan**, pp. 45-51.

<sup>13</sup> Bilâl İmflir, ed., **Lozan Telgrafları**, Vol. I, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1990, p. xiv; for the speech by *şmet Pafla* (*önöü*), who was the head of the Turkish Delegation at Lausanne, on developments prior to Lausanne and the conference itself, see: *şmet*

Before issues relating to the Armenians and minorities came up at the Lausanne Conference, the Allies were aware of Turkey's views on these subjects from press statements and bilateral talks. Rabbi Naum, who had previously met with  smet Pafla, told a diplomat from the British Delegation on 25 November that the Turks regarded the Greeks of Turkey as irredentist, and wished to expel them, but believed that the Armenians should remain in Anatolia. They hoped to reach agreement on the subject with the Armenian representatives.<sup>14</sup> At a meeting between  smet Pafla and British delegate Sir W. Tyrell on 27 November, these Turkish views on minorities and the Armenians were explained to the British.<sup>15</sup>

The views of the Allies on the Armenian question, at the outset of the Lausanne Conference, were as follows: British Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon had earlier penned the peace conditions, which after endorsement by Paris and Rome, would be proposed by the Allies for presentation to the Turkish Delegation. The first category of conditions consisted of those considered absolutely essential for any agreement to be reached. The Armenian question was not among them, but listed in the second category along with the other issues concerning minorities in Turkey.<sup>16</sup> Although in the course of the conference the delegates of Britain primarily and those of the other Allied powers put considerable emphasis on minority issues and the Armenians to impress their own public, in private talks these issues were not of crucial importance for Britain.  smet Pafla related the following conversation between himself and Lord Curzon at the outset of the conference: "Lord Curzon arrived, and I asked him about the minority question, to which Lord Curzon replied: 'Is there any minority left, that it should be a question? The Greeks in Anatolia withdrew at the end of the war, and we did an exchange with the Turks of our own accord. So no such question exists, as I say.'"<sup>17</sup>

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 n n , " stikl l Sava  ve Lozan", **Belleten**, Year XXXVIII, Vol. 149 (January 1974), pp. 1-30. The founders of the new Turkish Republic wanted a fully independent state, and were prepared to go to war again if necessary to achieve this. For the secret military plan in the event of the peace conference breaking down, see:  hsan Ilgar, "T rk Genel Kurmay n n Gizli Harek t Plan ", **Belgelerle T rk Tarihi Dergisi**, Vol. 36, pp. 33-34.

<sup>14</sup> FO, 839/9.

<sup>15</sup> FO, 371/7965, pp. 138-140.

<sup>16</sup> FO, 371/7915, pp. 155-162; **ngiliz Belgelerinde**, Vol. I, pp. 273-274.

<sup>17</sup> See:  n n , " stikl l Sava  ve Lozan", p. 25. At the end of November 1922, during non-official talks concerning the exchange of minority populations, the British and above all American representatives asked the Turkish Delegation with whom and how the Armenians were to be exchanged.  smet Pafla was in favour of a population exchange for

The members of the American Delegation attended the Lausanne Peace Conference as observers. Their briefing was to defend American interests and remain neutral.<sup>18</sup> From time to time, the American representatives took an active part in the conference, however.<sup>19</sup> Because of pro-Armenian public feeling generated by American missionaries and their organisations, combined with the presence of Armenian and Greek refugees in America, Turkey's minorities were a sensitive issue in the conference.<sup>20</sup> As a result of these activities and sensitivity, James L. Barton, a representative of the American Protestant missionary organisations, was appointed as a consultant to the American Delegation to Lausanne. The United States Government desired the continuation of capitulations and American cultural, educational and religious activities in Turkey; the security of

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Turkey's Greek population, but not of the Armenians remaining in Turkey. Ankara, on the other hand, favoured an exchange with Turkish minority populations in Armenia. However, when Şmet Paşa objected that discussion of such an exchange with Armenia with the Allied Powers would lead to a debate about Turkey's eastern borders and the Moscow Treaty; that to discuss this question with the Russians would be to involve them in another matter other than the Straits; and therefore, since no one was left to discuss the question of exchange of the Armenian population with, those Armenians who wished to remain in Turkey should be allowed to do so, Ankara agreed with his view. For the telegrams on this subject which were exchanged, see: **Lozan Telgrafları**, Vol. I, pp. 124, 143, 162-163, 172, 174, 176. However, those Armenians who had been involved in various incidents and left the country were not permitted to return. For studies carried out by S. R. Sonyel on British policy at Lausanne based on British documents, see: Salâhi R. Sonyel, "Lozan'da Türk Diplomasisi", **Belleten**, Year XXXVIII, Vol. 149 (January 1974), pp. 41-116; Salâhi R. Sonyel, **Türk Kurtulu Sava ve D Politika, II**, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991, pp. 290-357.

<sup>18</sup> Although the United States representatives were present only as neutral observers, the delegates of the Allies, particularly Britain, and the Turkish Delegation all endeavoured to persuade the Americans to take their side. See: John A. Denovo, **American Interests and Policies in the Middle East, 1900-1939**, Minneapolis, The University of Minnesota Press, 1963, pp. 138-139.

<sup>19</sup> Turkey's desire to conclude an agreement of amity and trade with the United States at this time may be evaluated in this light. See: Fahir Armaoğlu, "Amerikan Belgelerinde Lozan Konferansı ve Amerika", **Belleten**, Year LV, Vol. 213 (August 1991), pp. 483-493; Joseph C. Grew, **Turbulent Era: a Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945**, ed., Walter Johnson, Vol. I, London, Hammond, Hammond and Co., Ltd., 1953, p. 491.

<sup>20</sup> Prior to the Lausanne Peace Conference, the American Government received over a thousand pro-Armenian letters. Joseph L. Grabill, **Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927**, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1971, p. 271. On 11 February 1922, the Armenia America Society wrote a letter to President W.C. Harding condemning the Turks in harsh terms, and demanding that "whatever necessary" be done to defend the rights of the Armenians. In the summer of 1922, the US Secretary of State met with them and asked what they meant by "necessary", to which questioned they replied, "go to war if that be necessary". Denovo, **op. cit.**, pp. 138-144.

minorities, including the granting of an Armenian homeland; equal trade opportunities and free passage through the Straits; and reparation for American losses during the war.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, the United States Government supported realistic policies. In the written protocol laying down American expectations at the Lausanne Conference, it stated that granting a territorial home to the Armenians might give rise to debate, and that since conditions in Russia had improved somewhat, Russian Caucasus would provide a good refuge for Armenians who left Turkey.<sup>22</sup> As this protocol shows, America did not expect an independent Armenia to be established in Turkey.

American delegate Richard Washburn Child and Turkish delegate Celâleddin Arif Bey met at Lausanne on 21 November 1922, and Arif Bey assured Child that under no circumstances would Turkey grant territory to the Armenians or any other minority.<sup>23</sup> In a telegram to Washington the following day, the American Delegation stated that on account of Ankara's resolve on the subject, the representatives of the Allied Powers did not wish to demand Turkish land for the Armenians.<sup>24</sup> Washington instructed its delegation to support moves benefiting Christian minorities in Turkey, but to refrain from making any proposals.<sup>25</sup> The American Secretary of State agreed with the views expressed in the telegram, and said that although unification of the Armenians of Turkey and the Caucasus was desirable, this did not seem feasible for economic reasons.<sup>26</sup>

In order to assuage the Armenian lobbies, Protestant missionary organisations and public opinion, the United States delegates, like their Allied colleagues, took some initiatives such as speeches in support of the Armenians at the sessions and discussions outside them.<sup>27</sup> As a part of this policy, the American delegate Child sought support for the idea of an Armenian

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<sup>21</sup> Grabill, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

<sup>22</sup> Grew, *op. cit.*, pp. 481-485.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 492.

<sup>24</sup> For the impressions of American delegate Barton concerning the determination of the Turkish Delegation as regards an Armenian homeland, and the hesitant attitude of the Allied Powers on the same subject, see: Grabill, *op. cit.*, pp. 270-271.

<sup>25</sup> Grabill, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

<sup>26</sup> Armaoglu, *op. cit.*, p. 516, from **Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1923**, (hereafter **Papers**), Vol. II, Washington D. C., Government Printing Office, 1938, pp. 902-903.

<sup>27</sup> Grabill, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

homeland in Anatolia,<sup>28</sup> and at one session, after reminding the Allies of earlier resolutions in favour of granting territory to the Armenians, asked the Allies not to leave the conference table without finding a solution to this question.<sup>29</sup>

Britain occupied a dominant position at the conference. The British delegates discussed issues first with the other Allied delegates, and presented a joint position at the sessions after reaching agreement with them. The British delegate spoke first at the sessions, after which the delegates of France, Italy and other states repeated what he had said from their own standpoints. The minority and Armenian issues were approached in this manner at the conference. Out of historical habit Britain and the other Allies took the view that they had the right to take the decisions in this matter, and wished to corner Turkey into accepting terms that suited their own interests.<sup>30</sup>

In order to represent the Armenians at Lausanne, the delegation from the Armenian Republic and the Armenian National Delegation joined to form the United Armenian Delegation. The Armenians wished to participate in the conference with the object of establishing a united and independent Armenia, or, at least as a provisional measure, the acceptance of an Armenian home. With this in mind they held talks with officials of the major powers and launched programs to influence public opinion in favour of the Armenians. On 18 August 1922, they sent letters to the British, French and Italian Governments asking to participate in the preliminary commission on the eastern questions, but this request was rejected on the third day.

On 18 October, the Armenian Delegation applied to the Allied Powers for admission to the conference and for the Armenian question to be put on the agenda. When the Allies discussed this matter among themselves, Britain favoured inviting the Armenian Delegation to present its case. France, however, had misgivings in this regard, on the grounds that it would set a precedent to the Georgians and other peoples of the region. Although Italy did not object to allowing the Armenian delegates to present their case at an appropriate time when the situation of the Armenians was

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<sup>28</sup> Armaoğlu, *op.cit.*, p. 516, from *Papers*, Vol. II, p. 910.

<sup>29</sup> *Lozan Tutanaklar*, T. 1, C. 1, K. 1, pp. 202-204.

<sup>30</sup> Esat Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, 2nd pr., İstanbul, Belge Yayınlar, 1987, pp. 706-708.



under discussion, it considered that extending unofficial invitation to the Armenian delegates before the Allies had reached a preliminary agreement amongst themselves would be a mistake, setting an undesirable precedent for other groups which, like the Armenians, lacked their own government.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, on 13 November Lord Curzon invited the Armenian Delegation to speak at the Lausanne Conference.<sup>32</sup>

On 18 November 1922, the Armenians repeated, in fresh letters to the Allied Powers, their request to participate in the conference.<sup>33</sup> The Armenian Delegation presented a memorandum to the Allied delegates at Lausanne asking that they be kept in mind during the conference. In this memorandum they claimed that the Armenians had taken the side of the Allies during the First World War, that they had carried out their duties towards the Allies to the full, that as a result 1,250,000 of the 2,250,000 Armenians in Turkish Armenia had lost their lives, that 700,000 had emigrated from Turkey, and that there remained 280,000 Armenians in Turkey, all of whom were ready to emigrate at any moment. They declared that it had already been decided that a homeland should be granted to resolve the Armenian question, that this could be realised either by providing land which gave access to the sea for the Republic of Erivan, or by giving Cilicia to the Armenians. In other words, whichever course was taken, an Armenian homeland could only be established on Turkish territory in Asia.<sup>34</sup>

It was not only the Armenian Delegation which voiced Armenian claims prior to and during the Lausanne peace talks. In addition, notable figures of the Armenian community,<sup>35</sup> pro-

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<sup>31</sup> FO, 371/7915, pp. 143-146.

<sup>32</sup> In his letter dated 13 November to the British Embassy in Paris, Lord Curzon told the British Ambassador to relate the following to the French Foreign Minister: "You should point out to Monsieur Poincaré that the case of Georgia is quite different. We are only admitting the possibility of hearing Armenian representatives at Lausanne should we desire information regarding Armenian minorities in Turkey during the course of proceedings. The Armenian representatives who may thus be summoned to Lausanne will not be the representatives of the pro-Soviet Armenian Government of the Caucasus, but Armenian national representatives including particularly Turkish Armenians..." *ngiliz Belgelerinde*, Vol. I, No. 189, pp. 268-269.

<sup>33</sup> Uras, *op. cit.*, pp. 708-710.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 710-714.

<sup>35</sup> Two Armenian leaders, Varandian and Ahavonian, conveyed the Armenian demands to the Italian and British Governments respectively. In a letter dated 6 November 1922, Varandian expressed the opinion that Armenia had not been admitted to the conference

Armenian societies and church organisations also approached the Allied Powers or their representatives at Lausanne to present their case. The *Ligue Internationale Philarménienne* sent a memorandum signed by chairman E. Naville and general secretary A. de Morsier to the Lausanne Conference (1 December) stating their demands. The memorandum related the losses and damage suffered by Armenians who had taken part in the Allied effort during the war, reminded them of earlier decisions and promises to establish an independent Armenia, declared that the establishment of an Armenian Republic with its capital at Erivan would not end the question of an Armenian homeland, that this question could not be resolved outside Turkey, and asked for the establishment of such an Armenian homeland.<sup>36</sup> Lists of churches and Christian organisations in many European countries which supported this idea were submitted to the conference on 4 December, 8 December and 22 December 1922, and on 9 January 1923.<sup>37</sup> In addition, the British Armenia Committee gave a memorandum to the British Delegation at Lausanne on 5 December presenting their demands for an Armenian homeland and protection of minorities.<sup>38</sup> The Armenia America Society presented a document containing similar demands to the British Delegation at Lausanne on 16 December.<sup>39</sup>

The Lausanne peace talks took place in two phases.<sup>40</sup> During the first phase of talks (20 November 1922 and 4 February 1923)

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because the country was under Soviet rule, and asked that whatever possible be done for the Armenians in Turkey. Ahavonian made similar requests from Britain. Through its embassy in Rome, the British Government asked the views of the Italian Government, which replied on 18 November 1922, that they intended to tell Varandian that everything possible would be done. As explained above, although not opposed to the Armenian Delegation being heard at the conference, they said they thought it would be inappropriate to extend an official invitation to the Armenian delegates before the Allies had reached a preliminary agreement amongst themselves, and that it would set an undesirable precedent. FO, 371/7915, pp. 143-146.

<sup>36</sup> FO, 839/12.

<sup>37</sup> For a list of these organisations, see: FO, 839/12.

<sup>38</sup> FO, 839/12. In the British Foreign Office file containing the demands of the said organisation, there is a note reading: "A national, i. e., territorial home for Armenians as distinct from the Republic of Erivan is not a practical proposition". However, as will be seen later, due to promises made previously and public pressure, the British delegates did bring up the question of an Armenian home at Lausanne on several occasions.

<sup>39</sup> FO, 839/12.

<sup>40</sup> On the subject of the Lausanne Conference in general and other issues discussed there, see: Cemil Bilsel, **Lozan**, C. II, İstanbul, Sosyal Yayınlar, 1998; **Türkiye D Politika n da 50 Y 1, Lozan, (1922-1923)**, Ankara, Dışişleri Bakanlığı, 1973; **Lozan' n 50. Y 1 na Armağan**, İstanbul, İ. Ü. Milletlerarası Hukuk ve Milletlerarası Münasebetler Enstitüsü, 1978.

an Armenian homeland was discussed, and during the second phase (23 April and 23 July 1923) the return of Armenians who had left Turkey.

Minority issues, which according to the rules of procedure of the Lausanne Peace Conference were to be discussed by the second commission (the Commission of Foreigners and Minorities), the first commission (the Commission of Land and Military Issues), began to debate them (12 December 1922). In a speech on behalf of the Allies, Lord Curzon, the chairman of the commission and British delegate, declared that one of the reasons why the Allies had entered the war was to protect and save Christian minorities, particularly the Armenians, and that the Armenian issue should be approached, not only with respect to the suffering they had undergone, but also promises made to them regarding their future. He said that the solution to the problem depended on establishing an Armenian home either in north-eastern Anatolia or in the area between south-east Cilicia and the Syrian frontier; and that this was a historic right of the Armenians. French delegate Barrère and Italian delegate Marki Garroni then proceeded to deliver talks in support of Curzon.<sup>41</sup>

In a speech made in response to these, Turkey's chief delegate Şmet Pafla explained the rights accorded to minorities in the Ottoman Empire since the time of Mehmed II (1451-1481), and summed up the views of his government in these three points: "(1) Improving the situation of Turkey's minorities depends above all on eliminating all possibility of any kind of foreign intervention and outside provocation. (2) This objective depends first of all on an exchange of the Turkish and Greek populations. (3) The most reliable guarantees for the security and welfare of those minorities not covered by a population exchange measures will be those provided by the laws of the country, and by Turkey's broad-minded policy to all those communities whose members, as citizens of Turkey, performed their duties to the full."<sup>42</sup>

When Şmet Pafla completed this speech, Lord Curzon took the stand again. He declared that the general public would not permit the Turkish Government to treat the Armenians as it wished, and

<sup>41</sup> **Lozan Tutanaklar** , T. I, C. 1, K. 1, pp. 180-187.

<sup>42</sup> **Ibid.**, pp. 187-200. For further details about this session in telegrams sent by Lord Curzon to London and by Şmet Pafla to Ankara, see: **Lozan Telgraflar** , C. I, pp. 210-213.

asked, "Is there no scrap of land for the Armenians in this huge country?" Then, the Greek delegate Venizelos, the United States delegate Child, and Spalaikovitch, delegate of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, each gave a speech on the rights of minorities in Turkey supporting the views of Lord Curzon. «smet Pafla spoke again, and responding in particular to the speech by Venizelos, explained that the cause of the suffering of the Armenians was the fact that they had been forced to fight on the Greek side during the Greek occupation of Anatolia; that Armenian leaders in Europe had applied on many occasions to the Greek Government asking that their compatriots be protected from such dangers, but that the Greek Government had ignored these pleas, and that the Greek authorities had endeavoured to blame the Armenians for the burning and destruction which took place following the Greek defeat; and that during the Greek withdrawal from Anatolia, they had forced the Armenians to go with them. "The last government in the world which should dare to publicly express pity for the sufferings of the Armenians is the government which has been the direct cause for the Armenian misfortunes", «nönü declared.<sup>43</sup>

At the next day's session, «smet Pafla said that the peace to be concluded would remove the political causes of such suffering; would also eliminate all the reasons for the existence of the Armenian committees operating abroad which saw the Armenian question as a livelihood or as a political weapon; and that thereby Turks and Armenians would be able to bind the wounds of war together. He declared that Turkey regarded any proposal to establish a state of Armenia in any of its part as an attempt to divide the country; that they had concluded treaties with the existing Armenia; and that to accept a second Armenia would be contrary to these treaties.<sup>44</sup>

Lord Curzon, speaking on behalf of the Allies, said that the Turkish reply to proposals concerning an Armenian homeland created an unfavourable impression, and threatened the Turkish Delegation that issues concerning minorities could bring the negotiations to an end.<sup>45</sup> At the discussions on 14 December, «smet Pafla explained that the figures given by Lord Curzon for the

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<sup>43</sup> **Lozan Tutanaklar** , T.I, C.1, K.1, pp. 206-207.

<sup>44</sup> **Ibid.**, pp. 208-212.

<sup>45</sup> **Ibid.**, pp. 215-217; **Lozan Telgraflar** , C. I, pp. 218, 220, 236.

Armenian population were inaccurate, and that in no period of history had there been three million Armenians in the world, never mind in Turkey, and that the British, French and Turkish documents confirmed that the pre-war Armenian population in Turkey varied from 1,300,000 to 1,500,000. To Lord Curzon's question about whether a corner could not be found for the Armenians in a country as large as Turkey, he reminded him that there were countries whose territories were incomparably larger than those of Turkey.<sup>46</sup> Curzon's response at the same session was to repeat the request for the establishment of an Armenian home in Turkey.<sup>47</sup>

The intractable British stand on the minority issue, inclusive of the Armenian question, led «smet Pafla at one point to doubt whether the British really wanted peace at all, and he privately discussed this matter with a diplomat from the British Delegation. According to «smet «nönü's account of this meeting in his memoirs, the British diplomat told him, "«smet Pafla! For years we have said much and promised much. We have engaged in many undertakings throughout the world. Why do you find it strange that so much ceremony should accompany their conclusion now?" After this request to respond with forbearance to the commotion on the subject to minorities, the mind of the Turkish Delegation was set at rest, and it maintained its resolute stance on the subject of the Armenians and other minorities.<sup>48</sup>

The first commission, at which minority issues were discussed, decided that following these discussions the issues should be debated by a sub-commission. The Minorities Sub-commission established for this purpose convened on the same day, that is, on 14 December 1922. The sub-commission consisted of the representatives of the United States, Britain, France, Greece, Italy, Japan, Rumania, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and Turkey. The Italian delegate Montagna was elected chairman of the committee by unanimous vote.<sup>49</sup> At the next day's session,

<sup>46</sup> **Lozan Tutanaklar** , T. I, C. 1, K. 1, pp. 219-223.

<sup>47</sup> **Ibid.**, pp. 223-225. For the telegram on the subject of these sessions sent to Ankara by «smet Pafla, see: **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. I, pp. 218-224; and for the telegrams sent to London by Lord Curzon see: **«ngiliz Belgelerinde**, Vol. II, pp. 387-388, 391.

<sup>48</sup> «smet «nönü, **Hat ralar**, Vol. II, Ankara, Bilgi Yay›nevi, 1987, p. 85.

<sup>49</sup> The members of this sub-commission were as follows: Dwight and Lamot Belin (United States); Sir Horace Rumbold, Ryan and Forbes Adam (Britain); De Lacrois, Laporte, Bargeton and De Percin (France); Venizelos, Caclamanos, Dendramis and Theotokas (Greece); Montagna, Guariglia and Galli (Italy); Sato and Tani (Japan);

Montagna presented a plan comprising the issues to be examined by the committee. According to the minutes of the Lausanne Peace Conference, translated into Turkish from the French originals, the final point in this list of problems to be discussed with respect to minorities read: "A National Homeland for the Armenians". Rıza Nur informed the committee that the Turkish Delegation refused to discuss such a proposal, upon which the Italian, British and French delegates said that rather than refusing to discuss the question, it would be more appropriate if the Turkish Delegation were to present counter-arguments. So the session closed.<sup>50</sup> In his memoirs, Rıza Nur, the Turkish representative on the sub-commission, claimed that the Allied delegates and their secretaries adjusted the minutes to suit themselves, recording or omitting what was said as appropriate to their own ends, and sometimes altering speeches in the written form; so that it was in this corrupted form that they appeared in the newspapers of the time; that the question of an Armenian homeland was not in fact in the original plan drawn up by Montagna, but was subsequently inserted into the minutes and brought up for discussion.<sup>51</sup> At the third session of the Minorities Sub-commission on 18 December, the Allies presented a draft proposal which was accepted as a basis for discussion. Neither the question of an Armenian homeland nor indeed the Armenians themselves were mentioned in this draft.

As well as demands from Armenian homeland at the official sessions of the Lausanne Conference, the Allied delegates conveyed their requests for an Armenian homeland to the Turkish Delegation during private talks. In mid-December such a talk took place between the Italian delegate Garroni, the United States Delegation and Ahmet Paşa. The Turkish standpoint was explained

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Contzesco (Rumania); Spalaikovitch and Rakitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes); and Rıza Nur, Mustafa Fierref and Fikri (Turkey). **Lozan Tutanakları**, T. I, C. 1, K. 2, Ankara, A. Ü. Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, 1970, p. 151.

<sup>50</sup> For details of this plan and discussions, see: **Ibid.**, pp. 152-159.

<sup>51</sup> According to Rıza Nur, the Armenian homeland proposal was not included in the plan drawn up by Montagna; the section of the French language Lausanne minutes from line 12 on page 448 to the end is spurious; the article concerning an Armenian homeland was inserted afterwards into the session and minutes, with the result that a great deal of debate took place on the subject. Notes were exchanged between Turkey and Britain, and these are not included in the minutes. According to Nur, the Turkish representative in the secretariat responsible for keeping the minutes was alone and too weak to object to this kind of falsification. See: **Dr. Rıza Nur'un Lozan Hatıraları**, 3rd pr., İstanbul, Boğaziçi Yayınları, 1992, pp. 102-103, 116.

to them.<sup>52</sup> Meanwhile, the son of the British Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested to Կսմեթ Փափա that Turkey occupy Soviet Armenia in return for letting the Armenians have Cilicia as a homeland. In their talks with Կսմեթ Փափա, the Russian Delegation told him that the former Ottoman Foreign Minister Noradounghian wished him to help them on the subject of an Armenian homeland. Կսմեթ Փափա responded by telling the Russians about the latest British proposal, and they dropped the matter.<sup>53</sup>

According to Րազա Նուր, at the end of the sub-commission session held on 22 December, Montagna told the Bulgarian Delegation, which had requested to speak at the sub-commission on the subject of minorities, that they would be invited to speak. This unexpected development gave Րազա Նուր reason to suspect that this was a ploy designed to pave the way for listening to the Armenian case. He therefore said that he could not agree to such a thing, and that if the other delegates wished to hear a delegation that was not an official participant in the conference, the Turkish Delegation would not attend that session. The French delegate replied that in the event of the Turkish Delegation declining to attend such a session, the other delegates would not object to hearing them. Րազա Նուր countered this argument by saying that sessions in which the Turkish Delegation was not present could have no official status and would be regarded as having never taken place, and that therefore its proceedings would not go down in the minutes.<sup>54</sup> Despite all this debate, the sub-commission resolved to hear the Armenian Delegation on 26 December, informing the Turkish Delegation of the fact an hour beforehand. At this Րազա Նուր wrote a memorandum to the chairman of the sub-commission, while Կսմեթ Փափա wrote memorandums to the commission chairmen, saying that the Armenian Delegation was not authorised to represent the Government of Armenia, and that if they claimed to represent the Armenians of Turkey they

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<sup>52</sup> In the telegram sent to Ankara by Կսմեթ Փափա, he said that the Americans were not insistent on this issue. **Lozan Telgrafları** , Vol. I, p. 216.

<sup>53</sup> **Ibid.**, pp. 217-229. Կսմեթ Փափա was of the opinion that this suggestion made by the son of the British Chancellor of the Exchequer reflected the personal view of the young man rather than that of the British Government.

<sup>54</sup> In his memoirs, Րազա Նուր wrote that these discussions were not accurately represented in the French language minutes, but recorded as it suited themselves. For discussions on the subject of the official minutes, see: **Lozan Tutanakları** , T. I, C. 1, K. 2, p. 191; for Րազա Նուր's account of the discussions at this meeting, see: **Dr. R a z a N u r' u n L o z a n H a t r a l a r** , pp. 109-110.

protested the situation. They added that the Armenian Delegation could only be heard if representatives of all the minorities in Rumania, Serbia and Greece and of all the Muslim countries were also heard, including the Irish delegation.<sup>55</sup> The sub-commission heard the Armenian Delegation on 26 December 1922, at a meeting that had no official capacity since the Turkish Delegation was not present. The delegation explained how, motivated by the Allies' promises of freedom, Armenians had formed the Eastern Army of the French following the relocation, how they had fought on the frontiers of Palestine and Syria under the command of General Allenby, and finally repeated their views on the subject of an Armenian home as expressed earlier in their memorandums.<sup>56</sup> Britain and the other Allies tried to keep up the pressure with regard to the Armenian and minority questions, but they also took care not to go so far that the peace negotiations collapsed.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> In his memoirs, Rıza Nur said that the agenda drawn up by the chairman for the sessions of the sub-commission were usually sent to him only an hour before the sessions began, so not allowing him time for research and to prepare responses; and that one day, on an agenda again submitted to him late, he read that the Armenian, Assyro and Chaldean Delegations were to be heard, at which he wrote a note half an hour before the session began and had it presented to Montagna when the delegates had taken their places and the session was about to begin; upon which the session could not take place, but that they listened to the Bulgarians and Armenians etc., saying that this was in an unofficial capacity, and that these would not be recorded in the minutes; yet the secretaries of the Allies Powers still drew up the minutes as they wanted. **Dr. Rıza Nur'un Lozan Hatıraları**, pp. 115-116. «smet Paşa sent a note to Lord Curzon saying that no state or organisation apart from those officially invited to the conference could be heard at the sessions, and that if this principle was violated Turkey would request that minorities living in Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria and Greece be heard; he also intimated that he might ask that the representatives of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and India be heard. At this, he explained, Curzon wrote a reply couched in conciliatory terms the following day, in which he said that the incident had taken place by the authority of the sub-commission, that the Turkish Delegation had not attended the session, and that the issue was closed. See: **Lozan Telgrafları**, Vol. I, pp. 281-284; **Angiliz Belgelerinde**, Vol. II, pp. 416-417; for «smet Paşa's account of this incident in his memoirs, see: **Hatıraları**, Vol. II, pp. 83-84.

<sup>56</sup> They reminded the Allies of the decisions taken at previous meetings on the subject of an Armenian territorial home, and declared that the ideal region for such a home would extend from Rize and Hasankale, leaving out Erzurum, and encompass Mufl, Lake Van and the area as far as the Iranian border; alternatively but that it could also be established between the Syrian border and the Euphrates, taking in Ceyhan, Sis and Maraş, a region which they thought should be separate and independent from Turkey, but that so as not to cause difficulty for the Allies, they would be prepared to accept a relationship with the Turkish Government like between Britain and its colonies. Uras, **op. cit.**, pp. 723-731.

<sup>57</sup> In the telegram which Lord Curzon sent to the British representative in İstanbul on 30 December, he described this event in the following words: "What actually passed was that Turkish delegates dissented from proposal of president of sub-commission to hear



A protest similar to that made by Şmet Pafla to his British colleague Lord Curzon in Lausanne was carried out by the Turkish Government to the French representative in Ankara. The disappointment felt at the fact that the sub-commission had heard the Armenian Delegation with the support of the French delegate was conveyed by Turkish Prime Minister Rauf Bey to the French representative in Ankara. Rauf Bey said that this situation gave Turkey the right to listen to the representatives of Muslims, who formed a majority in some countries, at Lausanne. This indirect reference to Muslims in countries under French rule was a veiled threat.<sup>58</sup>

While discussions concerning the Armenians continued at Lausanne, the Armenians living outside Turkey engaged in propaganda using every possible means.<sup>59</sup> With the commencement of discussions about minority issues at Lausanne, Armenian lobbying and propaganda activities also increased. On 10 December, Noradounghian Efendi, accompanied by one of the

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Bulgarians and Armenians at next meeting. President then stated that representatives of inviting powers on sub-commission were at liberty to hear what interested parties they wished but Turks were free to absent themselves. Unfortunately secretariat erroneously issued notice as to meeting of sub-commission to hear Bulgarians and Armenians and similar statement also appeared in some papers. Actually there was no meeting of sub-commission but representatives of inviting powers heard Bulgarians, Armenians and Agha Petros. Mistake of secretariat was satisfactorily explained to Turks who have no reason to complain except on account of slip by secretariat and they showed singular and unnecessary discourtesy in refusing to be present to hear statements of interested minorities. You should explain matter at once Adnan in order that Hassan Bey may not misinform Ankara". FO, 371/9058, pp. 2-4.

<sup>58</sup> **Lozan Telgrafları**, Vol. I, p. 290.

<sup>59</sup> For example, at the end of November the Armenian Delegation at Lausanne spread unfounded rumours to the effect that a territorial home for 700,000 Armenians had been agreed, and that Armenians whom it had been decided should remain in Turkey had been forcibly ejected. They even discussed this matter with Şmet Pafla, head of the Turkish Delegation. For an account of pro-Armenian feeling generated and anti-Turkish propaganda at Lausanne, see: Nafit Erez, "Lozan Konferansı ve Şviçre Kamuoyu", **Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi**, No. 34 (Temmuz 1970), p. 33. The truth emerged when Şmet Pafla asked Ankara for information on the subject: the Ankara representative of Near East Relief, an American Protestant missionary charity organisation which had been involved in work with the Armenians, had applied to the government for permission to move its orphanages to Syria. Permission had been granted, and the move had taken place. Meanwhile, due to extraordinary circumstances prevailing in Turkey, both Muslims and non-Muslims were temporarily forbidden to travel. When this prohibition was lifted for a month following the Mudanya Armistice, non-Muslims afraid of war breaking out again took the opportunity to leave Anatolia. The French calculated the numbers of those who left from the Adana region to be around 45,000. For telegrams on this subject exchanged by Şmet Pafla and Ankara, see: **Lozan Telgrafları**, Vol. I, pp. 129, 131-133, 136.

Armenian revolutionaries, visited  smet Pafla and demanded that an Armenian home be established in any part of Turkey.<sup>60</sup> On 8 December a Swiss Delegation and on 27 December the American, French and Swiss representatives of an organisation called the *Comit  Philarm nic* met with the Turkish Delegation to express their desire for an Armenian home. On 16 December a notice concerning the same demand and bearing the signatures of notable French figures was put up in the hotel where the Turkish Delegation was staying. British and American newspapers campaigned vigorously for an Armenian homeland, and in the United States five million signatures were collected in support of this aim.<sup>61</sup>

Following speeches by Curzon and other Allied representatives on the subject of an Armenian homeland delivered on 14 December, United States Delegation requested definite instructions on the subject from Washington. The latter responded on 26 December, not with instructions, but with questions about the views on the issue that were emerging at the conference. When the

<sup>60</sup> **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. I, p. 192. At first  smet Pafla regarded Noradounghian as someone with whom he could talk seriously and reach agreement, but when Noradounghian became increasingly insistent on the subject of an Armenian territorial home, he told him that this was absolutely out of the question, concluding with the words, "This conference is debating the fate of the empire, of Turkey. You hope to take advantage of this and do not wish to miss this opportunity. Let me tell you that if you wish to pursue your endeavour to the end, feel free to do so. I say only that if you do so, all trust between us will be swept away. I realise that you do not think it is in your interests to reach agreement with me at a time when the claims, which you have been pursuing as a national cause for so long, are being decided. Once the trust and amicability between us have been destroyed, you will come to me again and seek me out. But then it will be impossible for us to talk and moreover unnecessary. Do not forget, when that time comes I will not see: you".  smet Pafla related that at later stages of the conference, Noradounghian asked several times for an appointment to see: him, but that he instructed his doorkeeper, "I have no time. It is impossible for me to see: him. If he asks the reason, tell him I say he knows what it is". " See: **Hat ralar**, Vol. II, pp. 80-81.

<sup>61</sup> **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. I, pp. 182, 215, 229-230, 289; for the full text of this statement, see: **Journal de Gen ve**, 19 December 1922. The head of the Swiss Delegation insisted on an Armenian territorial home in increasingly strongly worded terms, and when he said, "I will pursue the matter. My predecessor fought for this cause until he died, and I will fight to the end,"  smet Pafla replied, "What you want is a course which will make harmony between the people of Turkey impossible. You are on a misguided course. You cannot succeed. You are proposing the division of my country. After fighting throughout the World War to save our country from fragmentation, we went on to fight another four years. Any struggle that your society might engage in will be negligible compared to the countries and adversities, which we have overcome. You will be far outweighed". See: **Hat ralar**, Vol. II, p. 82.

United States Delegation reported that in their opinion the Allied delegates were using the issue as a bargaining tool rather than debating it seriously, they were given permission to speak on the subject of the Armenians at the sub-commission.<sup>62</sup> At the session on 29 December the sub-commission discussed passing an amnesty for crimes committed by minorities in Turkey, at which the American representative Dwight said that the Turkish Armenians abroad should be included in the amnesty.<sup>63</sup> Dwight presented the views of the American public on the Armenian question at the session on 30 December, and issued a statement to the press on the subject of an Armenian homeland, saying that the United States was sympathetic to the idea of creating an autonomous region as a refuge for Armenians. Letters stating the views and demands of the Federal Assembly of American Protestant Churches and the Americans for Armenia Society were included in the introduction.<sup>64</sup>

Under pressure from missionary societies and Armenian lobbies, the American Government asked its representatives in Lausanne to exert pressure on the Turks or the French for the establishment of an Armenian homeland in Cilicia or northern Syria. However, the United States Delegation at Lausanne saw the resolve of the Turks on this subject and was unable to persist in their demands. There was nothing more it could do. The American President considered that Grew's press statement should satisfy the sensitivity of the American public.<sup>65</sup> In a telegram sent to Washington by the American representatives on 1 January 1923,

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<sup>62</sup> Grabill, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

<sup>63</sup> **Lozan Telgraflar** , T. 1, C. 1, K. 2, pp. 221-222.

<sup>64</sup> FO, 371/9058, pp. 133-141. In another document dated 18 December enclosed in this letter, it was said that a bill had been presented to Congress authorising the American President to grant a loan of 20 million dollars from the Treasury for the purpose, if a sufficiently large piece of land was granted to the Armenians at the conference. See: **Lozan Tutanaklar** , T. I, C. 1, K. 2, pp. 241-246; Grew, *op. cit.*, pp. 524-525; Uras, *op. cit.*, pp. XL-XLII. In his memoirs Rza Nur relates that he responded to this speech as follows: "Since the Americans wish the Armenians to be comfortable for humane reasons, and wish to serve humanity, let them grant them a homeland in the United States...Because there is no comfort in Turkey as yet. The United States is a fully organised, comfortable, happy and rich country. The Armenians will be very comfortable there", at which there was general laughter. When Montagna said, "Tomorrow is Christmas. Give it as a Christmas present", he had responded, "It is not our custom to give presents at Christmas, which is a Christian festival, so since you have such custom, you may give it". However, none of this conversation was recorded in the minutes. See: **Dr. R za Nur'un Lozan Hat ralar** , pp. 114-115.

<sup>65</sup> Grabill, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

he said that in making his presentation concerning an Armenian homeland to the sub-commission, he had made no proposals on the subject, and that so long as the Allied delegates did not propose such a program, the American delegates would not take any initiative, or enter into any undertaking, that there was no question of any real backing on the issue, and that the Turks were aware of this situation.<sup>66</sup> Barton and Peet, who were included in the American Delegation at the request of missionary societies, saw that there was nothing more to be done, and left Switzerland before the proposal for an Armenian homeland was rejected by the sub-commission.<sup>67</sup>

As reported by the American representative, the Allied delegates had no intention of giving genuine backing to the Armenian question under existing conditions, but continued to use the Armenians to achieve their own military and political objectives, while putting on a show for the benefit of their own publics and Armenian lobbies.<sup>68</sup> In private Montagna tried to persuade Rıza Nur not to react with such strong measures as absence from the session at which this issue was to be discussed. He promised that he would not allow the Armenian Delegation to be heard, so persuading the Turks to attend a session at which they would merely discuss the matter amongst themselves. Rıza Nur recounts developments in these words: "Montagna said, 'my dear fellow, the British and French have used these people for their own affairs and interests, and thereby offended them. Now they feel a moral obligation to demand a homeland for them. At that time the Armenians believed those promises. Accept it! Let them do it.' I said, 'It is unthinkable. Never! Are we supposed to give them a homeland? We will not permit even the suggestion of such an idea.' At which he said, 'that is not what I mean. They will only say it for the sake of appearances. They will not insist on establishing a homeland.'"<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 520 from *Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 941-942; Grew, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 531.

<sup>67</sup> Grabill, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

<sup>68</sup> In December 1922, Greek and Armenian volunteers from İstanbul in the guise of labourers were sent to British divisions at Çanakkale. *Lozan Telgrafları*, Vol. I, p. 231; in April 1923, Nestorians and Armenians were employed in the British military manoeuvres in the area of Revandüz. FO, 839/50.

<sup>69</sup> *Dr. Rıza Nur'un Lozan Hatıraları*, pp. 117-118.

With such promises, the sub-commission convened on 6 January 1923, under Montagna as chairman, and brought up the question of an Armenian homeland again. In the most mild terms, he explained what they meant by this concept in the following words: "Our wish is only for a simple local regime which will allow the Armenians to maintain their ancient traditions, while fully preserving the integrity of the Turkish state. The Armenian home will thus not be a territory closed to others living on Turkish soil, or outside Turkish administration; it will only be a region where Armenians scattered throughout the world will be able to gather." According to Montagna, the Allies would leave the choice of location for the region that would be a home for the Armenians to be decided at discussions between Turkey and the League of Nations, on the grounds that it was necessary to carry out a thorough investigation of local conditions, and that it was more appropriate the issue should not be treated as a political one. At this stage, they only wanted Turkey to accept this proposal in principle.<sup>70</sup>

After Montagna, the British delegate Sir Horace Rumbold made a speech along the same lines. Rumbold said that Turkey possessed extensive land in Anatolia, and that the country had a sparse population, so that it should present no difficulties for Turkey to give the Armenians a homeland. For this purpose, he explained, since as a result of the agreement concluded between France and the Ankara Government the Syrian frontier had been moved some considerable distance to the south, this strip of land whose area totaled 19,000 square kilometers could be given to the Armenians, and would be sufficient to hold a population of 200,000-300,000 Armenians. Political relations between the Armenian home and Turkey could be modeled on those between Britain and its colonies, he explained.<sup>71</sup>

Turkish delegate Rıza Nur now took the floor and said that the Allied Powers had the right to make the requests just voiced; that the countries in question were under moral obligation to the

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<sup>70</sup> **Lozan Tutanaklar** , T. 1, C. 1, K. 2, pp. 273-275.

<sup>71</sup> **Ibid.**, pp. 276-277. In the file of The Records of the British Foreign Office containing the minutes for this speech by Rumbold, the following is written: "This shows that we have really made a genuine effort in favour of obtaining an Armenian national home, and so should receive as wide circulation as possible". From these words it is evident that the British realised an Armenian national home would not be achieved, but wished to be absolved as far as possible from public blame. FO, 371/9058, pp. 228-229.

Armenian or Assyrian (Assyro) peoples, and that the Allied Powers were exploiting these peoples as political weapons for attacking Turkey; that for this reason they were responsible for the disasters which befell them; that he therefore regarded statements made under these conditions as if they had never occurred and as invalid; and that rather than listen to more statements of this kind, it would be better to withdraw from the session. Although sub-commission chairman Montagna said that such a move would violate the rules of the conference and asked him to remain and listen to the statement of the French representative, Rıza Nur declared that he could not remain any longer and announced that the Turkish Delegation was withdrawing from the session.<sup>72</sup>

The Allies sent a protest note to Çsmet Paşa,<sup>73</sup> who responded in another note, saying that Rıza Nur had done the right thing; that inviting people who were not part of the conference to the sessions and performing *fait accomplis* were unacceptable, and a cause of regrettable incidents; but that nevertheless he would regard the

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 278; Grew, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 530-531. The French representative De Lacroix said that they wished the Armenians to be granted a certain degree of local and administrative autonomy under Turkish sovereignty in an area close to the Republic of Erivan, and pointing out that provisions to similar effect had been incorporated in treaties signed at the end of the First World War, asserted that this was a reasonable demand. **Lozan Tutanaklar** , T. 1, C. 1, K. 2, pp. 278-279. In his memoirs Rıza Nur gives the following account of this incident: "I said, 'The Allied Powers have used the Armenians as a political tool and thrown them into the flames. They incited them to rebel against their own country. The result was their chastisement. They were chastised with epidemic disease, starvation and emigration. The entire responsibility for this lies not with us, but with the Allied Powers. If a reward is required, you may give it...You cannot win friends with the property of your foes. You think that the Armenians are oppressed, that they need a home and independence. We are convinced. But the number of oppressed nations in the world is not one but many. How many times has Egypt been in ferment for the sake of freedom; just recently blood was being spilt there. India, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco want freedom and their homeland. For how many centuries, and how much blood have the Irish spilt for their homeland and independence?...You give freedom and homes to them; then we may give to the Armenians. All that you recite is as if it never existed. We cannot remain here under these conditions. I am quitting this session'....They did not record this last part of my words in the minutes. They adjusted the minutes as they pleased and falsified them. What duplicity was this?...Yet my words found their way into the newspapers of the time, repeated *verbatim*. A few days later members of the Irish independence movement wrote me a letter thanking me for mentioning the Irish among the oppressed nations who desired freedom. " **Dr. Rıza Nur'un Lozan Hatıraları** , pp. 119-120; **Écho de Paris**, **Gazette de Lausanne** and **Journal de Genève**, 7 January 1923.

<sup>73</sup> For the telegram sent by the Allied representatives, see: FO, 371/9058, pp. 152-153; FO, 839/22, No. 928.

matter as closed.<sup>74</sup> Following these disagreements the Armenian question was not discussed again by the sub-commission. In the accepted texts of the provisions concerning minorities drawn up by the sub-commission, there is no item concerning the Armenians.<sup>75</sup>

In a telegram to Ankara explaining the situation, Կսմեթ Փափա said, "When they deliberately bring up the Armenian question, we are naturally obliged to be firm and unyielding".<sup>76</sup> In his memoirs, Joseph C. Grew, the American representative at Lausanne, described the Turkish withdrawal from the session as a scandal. Curzon, Barrère and the Italian delegates said in private discussions that the creation of an Armenian homeland or new small distinct regions for the Armenians, or the formulation of any concrete plan aimed at achieving the same did not seem possible. According to Grew, the Turks held firmly to the opinion that so long as the Armenians were not tools to foreign intrigues, those who remained in Turkey would be secure, but that there was no question of Armenians who had left the country returning, even in the event of Turkey losing no land or sovereignty. This was the point on which the Turks were most resolved.<sup>77</sup> In his address to the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 3 January 1923, Turkish Prime Minister Rauf Orbay declared that there could under no circumstances be an Armenia other than that which already existed. At a meeting between the British representative Henderson and the Ankara representative Hasan Bey in Կստանբուլ on

<sup>74</sup> For Կսմեթ Փափա's letter, see: FO, 371/9058, pp. 185-188. In his memoirs Րօզա Նուր said that Lord Curzon sent a protest note on behalf of the Allies, and Կսմեթ Փափա wrote that Marquis Garoni had written a protest letter. See: **Dr. Րօզա Նուր'ուն Լոզան Դատարար**, pp. 121-122; **Դատարար**, Vol. II, pp. 83-84.

<sup>75</sup> For the texts in question dated 11 January 1923, see: **Լոզան Կուտանակլար**, T. 1, C. 1, K. 2, pp. 289-292.

<sup>76</sup> "From this point on, the Allies began making detailed declarations and claims for an Armenian territorial home, and for Assyrian and Chaldean homes. Րօզա Նուր said that he could not allow this declaration to be made, and insisted to the chairman that he be allowed to speak on time, and finally despite the efforts of the chairman he left the commission with his delegation. This was an unavoidable step in response to the Allies, who were endeavouring to affect a *fait accompli* in order to speak about Armenian issues and make proposals...In a joint letter written to me by the conference chairman, they spoke of the incident and declared that it showed our contempt. I replied to them that we were aware of the situation, that by being subjected to declarations and claims we had been constrained to defend ourselves, and that the incident might be regarded as closed. Recently, we responded forcefully to another attempt at *fait accompli*. When they deliberately try to speak of the Armenian question, we are naturally obliged to act with determination and vehemence". **Լոզան Ելգրաֆլար**, Vol. I, pp. 345-346.

<sup>77</sup> Grew, **op. cit.**, Vol. I, p. 531.

7 January, it was reiterated that there was no question of agreeing to an Armenian homeland.<sup>78</sup>

The Allied delegates realised that it was impossible to demand land or special privileges for the Armenians from Turkey, and that tactics designed to force such concessions would not work. Prior to the session on 9 January, they met with the Turkish Delegation and told them that they would deliver short speeches on the subject of homes for the Armenians, Assyros and Chaldeans, and that if İsmet Paşa briefly rejected these demands, the question would be closed.<sup>79</sup> Having agreed among themselves to this course of action, the Minorities Sub-commission met for the presentation and discussion of the report drawn up by Montagna on the work of the sub-commission, and the Armenian question was discussed for the last time in very mild terms at this session. In his opening address, sub-commission chairman Montagna said that they were obliged to return the Armenian question and that of the Assyros and Chaldeans to the commission, and that the sub-commission had met with the refusal of the Turkish representatives. In their addresses Barrère and Lord Curzon said that granting a home for the Armenians would not violate Turkish sovereignty, but that the Turkish Delegation had refused to accept this, and that after peace had been concluded they hoped that Turkey would take some steps in this direction. İsmet Paşa said that Turkey interpreted the question of homelands, as division of the country, and that there had been no change in their standpoint.<sup>80</sup>

In a telegram to London concerning this session at which the question of an Armenian home was closed, Lord Curzon said that the committee's work had been most beneficial and tolerant; that faced with the İsmet Paşa's resolute opposition they had been obliged to discontinue their demands for an Armenian home; that they had no means of forcing the Turks to accept this proposal; and that the Turks attached no importance to world opinion.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> FO, 371/9058, pp. 180-181.

<sup>79</sup> "He confirmed that there would be a brief statement concerning Armenian, Assyro and Chaldean homes, and that in response I would give a short speech rejecting it absolutely". **Lozan Telgrafları**, Vol. I, pp. 360-361.

<sup>80</sup> **Lozan Tutanakları**, T. 1, C. 1, K. 1, pp. 295-319.

<sup>81</sup> "I once again pleaded cause of Armenian, Assyro, Chaldeans, and Bulgarian refugees. But İsmet Pasha once more refused categorically even to consider the idea of a national home either for Armenians or any other minority and as we have no means of forcing Turks to accept and cannot introduce such a clause in treaty there remain no means of influence or pressure but world opinion to which in their present frame of mind they attach not the smallest importance". FO, 371/9058, p. 198.



◊smet Pafla, in his telegram to Ankara about the same session, described Curzon's speech as, "on the whole quite restrained and conciliatory". "The minorities question may be regarded as satisfactorily concluded", he reported. "The Armenian homeland matter is also drawing to an end. It is notable that the respected American delegate did not participate at all in the debate".<sup>82</sup> With the speeches at this session, the representatives of the Allied Powers were satisfied that they had performed their final duties towards the Armenians and could now pursue their own interests without distraction. At a meeting between American representative Grew and chief Turkish delegate ◊smet Pafla on 14 January, at which both sides expounded their views, the Armenian question was not even mentioned.<sup>83</sup> American President W. C. Harding, in a letter dated 15 January 1923 to Secretary of State Hughes, said that the Turkish refusal to grant a national home to the Armenians had disappointed religious circles in America, but that not much could be done for the Armenians, as even their fiercest supporters were not prepared to contemplate war on their behalf.<sup>84</sup>

When the Armenian question was closed in this way at the peace talks, the Armenian Delegation in Lausanne sent a telegram to London on 10 January 1923, asking that the matter be kept on the agenda, and that the British delegates at Lausanne be instructed not to sign the agreement before the Armenian question had been resolved.<sup>85</sup> Naville, president of the *Ligue Internationale Philarménienne*, visited Lord Curzon on 20 January and together they reviewed the situation. Naville asked that before the conference closed the Allies issue a declaration to the effect that they did not regard the Armenian question as resolved. He explained that such a declaration would keep Armenian hopes alive. Curzon replied that issuing such declaration would be giving false hopes to the Armenians, upon which Naville asked that an international commission be set up to deal with the problems of Armenian refugees in European countries.<sup>86</sup> On 2 February, the Armenian Delegation reiterated these requests to the Allied

<sup>82</sup> **Lozan Telgrafları** , Vol. I, pp. 360-361.

<sup>83</sup> Grew, **op. cit.**, Vol. I, pp. 534-535.

<sup>84</sup> Armaoğlu, **op. cit.**, p. 521 from **Papers**, Vol. II, p. 950.

<sup>85</sup> Concerning this submission, it writes on the British Foreign Office file that the government/Foreign Office had done its best, and that the Armenians should actually blame the French. See: FO, 371/9106, pp. 58-59.

<sup>86</sup> FO, 839/12, No. 1128.

delegates.<sup>87</sup> Armenian leaders in Lausanne arranged private talks with a Turkish Delegation and attempted, sometimes with threats and sometimes pleas, to wrest some promises concerning an Armenian home, but to no avail.<sup>88</sup> The Armenian Delegation also applied for assistance from France and Italy, and the Armenian Friends Society from Russia. France was asked not to recognise the decisions of a conference which had not taken Armenian demands into consideration; while Italy was asked that if the resolution concerning an Armenian home could not be obtained at Lausanne, at least the establishment of an Armenian homeland in principle be incorporated into the treaty, and the implementation of the principle made the responsibility of the League of Nations or a special commission. Russia was asked to conclude a special agreement with Turkey, which would extend the boundaries of the Caucasian Armenian Republic as far as Van and Bitlis. But from no quarter did they receive a satisfactory reply. Russia responded with a letter, dated 25 January 1923, saying only that the country would admit a certain number of Armenian refugees.<sup>89</sup> When the Armenian Delegation was given no assistance by either the Allied Powers or the Soviet Union for a homeland, they wrote a letter to the League of Nations on 25 January. Referring to resolutions earlier taken in their favour by the League of Nations, they requested that their situation be discussed at the assembly to be held on 29 January, explaining that they had not entirely lost hope at Lausanne, but wished for the backing of the assembly.<sup>90</sup> A second long letter was written shortly afterwards to the League of Nations by the Armenian Delegation in Lausanne. Speaking of the promises of the Allies, Armenian services to the French in the *Légion d'Orient*, and the situation of refugees in various countries, they declared that the only solution was the establishment of an Armenian homeland for which they asked support.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>87</sup> FO, 839/12, No. 1402.

<sup>88</sup> **Dr. R za Nur'un Lozan Hat ralar** , pp. 123-128.

<sup>89</sup> Uras, **op. cit.**, pp. 732-734. In a telegram which şmet Pafla sent to Ankara on 24 December 1922, he relates a meeting between himself and Georgy V. Chicherin. Apparently, the Armenians had come to Chicherin and asked for land for the refugees, and he had promised to grant land in Russia. Since this meeting took place at the end of December, it is evident that the Armenians had already realised that their demands for an Armenian home would not be met. See: **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. I, p. 273.

<sup>90</sup> FO, 371/9101, pp. 73-77.

<sup>91</sup> On the file containing this letter in the British Foreign Office Archive, it writes, "most of this is perfectly true. But there is nothing more that can be done". See: FO, 371/9109, pp. 90-98.

When the Armenian representatives realised that they were not going to get what they wanted at Lausanne, they issued a statement on 2 February 1923, and departed. In this statement they spoke of the countless services rendered by the Armenians to the Allied Powers during the First World War; that above all they had formed the nucleus of the *Légion d'Orient* which had won such renown in Palestine and Cilicia; that they had fought alone on the borders of Caucasia in 1918; that they had prevented the Turks from advancing on the British Army and on Iraq; that in the course of these activities they had suffered enormous losses of life and property, for which figures had been given in their previous declaration; that none of the promises made to them at the time of performing these services and in subsequent years by various quarters had been fulfilled at this conference; that the Allied Powers had deserted the Armenian cause; and that they wanted the Allies to turn their attention again to this matter.<sup>92</sup>

Armenian representatives sent letter after letter to both representatives of the Allied Powers and to the League of Nations, tirelessly reiterating their demands. In the end, the British stopped replying to these letters.<sup>93</sup> When the Lausanne talks were discontinued on 4 February 1923, the Armenians saw this as giving fresh hope for an Armenian homeland. But the Allies were not of the same opinion. On 27 March chairman of the Armenian Delegation, A. Aharonian, wrote to Lord Curzon requesting that he revive the question of Armenian home when negotiations resumed. In his reply dated 4 April, Curzon stated, "While it is not anticipated that there will be a new opportunity of raising the question of an Armenian home at the forthcoming negotiations, the matter will be borne in mind in case such opportunity may occur".<sup>94</sup> France, meanwhile, temporised by giving Armenian Delegation the impression that, although wishing to do something for them, they were hindered by the failure to obtain the support of Britain. On 25 April Armenian delegate L. Pachalian applied to the British Government, saying that France desired the establishment of an Armenian home under the auspices of the League of Nations,

<sup>92</sup> For the entire text of this memorandum, see Uras, *op. cit.*, pp. xxxvi-xxxviii.

<sup>93</sup> Curzon did not even reply to the memorandum sent to him by the Armenian representatives in Paris on 2 February. In response to an application to himself on this subject made on 15 March, it was said: "We have done what we can for the Armenians. We did not think it necessary to reply to the memorandum". FO, 371/9109, pp. 155-163.

<sup>94</sup> FO, 371/9109, pp. 175-179.

and asking what Britain's opinion was on this matter and what course it intended to take. British documents show that Britain did not take France's promise on this matter seriously: it was said that the French had made no mention to them about establishing an Armenian homeland in Syria, and asked how much money France intended to allocate for such an objective.<sup>95</sup>

After the Armenian question was thus dropped from the agenda at the Lausanne talks, reports were received that even before the peace treaty was signed, Greece and France were arranging for Armenian militants to enter Turkey and encouraging them to engage in seditious activities; upon which the Turkish Delegation at Lausanne sent a note to the conference secretariat on 12 May protesting the situation.<sup>96</sup> A few days later, news was received that the Dashnag and Hinchag headquarters in Germany had sent two groups to Switzerland to assassinate the Turkish Delegation, and on 16 May 1923, Կսմեթ Քաֆա wrote letters to the chairmen of the British, French and Italian Delegations in Lausanne informing them of this situation and protesting it. On 18 May Turkey's representative in Paris sent a note to the French Foreign Ministry.<sup>97</sup> In response to this news the Council of the Armenian Patriarchate in Կստանբուլ issued an announcement accusing the Allies, who had made certain unacceptable demands at Lausanne, of spreading such rumours, explaining that the Armenians now realised where their own interests lay, and wished to maintain amicable relations with the Turks. This announcement disturbed the British.<sup>98</sup>

During the second phase of the Lausanne Conference, the question of the Armenians who had left Turkey being allowed to return was discussed. At a meeting of the first commission on 19 May, Rumbold said that the non-Muslims and particularly Armenians who had left Turkey following the Turkish victory in the War of Independence from fear of harm, and who were not included in the population exchange, had not been able to return; and that the Turkish Government should not prevent them returning. Montagna of Italy and Pellé of France supported him.

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<sup>95</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 14-20.

<sup>96</sup> For the letter in question, see: **Lozan Telgrafları**, Vol. II, p. 273.

<sup>97</sup> For the letters in question, see: **Ibid.**, Vol. II, p. 308-309.

<sup>98</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 58-60.

«smet Pafla said that he would consult Ankara,<sup>99</sup> and on the evening of the same day reported on the discussions and asked for instructions on this issue.<sup>100</sup> At the session on 22 May of the General Amnesty Sub-commission, the subject was debated again. In the telegram which «smet Pafla sent to Ankara the same evening, he said that although he had refused to enter into any undertaking about the return of the Armenians who had left the country, in accordance with the terms of the population exchange agreement it would not be appropriate to object to the return of those who had left «stanbul.<sup>101</sup> In Ankara's reply dated 23 May, it was stated that the government was opposed to the return of those who had collaborated with the enemy and fled from Turkey at the approach of the Turkish army.<sup>102</sup>

The Armenian Delegation applied to Britain on 31 May with the request that provisions be incorporated into the treaty concerning the Armenians and Armenian property.<sup>103</sup> The *Ligue Internationale Philarménienne* sent telegrams on 1 June to the conference chairman and the British Foreign Office asking that provisions be included permitting the return of Armenians to Turkey.<sup>104</sup> The same requests were repeated on 2 June.<sup>105</sup> The British replied that they had done all they could in this regard.<sup>106</sup> At the meeting of the first commission on 4 June, Rumbold brought up once again the question of those Armenians who had emigrated from Turkey. Ryan and Pellé supported him. «smet Pafla explained that innocent people would not be prevented from returning individually, but that he could give no guarantee that returns *en masse* would be permitted.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>99</sup> **Lozan Tutanaklar** , T. II, C. 1, K. 1, Ankara, A. Ü. Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, 1972, pp. 121-125.

<sup>100</sup> **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. II, pp. 323-324.

<sup>101</sup> **Ibid.**, p. 335.

<sup>102</sup> **Ibid.**, p. 337.

<sup>103</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 91-97.

<sup>104</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 81-87; FO, 839/52, p. 646.

<sup>105</sup> FO, 839/52, No. 646.

<sup>106</sup> **Idem.**

<sup>107</sup> **Lozan Tutanaklar** , T. II, C. 1, K. 1, pp. 157-163. In his telegram concerning this session, «smet Pafla said: "Since we had explicitly stated a view on this point, it was to our advantage that the Allies did not insist. If this issue is not instigated again at another opportunity, the question of the return of the Armenian refugees will be closed with our explicit refusal in verbal statements". **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. II, pp. 395-396. In his telegram about the issues still undecided by the conference as of 7 June, and the possible means of resolving these issues, «smet Pafla said that there was discussion of allowing those Armenians who had left the country earlier or later to return under a

On 2 July the Armenians applied to the British Foreign Office once more asking that those of them who had left the country be allowed to return. The reply, dated 7 July, was a vague "your request will be taken into consideration". On the British Foreign Office file containing this document is a note reading, "it is useless to go on trying to defend an indefensible position".<sup>108</sup> Meanwhile, a pro-Armenian campaign led by the Protestant and Catholic churches was in full flood. On 5-6 May the Federation of Belgian Catholic Societies issued a demand for Armenian independence,<sup>109</sup> and on 28 June the Irish Presbyterian Church asked that promises formerly made to the Armenians be kept.<sup>110</sup>

At a special session on 11 July, Rumbold announced that a law had been enacted by the Turkish Parliament under which Armenian, Greek and Albanian Turkish citizens who had served the British were to be deported. Subsequently, it was discovered that no such law had been passed.<sup>111</sup> At the final session of the Lausanne peace talks on 17 July, Rumbold brought up the question of Armenians returning to Turkey again, and the other representatives supported his views. Şmet Pafla again said that they could give no undertaking on this question. The debate came to an end.<sup>112</sup> The subject was closed, as Turkey wished.<sup>113</sup>

In the Lausanne Peace Treaty, signed on 24 July 1923, there is no mention of the Armenians.<sup>114</sup> Subsequently, on 27 July, the Joint Council of British Armenian Societies applied to the British Foreign Office, saying that promises made to the Armenians had not been kept at Lausanne, and that Britain should at least assist

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general amnesty, but that they had rejected this suggestion. See: **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. II, p. 410. In a reply from the British Foreign Office to the Armenians on 20 June, it said that the Allied delegates had conveyed their requests concerning the Armenians to the Turkish Delegation; that there was little they could do at this stage; and advising them to win public support through the press. FO, 371/9110, pp. 91-97.

<sup>108</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 117-123.

<sup>109</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 37-38.

<sup>110</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 124-128.

<sup>111</sup> **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. II, pp. 562-563.

<sup>112</sup> **Lozan Tutanaklar** , T. II, C. 1, K. 1, pp. 190-194.

<sup>113</sup> **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. II, p. 581. At that time Turkish and United States Delegations at Lausanne were holding meetings concerning a possible agreement. In a telegram dated 26 July sent by Ankara to Şmet Pafla, he was asked not to enter into any undertaking that would allow the Armenians to return to Turkey. See: **Lozan Telgraflar** , Vol. II, pp. 610-611.

<sup>114</sup> The Turkish, British, French, Italian, Japanese, Greek and Rumanian delegates signed the Lausanne Peace Treaty. Annexed agreements and protocols also carry the signatures of the Soviet Union, Belgium, Portugal and Bulgaria.

Armenian refugees and with reuniting families that had been separated. This request was passed over with a comment about waiting until Turkey joined the League of Nations.<sup>115</sup> On 2 August the Armenians requested assistance for themselves, and that the committee be set up under the auspices of the League of Nations for the establishment of an Armenian homeland, and that this committee either be under the patronage of the Allies or formed by the Allies. This request was rejected on financial grounds, with the comment that only the League of Nations could attempt such an undertaking.<sup>116</sup> In letters to the League of Nations and Allied Powers on 9 August 1923, the Armenians expressed their disappointment and opposition to the Lausanne Treaty. They demanded that something be done.<sup>117</sup> Britain and the other Allies passed over these letters in silence. A similar letter was sent to the foreign ministries of the Allied Powers on 22 August.<sup>118</sup> On 23 August L. Pachalian, on behalf of the Armenian delegates, applied to Britain, saying that the French Government wished the Armenian question to be put before the League of Nations, with a reminder that Britain and Italy had asked them to wait until the Lausanne Conference was over, and asking what Britain's views were on this matter. The British reply stated only that the letter of 23 August had been received.<sup>119</sup> A. Aharonian wrote to the Italian Government on 4 September, saying that promises made to the Armenians at Sèvres and in the other treaties had not been kept at Lausanne, and protesting the treaty. The Italians, assuming that the same letter had been sent to the British, consulted the British about their opinion so that their reply would reflect a joint Allied view. In their reply to the Italian Government on 17 September, Britain said that they had received numerous letters to this effect over the previous six weeks; that the intentions of the Armenians were to oblige the Allies to assist them, to enable Armenian refugees to settle in the three Allied countries, or to persuade the

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<sup>115</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 142-147.

<sup>116</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 152-162.

<sup>117</sup> On 9 August 1923, the Republic of Armenia wrote a letter to the League of Nations explaining that the issue had not been resolved but remained unaltered, and asking that it be put onto the agenda again by some means. In a protest document written to the representatives of the Allied Powers on the same date, they said that the Armenian nation, which had fought for its independence as a result of the shining promises of the Allies, had been forgotten; and that they opposed the Lausanne Treaty. For the full text of their letter, see: Uras, *op. cit.*, pp. 736-738.

<sup>118</sup> FO, 371/9110, pp. 172-179.

<sup>119</sup> FO, 371/9111, pp. 6-10.

British Government to take the problem to the League of Nations; and that they had merely acknowledged receipt of these documents in their replies.<sup>120</sup>

The Lausanne Peace Treaty recognised the existing borders of the Turkish Republic and its status as an independent and sovereign state. The birth of this new state in Anatolia and in the Balkans was completed at Lausanne.<sup>121</sup> At Lausanne, "the age of the Ottoman state, with its territories spread over three continents, sea, estates, property, rights, laws, receivables, debts, commercial privileges, capitulations, and all other paraphernalia, was ended".<sup>122</sup> The Armenians, who for half a century had been deceived by promises made by the major powers into being exploited against the Turks, with whom they had coexisted for centuries, were thus abandoned by those same states at Lausanne, and left alone with their own sufferings and those they had caused. The Armenian question, which had been a preoccupation of the last period of Ottoman history, was dealt with at Lausanne, and the matter closed along with many others. The Lausanne system remains valid today. Yet despite this, an issue that is quite clearly not for the benefit of the Armenians is still revived by some governments, sometimes from a desire to gain the support of Armenian lobbies at election times, and sometimes as a means of exerting pressure on Turkey to obtain concessions.

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<sup>120</sup> FO, 371/9111, pp. 36-41.

<sup>121</sup> **Lozan Telgrafları**, Vol. II, p. ix.

<sup>122</sup> **Idem.**