



## Community News

## Diocese Responds to Desperate Condition of Armenians in Bulgaria

NEW YORK, NY – It was five months ago that the desperate Bulgarian-Armenian community appealed for aid from the Armenians in America. Immediately, the Diocese of the Armenian Church under the leadership of the Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, instructed all its parishes to hold a special collection on Easter Sunday.

As a result of this effort, which was under the direction of the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR), soup kitchens were instituted in Armenian churches or chapels in all 13 cities in Bulgaria with Armenian populations. Manned by volunteers, the kitchens feed on a weekly basis the most needy—the elderly, sick, pensioners and children.

The American-Armenian contribution also established a camp for the Armenian youth in Bulgaria, which accommodates up to 140 young people.

The conditions in Bulgaria have been critical due to the gov-

ernment's economic policies, which have brought hyper-inflation to the country. With virtually no bread due to lack of flour, and a pound of meat costing \$2 and cheese \$3, most pensioners cannot afford these staples since their monthly pension ranges from \$3 to \$4. In addition, medicine is so expensive that the critically ill cannot afford it.

It was in mid-March that the Primate received a fax from the Armenian Diocesan Council Chairman in Bulgaria, Onnig Kirazian, representing the Primate, Archbishop Dirayr Mardigian, asking for emergency help.

Archbishop Barsamian immediately sent \$5,000 from the emergency fund of the Diocese, and then asked all Diocesan parishes to contribute. Following the fundraising efforts, another \$14,000 was sent, bringing the total contribution to \$19,000.

The small community of Bulgarian Armenians in this coun-

try also organized themselves into an emergency committee under the leadership of Haig Haigian, and collected approximately \$2,500.

In Bulgaria, a committee has been formed to address this critical situation. Its head is the Diocesan Council Chairman, along with the participation of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the Yerevan Committee. The group is involved in monitoring and operating the soup kitchens and in distributing the food.

Though a positive start has been made in trying to alleviate the desperate conditions of the Armenians in Bulgaria, the situation is still critical. Those who would like to bring an end to the severe deprivation of the Bulgarian-Armenian community can send checks payable to FAR-Bulgarian Relief Fund, Diocese of the Armenian Church, 630 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

## Tchilingirian New Director of Zoryan Institute

CAMBRIDGE, MA – After a yearlong search in the academic community, the Corporate Board of the Zoryan Institute for Contemporary Armenian Research and Documentation (Cambridge and Toronto) has announced the appointment of Hratch Tchilingirian as Director of the Institute. "As a member of the new generation of Armenian scholars, Mr. Tchilingirian is well suited for the task of steering the Institute into the 21st century," observed Kourken Sarkissian, Corporate Board Member.

A PhD candidate in the Sociology Department at the London School of Economics, Tchilingirian is studying the society of Nagorno Karabagh, with special focus on the struggle for self-determination, the war and the state-building process. He is the author of numerous articles on Armenia and Karabagh published in Europe, North America and the

Middle East. From 1990 to 1995, Tchilingirian was editor of Window Quarterly, a California-based journal dealing with contemporary issues in the Armenian church and community.

"For over a decade, the Zoryan Institute has provided ground-breaking research, analysis and publications to the academic, professional and wider communities," stated Tchilingirian upon accepting the appointment. "The challenge of adding to the considerable body of work achieved by the Institute is one I look forward to meeting."

The second Director in the 15-year history of the Zoryan Institute, Tchilingirian will draw upon his diverse background—which includes an MPA (Public Administration/Political Science) and MDiv (Theology)—to design and implement new research and documentation projects within the Institute's three main areas

of concentration: the diaspora, Republic of Armenia, and the Genocide.

Tchilingirian's inaugural task as Director of the Zoryan Institute was to finalize the purchase and transfer to the Institute of the archives of Royal and Lizzie Cole, American missionaries in Turkish Armenia and Kurdistan in the years 1868 to 1908. The acquisition was made possible through the efforts of Kouken Sarkissian, Prof. Vahakn Dadrian and Prof. Saul Nigoghosian. Tchilingirian predicts that, as a priceless primary resource, the Cole Collection will have a significant impact on the study of Armenian massacres and Armenian life in the late 19th century. An introduction and background to the Cole Collection has been prepared and will be published by the Institute soon.

According to Tchilingirian, the Institute's projects for the coming year include a series of sym-

inars on diaspora-Armenian relations, which will be held in various cities across North America; an international conference on the 10th anniversary of the "Karabagh Movement," scheduled for May 1998; publication of books, including Zoryan-sponsored English translation of Dr. Yair Auron's *The Banality of Indifference*, dealing with the attitudes of the Jewish community in Palestine and the Zionist Movement, as well as the state of Israel, to the Armenian Genocide; an introduction to the newly-acquired Cole Collection; and a book on comparative genocide, a joint venture with Macmillan Press. The Institute continues to co-publish (with University of Toronto) its award-winning *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*.

The Zoryan Institute is a publicly supported, non-profit organization, devoted to the study, analysis, and presentation of contemporary Armenian issues in the context of regional and global changes. The Zoryan Institute is located at 19 Day Street, Cambridge, MA 02140.