

FRATRICIDE FIFTY YEARS APART

Posted on March 1, 2018 by Keghart



Category: [Opinions](#)



By Dikran Abrahamian MD, Ontario, 1 March 2018

Keghart readers who lived in the Middle East in the '50s may recall the ideological, geopolitical tensions that gripped the region following the rise of Arab nationalism in the context of the "Cold War". The period was marked by the revolt of the Young Officers in Egypt and the end of the monarchy, the formation of the Baghdad Pact, the Suez Crisis, the introduction of the Eisenhower Doctrine, the toppling of the Hashemite monarchy in Iraq, Lebanon's post-independence First Civil War and the American military intervention into the country.

The Armenian community was not spared the ravages of the turbulent times. Economic reforms caused the exodus of Armenians from Egypt; Syrian compatriots who allegedly had conspired against the authorities upon the instruction of western intelligence organizations were jailed; consequently some Armenians participated in "National Resistance" battalions in Syria to show their loyalty; and schism in the ranks of the Armenian Apostolic Church along ideological lines became deep-rooted.

The most outrageous expression of the raging intolerance of the period was the fratricide in Lebanon. Based on unverified data around one-hundred Lebanese Armenians were murdered by their own brothers. The victims included students, tradesmen and community leaders. The rancour quickly spread to other Diasporan communities, it was limited to verbal threats and spiteful statements in the press but without effective denunciation. To date, neither individuals nor organizations perpetrating these crimes have come forward to acknowledge their responsibility, let alone publicly apologize and ask for forgiveness. We, Armenians, are quick to demand justice for crimes committed by others. As expressed in public a number of times, I'll repeat: "When will we ask justice from ourselves?"



[Papken Boyadjian's](#) mother was pregnant then, and he was born shortly after his father Papken Boyadjian Sr. was murdered. I join him and Hratch Kalsahakian whose video appears above. We demand justice. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the cessation of the overt hostilities among opposing factions. As Kalsahakian suggests, it will be appropriate to erect a monument in Lebanon with the names of the victims and a proper epitaph. A steering committee supported by the public would probably be a good start.

Coincidentally and unfortunately this year also marks the 10th anniversary of another politically motivated fratricide. It took place in the streets of Yerevan, Armenia. Ten people were murdered. The perpetrators are still at large.

Outrage against the silence -- not anger -- is what we express. Our intention is not to finger point or revive old wounds.

Keghart.com pages will be available throughout the year to reflect on these painful subjects provided comments and articles are of reasonable length, they are composed in good taste and convey constructive thoughts.

