TÊTE-À-TÊTE WITH KEGHART READERS

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Category: Editorials

By Dikran Abrahamian MD, Ontario, 24 January 2024

Dear Reader,

Keghart.org (former Keghart.com), an independent non-partisan online periodical, started its journey in September 2007. It was partly a reaction to the heinous murder of *Agos* magazine publisher Hrant Dink in Istanbul. At the time too many misconceptions were being disseminated in the Canadian media along with deliberate misrepresentations of the Genocide of the Armenians by the Young Turks (1915). The periodical's aim was to raise awareness of these issues in Canadian academia.

However, the focus of the target audience shifted in March 2008 following the massacre perpetrated by the corrupt regime in the Republic of Armenia (RoA). The readership of Keghart.org was vastly expanded to include Armenian readers. The following years were mostly dedicated to exposing corruption in RoA and in the Armenian Diaspora. Certainly, positive aspects of Armenian heritage and current events in Canada were also presented along with a continuous column of "Did You Know" to the Armenian and the non-Armenian readers.

In 2018 Keghart.org welcomed the popular uprising in RoA. There was a widespread expectation that the new regime would initiate programs promoting democracy and fairness in wealth distribution. Moreover, it was widely believed the new regime would eliminate factors that had turned the country into a failed state with features of semi-colonial dependence on Russia. It was also thought the new government would strengthen the security of the country, pay special attention to preserving the national heritage, and enhance RoA-Diaspora cooperation.

Contrary to widespread national expectations, it did not take long to conclude the new authorities had a hidden agenda which became evident in a piecemeal fashion starting with education. Globalism rather than national interests was prioritized with all its negative implications for a small nation facing the abyss. The 2020 war and the occupation of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) in 2023 made even more evident the multiple flaws of the new regime. Keghart.org reflected on these matters.

The Keghart team believes that no matter what international orientation RoA takes, begging for a "peace treaty" from a weak position is music to the ears of multinationals, the World Bank, and the IMF. They will "assist" through their respective governments but favour their interests. Keghart.org will expand on these and related issues in the coming months.

Since its inception, Keghart.org has posted 5,500 items, the majority of which were original and included many exemplary articles. The editorials and selected articles (2007-2015) were published in three books. The PDF versions can be accessed on the front page of the website. The periodical provided an environment for meaningful comments and dialogue. We believe the editorials and the petitions helped contribute to the formation of independent public opinion, and raise awareness about important communal and international issues.

Throughout Keghart.org's existence, except for a brief period, I carried the duties of the publisher. The publication owes much to veteran and renowned Armenian Canadian journalist Jirair Tutunjian. Following his semi-retirement from the Canadian national scene, where the magazines he edited earned numerous awards, Tutunjian joined the Keghart team acting as the editor-in-chief for most of the periodical's almost 17-year journey. His immense knowledge of national and international issues was reflected in his articles which were always in the top 10 list. It was an exceptional honour to know Jirair with whom members of the periodical's team shared a lifetime of unique experience and friendship.

In a few months, I shall be knocking at the door of the octogenarians' club. It is my firm belief that a person at that age should not be in a leadership position, whether of a publication or a public serving organization. That does not mean ceasing to write or not to partake in an advisory position for as long as my mental faculties are intact.

Like many other diasporan periodicals, Keghart.org will need a new and young publisher. Young, in this context, I understand is anyone whose age is below sixty-five years. The required qualifications are: be a Diasporan Armenian or a former Diasporan who has repatriated, aware of her/his national history and heritage, has a good command of Armenian and English, and follows Armenian and current international events. Having in mind Keghart.org's tradition, a non-partisan person is favoured, as well a candidate who believes in democracy, the fair distribution of wealth, and respects human rights and alternate opinions.

The publisher will oversee the periodical's overall operation and maintain correspondence with the editorial team and article contributors. She/He will decide the editorial topic and who would write them. The publisher will be assisted in how to post items on the website and prepare the flyer for distribution. A new issue is published monthly, unless there is a significant development.

One might ask, what about finances? I am glad to inform you that thanks to friends of Keghart who periodically make donations and through savings, the future of Keghart appears to be in a good state for the coming five years. Honoraria disbursement for writers from RoA and the Middle East will continue to be provided, as well as expenses related to the website and mass distribution which is limited to 10,000 addresses. The list of addresses is periodically reviewed and those with negligible readership scores are deleted to make room for new addresses.

The above is a tall order. However, Team Keghart counts on the periodical's outstanding history, its solid contribution, and its vital mission; they will motivate qualified candidates to apply to take over Keghart's leadership.

With cautious optimism, I remain,

Yours respectfully,

Dikran Abrahamian MD

Comments



Տիգրան Աբրահամեան – 2024-03-20 23:37:38
Յարգելի Գեղամ Փափազեան, Յակոբ եւ Հ., Շնորհակալութիւն Ձեր քաջալերական խօսքերուն համար: Ինչպէս տեղեակ էք այս օրերուն, մանաւանդ արեւմտեան երկիրներուն մէջ դժուար առաքելութիւն մըն է գտնել երիտասարդ հրատարակիչ մը, որ լաւապէս կը տիրապետէ միաժամանակ հայերէն եւ անգլերէն (կամ ֆրանսերէն) լեզուներուն: Բաց աստի, տուեալ անձէն կը սպասուի քաջատեղեակ ըլլալ միջազգային ու ազգային անցուդարձերուն եւ ամենագլխաւորը՝ աննախապաշար կեցուածք ունենալ գաղութներուն եւ Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան մէջ փոփոխուող հոլովոյթներուն նկատմամբ: Աւելորդ պիտի չըլլար նշել, որ «Գեղարդ»ի ապագայ հրատարակիչէն կ'ակնկալուի ազգային շահերու գիտակցութիւն, որ ինքնին կը նշանակէ իրազեկ ըլլալ հայոց պատմութեան եւ ազգային նիւթական ու հոգեւոր ժառանգութեանց: Յառաջիկայ ամիսներուն «Գեղարդ»ի անձնակազմը իր կարելին պիտի կատարէ վերոյիշեալ յատկանիշերով օժտուած հրատարակիչ մը գտնելու համար: Յարգանքներով՝ Տիգրան Աբրահամեան (ի դիմաց «Գեղարդ»ի անձնակազմին)



Kegham Papazian – 2024-03-17 20:05:07
Ձեզ առողջութիւն եւ յաջողութիւն կը մաղթեմ: Տարիներէ իվեր հետաքրքրութեամբ կը կարդամ Գեղարդի գրութիւնները, թէ Անգլիերէն եւ թէ Հայերէն լեզուով: Յուսամ նոր երիտասարդը յաջողութեամբ շարունակէ ձեր կարեւոր գործը:



H – 2024-02-04 15:36:45
Dr. Abrahamian, “A tall order” is right. Just to say: It would be next to impossible to find a replacement as visionary, knowledgeable, and fair as you. You founded Keghart.com and against all odds kept it on target, and unbiased. Having Jirair Tutunjian on your team, we must add, has been an added bonus, because for many to find answers, Jirair Tutunjian has been the “go to” researcher and contributor. We therefore share your praise and acknowledgment. About your reference to globalism, perhaps it has succeeded in outpacing nationalism for the Armenians in general. It remains to be seen how Keghart can keep up with the awareness of the precious Armenian language, history, culture, nationally beneficial goals, and help curb the onslaught. Your analysis of where we stand since 2018, for no better word is “accurate”. Thank you for notifying us of your future plans. We have no choice but to respect your decision. Thank you!



Hagop – 2024-02-04 09:08:54

I have been a regular reader and friend of Keghart. There were several attempts for several initiatives, but most short lived. However, Dikran's and Jirair's perseverance paid off. I am proud of you both and other contributors to keep Keghart independent and yet address vital issues that are dear to all Armenians whether in diaspora or Armenia.