

# TOPPLING CRIMINAL NOURHAN, RESTORING ARMENIAN LANDS

*Posted on May 18, 2023 by Keghart*



Category: [Opinions](#)



**By Hagop Hagopian, Toronto, 18 May 2023**

If you believe the moon rises every morning in the west to illuminate us... If you believe Armenians and Greeks set their Izmir hometown on fire... if you believe Bush I and Bush II invaded Iraq to establish democracy to that country... then you will probably believe the facile lies uttered by Patriarch Nourhan I of Jerusalem.

It's as clear as Jerusalem's blue skies that the so-called Patriarch knowingly signed the illegal real estate transaction with the Israeli front-man Danny Rubenstein regarding *Goveroun Bardez* ("Cows' Garden"). In his protest letter for being defrocked, Rev. Baret Yeretsian (now Khachig) wrote that he had advised Nourhan to have the "lease" checked by the General Assembly. Nourhan had replied the issue had been postponed for far too long. He then signed the document. The 8-acre land covers one-fourth of the Armenian Quarter. Yeretsian, although a deplorable character, is credible in this instance because he has a witness and admitted that he had supported the misbegotten deal. He has said he is considering to sue the Patriarchate.

"Since the scandal became public, Nourhan has been doing the Three Monkeys routine with an unconvincing addition ("I didn't see, I didn't hear, I didn't say, and I didn't do.")

Nourhan is so out of touch with reality that he believes defrocking his brother-in-crime (Yeretsian) absolves him of the crime which threatens the 1,800-year presence of Armenians in Jerusalem.

Nourhan also has the temerity to assume people would give credence to his decision to conduct an internal investigation of the scandal. What "internal investigation" when the crime is the work of the man heading the investigation? That is, the criminal, the prosecutor, and judge are the same person. It's a case that belongs to the annals of jurisprudence.

Nourhan claims he was misled by Yeretsian who was director of the Patriarchate's real estate office when the dirty deed was done. A likely tale. During his fifty-plus years as clergyman, Nourhan has been pastor (twice) of Geneva, once in Almelo (Netherlands), Philadelphia, Springfield, and Houston plus Haifa and Jaffa. He has attended theological academies and won a doctorate in theology from a famed Manhattan theological academy. He has held various jobs since he became a bishop 1998 and Patriarch on 2013. He is fluent in several languages and writes long religious-theological articles in the Patriarchate's "Sion" journal. How could a man like Nourhan be consistently bamboozled to by callow, undiplomatic, rough-hewn, often ill-mannered, and ill-educated Baret?

Doublespeak is an Orwellian word Nourhan must be familiar with. A good example can be seen in a recent communique where he vowed to "protect the interests of Armenian Convent and community" although he has done more harm to the Jerusalem Armenian Church than any of the 96 patriarchs who preceded him.

"Doublethink" is another Orwellian coinage. It's the act of simultaneously accepting two mutually contradictory beliefs as correct: Thus, although Nourhan gave away our precious patrimony, he

maintains he is as clean as... driven slush. Doublethink results in paralysis.

There are other verbal gimmicks (deliberate ambiguity, opacity, obfuscation, gobbledygook, deflection, distraction, digression...) Nourhan has deployed. Note his [cagey reply](#) to the Jordanian and Palestinian governments for [freezing their recognition of Nourhan's Patriarchate](#). Nourhan's communique said it was disconcerting that the two governments had condemned Nourhan when the 'main person responsible'...had been defrocked. Note that the "not main" party or parties are not mentioned. Can perchance the unknown party be none other than Nourhan?

While Judas I fled to Turkey, Judas II is still mismanaging the Patriarchate. As an Armenian businessman said of the pair: "He is the mouse, but the rat is still at home." We and others have demanded the resignation of Nourhan. While his toppling would be step in the right direction, it wouldn't solve the problem (how to reverse the illegal lease/sales contract.)

In May there were two positive developments. In addition to Jerusalem Armenians' spontaneous outburst against the land deal and the dramatic flight of the execrable Baret-Khachig, Jerusalem millionaire Tsolag Momjian offered to cover all expenses related to the legal case against the sale of *Goveroun Bardez*. The second good news was the offer by a highly-reputable Chicago law firm to take on the case. The company has had extensive international experience, including in Armenia and Artsakh.

Although admittedly in the dark because we haven't seen the notorious contract [Nourhan will not show it to anyone for obvious reasons), we venture the following legal advice and backgrounder

1. In 2002, 2006, and 2015 the Sts. James Brotherhood voted that real estate agreements covering one to 25 years should be ratified by the Holy Synod while agreements covering 25 to 49 years be approved by the Holy Synod and the General Assembly. Since these two bodies were not involved in the land deal, Nourhan's signature is null and void. The contract is illegal and of no consequence.
2. The contract isn't just a real estate matter. It's politics at the highest level. The agreement makes mockery of international law: Boghos Manougian of Aleppo, who as a young man found sanctuary in the Sts. James Brotherhood of Jerusalem, eventually becoming Patriarch, didn't realize his approval of the land deal violated relevant international covenants and decisions which aim to preserve the status quo governing Jerusalem. That international covenant protects the rights of the Armenian Church and community.

The Israeli judge can't brush off the above arguments.



***Armenians of Jerusalem protesting against land deals***

## Comments



**Alex** – 2023-05-21 09:45:50

I appreciate all the comments and answers to my inquiry or "elementary questions." I don't agree with all points, nor the strange attitude about me being an American-Armenian (I didn't choose my parents or where I was born), but it looks like I need to do more research and study this topic and your community. With Armenians being attacked left and right these days, one can't be too careful. I wish you all the best. PS. Show some respect to Mr. Adarian... with age comes wisdom. :-) He makes a good point about being united. Enemies seek to divide, in order to conquer.



**Nora** – 2023-05-20 23:52:05

Mesrob, thank you for replying to Nurhan Adarian who believes Pat. Nourhan is an honest churchman and he bases his opinion on none other than his years of wisdom as he is now 76 years old. Mr. Adarian adds that Badriark Nourhan was "the only one who stood up" but doesn't mention he stood up for what? So glad to see that Pat.Nourhan has ONE friend in the diaspora.



**Nora Der-Bedrossian** – 2023-05-20 23:25:27

Nourhan Adarian, it is nice to learn that Nourhan Badriark, soon to be ousted from the St. James Brotherhood, has ONE friend. You.



**Hratch H. K.** – 2023-05-20 17:29:20

We should declare Patriarch Nourhan "UNARMENIAN" for his crimes against our nation, Church, and the Armenian community in Jerusalem. Such a traitor is not entitled to belong to our nation. I believe the Armenian word is "nzovel". Particles: Proton; Neutron; Electron; Baryon; Hadron; Photon.... Nurhan and Baret belong to the Moron class of particles = The stupid particle (The particle responsible for stupidity). Hratch H K



**H** – 2023-05-19 22:52:26

Hayorti, Thank you. I couldn't have responded to Alex better.



**Heidi** – 2023-05-19 14:53:20

Alex, unintentionally perhaps, your comment reads like you are a proponent for the sale of land. American Armenian you say. Why wasn't it used? Is that important for you? That and other lands are "go to" places for the church to decide. Like the huge land was a place where survivors from the Turkish Genocide of the Armenians took refuge in tents provided. The patriarchate has in the past several times applied for permits to build income producing hotel for Armenian pilgrims. And as alternative apartment buildings for the young to get married and settle down. No licenses issued. You are correct. You may not be aware of the history of the Armenians in the Holy Land. Armenians have had 77 monasteries at one time. When? Centuries before the state of Israel was established in 1947. Is it for financial issues? No. But. Once the Armenian lands are sold then, yes, there will be major financial issues for the church and the Armenian community. One wishes more "American Armenians" get educated in the importance of the Armenian Christian presence in the Holy Land so that they side with the world Armenians telling nourhan the crook to rescind his illegal signature from the sale documents and leave the community.



**Mesrob** – 2023-05-19 13:40:58

To Nurhan Adarian. You are muddying the waters to absolve the patently corrupt Nourhan Manookian. The Jerusalem real estate scandal has nothing to do with the despicable "Catholicos" Karekin. By falsely injecting him into the Jerusalem problems you bury-- knowingly or unknowingly--the truth about the criminal who is head of the Jerusalem Patriarchate. By dragging the UnCatholicos into the Jerusalem story you distract attention from treacherous Nourhan. The man is a liar, a crook, and a traitor to the Armenian nation for giving away Armenian lands to people who make no secret that they want to expel every non-Jew from Jerusalem. By the way, what does your age has to do with what you wrote? Are we to consider your words of merit because of your age? By the way, it seems you are not aware what this website had exposed another criminal sitting at the highest throne of the Armenian Church. See "Catholicos Karekin II Stands Accused" <https://keghart.org/editorial-karekin-ii-accused/> .



**Hagop** – 2023-05-19 08:36:45

It is tragic that Armenians resort to fire fighting all the time, rather than planning ahead and using precaution. This case was known for so many years, the author of this article warned our communities over so many years, but we were silent.

**Hayorti** - 2023-05-19 08:11:40

Alex, I am tempted not to invest time in answering you because it's obvious you are not familiar with the scandal and late in the day you've jumped in with questions which betray your lack of knowledge. I would say Keghart has published a dozen or so articles about Jerusalem in the past year. Had you read them, you wouldn't have asked your elementary questions. However, since I don't have the whole day, I will answer some of your questions. 1. The Patriarch has not explained why he signed the lease. He hasn't shown the lease to the Sts. James Brotherhood or the community. 2. I find your "sowing goodwill toward Israel " idea bizarre. Perhaps it's rooted in your American "Israel right or wrong" attitude which has caused so much misery to the indigenous Palestinians. Please understand this: Israel is hostile to Armenians and to every non-Jew in the Holy Land. It wants a 100 percent Jewish Jerusalem. Since it illegally occupied Jerusalem, Israel's citizens have countless times attacked, spat upon, cursed Christians, including Armenians. They are not punished. They have attacked Armenian priests and businesses hollering "get out of our land." A few weeks ago, they tore the Armenian flag and for years have made a habit of ripping posters depicting the Armenian Genocide. 3. Rubinstein's hotel will overwhelm physically the Armenian Quarter. The few Armenian businesses will not benefit because Jews make a point of not buying anything from Armenians. Instead, they insult and spit at Armenian shop owners. According to unconfirmed reports, instead of a hotel, Rubinstein has now decided to build housing projects at Cows' Garden...for Jews. If anything, that will choke Armenians out of existence. 4. Re the Armenians financially helping the Patriarchate: Over the decades, the Patriarchate has received millions of dollars from the Gulbenkian Foundation, the AGBU, Alex Manoogian, and other diaspora donors. However, in an interview in 2018 with the AGBU magazine, Patriarch Nourhan said the Patriarchate was financially self-sufficient. 5. Re "Goveroun Bardez ("Cows' Garden") being empty. In the same AGBU magazine interview, Nourhan said the land will be used to build houses/apartments for young Armenians. Instead, he came up with the Israeli hotel. 6. Your questioning of the Jordanian/Palestinian "ferman" betrays your ethnocentric American bias and ignorance. If Americans don't do it, then it's wrong. The ferman is a traditional "license" that says the government recognizes the Patriarchate. This assures that the populace (Muslim and non-Muslim) considers the Patriarchate legitimate and deserving of respect. It also protects Armenian Church property. 7. Despite Israeli restrictions, Palestinians have financially aided Jerusalem Armenians. To say more, would reveal to the hostile Israeli government information it can use to hurt Armenians. There is far more to say, but I have already invested too much time to educate you. I advise you to dig up (it's not difficult) the more than a dozen Jerusalem articles Keghart has published in the past year. And please, before you ask a question, get hold of some of the fundamentals of your query.



**NURHAN ADARIAN** – 2023-05-19 08:02:18

Alex ! I am 76 years old, living in NY and I was always involved in Armenian organizations. I have visited Jerusalem and I agree whole heartedly with your comments and observation. Jerusalem Armenians are leaving the country because of lack of opportunities. Mistakes could be corrected as long as we are united. They are bashing Badriark Nourhan since he did not agree with Vehapar. Badriark Nourhan was the only one who stood up. Since then, some so called writers and intellectuals are making too much noise about Badriark Nourhan Manoogian, at the same time in the past 20 plus years Vehapar and his crime family are doing all kinds of illegalities for personal gains. Why they are not raising their voices? Who is behind it? Some of those writers remind me the American media in the way they treat President Biden and his crime family. That's all I am saying.





**Alex** – 2023-05-19 03:16:33

As an American-Armenian, I don't know much about Jerusalem-Armenian politics or structure, so forgive me if I am totally off-base, but this website seems to post a lot of negative opinions that warrant some scrutiny. Are we stirring up problems to our own detriment? Here are some unanswered questions: 1. Has the Patriarch explained WHY the land was leased? Is it for financial reasons to support the community? Maybe it is to benefit the community and protect future Armenian generations by showing goodwill toward Israel. If a hotel is built by an Israeli businessman, it will result in more tourists and more business for the local Armenian shops, doing something about the exodus problem. If little to no Armenians live there, there is no future community anymore while you all are arguing over an income-generating lease in an unused plot of land. 2. If for financial reasons, why were there no efforts to raise funds for Jerusalem's Armenian community? I never hear Armenian organizations raising funds for Jerusalem, a small but significant and historic community that not many Armenians know about with invaluable Holy Land assets 3. Why was the land empty for so long (or with cows?) causing this problem in the first place? Billions have been raised over the years for Artsakh's entire infrastructure only to hand it over to the enemy or close to it. Millions raised for various global Armenian issues. A simple apartment housing on a small plot of land for local Armenian residents could not have been accomplished by worldwide Armenians including wealthy businessmen? Maybe an apartment-hotel mix use. How much would that have cost? 4. Why does Jordan and Palestine, or Israel or any other nation, have the ability to recognize or freeze recognition of a duly elected Armenian religious leader? Is it as meaningless as Pakistan not recognizing sovereign Armenia? Why do we allow foreigners to have any influence over Armenians today requiring their permission to elect our own leaders? Are we still living under subjugation of foreigners like Persians, Arabs, Ottomans, etc? 5. If Jordan and Palestine are upset with Armenians who are thinking about their future in Jerusalem, which happens to be controlled by Israel with the full backing of the world's superpower, why are they complaining about it being leased to an Israeli now instead of Jordan investing in Jerusalem's Armenian community to avoid the need to lease a property to generate funds? Maybe the Patriarch is a criminal as this headline states, or maybe this is a brilliant move. Where is the full story? Where is the proof? Armenians like all nations and peoples need to put our own interests first. We don't have to be neutral with everything and everyone. Perhaps Patriarch Nourhan I of Jerusalem has realized this.



**Harry Avanesian** – 2023-05-19 02:23:06

Who knows how much more there is and needs to be exposed. This filthy parasite leadership class of clergies in Armenian communities needs to be swept out. They are the face of EVIL.



**Tatiana Arakelian Mardirosian** - 2023-05-19 01:16:53

Dear Jerusalemite compatriots. Our heart is bleeding over the sale of Goveroun Bardez, something that should have been used to serve the Armenian community. That is our (all Armenians) treasure that should have been safeguarded. My heart and soul is with you, I wish I could be there along your side to protest with you.