

HAPPY 55TH BIRTHDAY, DEAR MONTE

Posted on November 26, 2012 by Keghart



Category: [Opinions](#)



Norick Markosian, Los Angeles, 25 November 2012

It has been 19 years since you were martyred for Artsakh, Armenia and the Armenian Nation. A lot of things have changed, a lot of things have remained the same in your homeland since your untimely departure. Volumes have been written about you, including an autobiography by your brother Markar. But still, no one knows what really took place on that godforsaken day of June 12, 1993. A couple of hours after you left us, your comrade-in-battle Saribek also passed away from wounds he had received in a firefight. About three years later, Komitas lost his life during a reconnaissance mission. Vartan died of heart disease. 

Norick Markosian, Los Angeles, 25 November 2012

It has been 19 years since you were martyred for Artsakh, Armenia and the Armenian Nation. A lot of things have changed, a lot of things have remained the same in your homeland since your untimely departure. Volumes have been written about you, including an autobiography by your brother Markar. But still, no one knows what really took place on that godforsaken day of June 12, 1993. A couple of hours after you left us, your comrade-in-battle Saribek also passed away from wounds he had received in a firefight. About three years later, Komitas lost his life during a reconnaissance mission. Vartan died of heart disease. 

Now I can't help but remember what you had said about your fellow martyred soldiers: "Seems like the good people are leaving us in an untimely manner." Few days after you passed away, we, as a nation, gave you a state funeral with full military honors, attended by many dignitaries, and several of your close friends. We have erected monuments and named schools in your memory. There is even a military academy named after you. Your eternal home looks straight at Mount Ararat. Many of your lieutenants have become generals and are holding major posts in our military, but collectively, as a nation, we have failed to make your dream of independent Armenia--with a just and lawful society--come true.

A year-and-a-half year after your death, the Artsakh liberation war came to an end. Although we annihilated the enemy's forces and their will to fight, thanks to the shortsightedness of our government officials, we signed a ceasefire agreement rather than force a capitulation accord. Since August 1994 we have lost close to 300 of our sons in border skirmishes, due to the enemy's violation of the ceasefire agreement.

You should see the self-assured and victorious pose Aliyev Jr. adopts when he sits around the negotiation table, to discuss the status of Artsakh, with our presidents. It is still a mystery to me why we need to negotiate the fate of our nation and our national security when we were the victors. The territories, where you and many of our nation's brightest sacrificed their lives to liberate, has now become a subject of debate. Contrary to your belief that our national security interests and independence are directly related to the union of a free Artsakh and Armenia, some of our leaders

are considering the return of the liberated territories, in lieu of permanent peace with our enemy.

Maybe it is this mindset of our leaders which has prevented them from implementing a comprehensive plan for the resettlement of the liberated territories. Not much has changed in Artsakh since you saw it last, except for some newly-built hotels and restaurants, to attract Diaspora tourists and put money in the pockets of a few rich people connected to top government officials.

I have only one good news for you about the state of Armenia. We are still "independent". On one occasion you were asked by a reporter: "How would you like to see Armenia in the future?" You replied: "Free of corruption". Unfortunately, the prevailing oligarchic/feudal system in today's Armenia has resulted in lawlessness, where the wealthy have monopolized every profitable business and are exempt of taxation. The national poverty rate is almost 70%; our national debt has ballooned to unbelievable proportions, largely because the majority of the financial help which we receive from the IMF and the World Bank loans go into the pockets of the oligarchs. Our infrastructure is in shambles. There is no social welfare, nor is there any public healthcare. The justice system hobbles. Judges and court decisions are bought and sold.

The market is inundated by made-in-Turkey cheap merchandise. Meanwhile, casinos are packed by the oligarchs and their family members. Residential highrises are affordable only by Diaspora Armenians. Restaurants along the Zangou River, where only tourists and few locals can afford to dine, are being built like wild flowers blossoming in spring time. Because our young do not foresee a future in our homeland, let alone a bright one, they have become hopeless and begun a massive exodus from Hayastan. So far about 1.5 million Armenians have emigrated to the four corners of the world. The majority of who have stayed will leave as soon as possible. Although the destructive exodus continues unabated, government officials insist that the population has remained at 3 million. Our population count fluctuates from election to election. Maybe in the next elections I will visit a voting precinct or two in hopes of seeing you and our other martyrs; after all, voting time is miracle time in our country... where dead people rise from their graves and vote for certain (wealthy and powerful) candidates.

While our oligarchs are busy stealing our nation's wealth, destroying its environment, demolishing historical buildings, and turning our country into a cheap nightclub destination for visitors from our neighboring countries, our bloodthirsty enemies--Turkey and Azerbaijan--are arming to the teeth, and waiting for the opportune moment, to once and for all resolve the Armenian Question. Yes, the same Azeris, who you and the rest of our fighters beat to a pulp, are dreaming of plowing our land and depositing our nation into the trash-bin of history.

Shame on us for abusing and mistreating what you left us. More shame on us for not having had finished what you started.

Dear Monte, I leave you in peace now.

