

INTRODUCTION TO KEGHART.COM VOLUME III

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Like many Armenians in the Diaspora, this is what I hoped for when Armenia gained its independence 25 years ago. Freed from Soviet totalitarian rule, Armenia's citizens would surely exploit their intelligence, their enterprise and their instinct for self-renewal to build a prosperous republic, and we would all celebrate their achievements.

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Instead, those of us who faithfully follow the news from Armenia are battered by the truth: the country continues to struggle, and so do its people—at least, those who haven't fled. As much as a third of the pre-independence population is gone, and more are leaving because they can't find work or because what little they can earn isn't enough to pay the rent much less the bribes that are a reality of day-to-day life.

Given the history that weighs on all of us, it's understandable why some conclude such misery is the nation's fate. If you believe that, you might be tempted to put this book down and find some cheerier way to pass the time. After all, why think about such unpleasantness if there's nothing to be done?

If you're less pessimistic, I can attest that you'll be rewarded by reading the collection that follows.

I'm certain because in preparing to write this introduction, I reviewed these essays as well as the first two volumes of Keghart.com's collected editorials dating back to 2007.

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Reading them can be a bracing experience because none of Armenia's problems are ever sugar coated by the Keghart team: corruption in government, corruption in the church, the treachery of Armenia's enemies, the treachery of Armenia's supposed allies.

The sheer breadth of these challenges can seem overwhelming at times. It's a sense you may experience as you read the editorial *At The Brink*, which lays out many of the difficult or perhaps even impossible choices Armenia must make to survive.

Yet these essays also remind us that a great many Armenians in the Diaspora as well as in the homeland are confronting these challenges and working to overcome them. None of us who care about the outcome can afford to be absent from this effort. Even those who live thousands of miles from Armenia's fragile borders are on the front line of a growing and vicious assault on reality that threatens the safety as well as the honor of Armenians everywhere.

It's no surprise that Turkey and its followers have tried to drown out the voice of free Armenia, but simply shouting back will not focus the world's attention on our just claims. Turkish propagandists are too highly skilled at spreading false narratives that elicit sympathy by making them appear to be victims rather than aggressors.

Many of the editorials in this collection unmask these falsehoods and offer an array of facts to counter them. Borrow freely from them and you'll be more confident and effective when you discuss Armenian affairs, or write to your local newspaper.

One of the most effective but disingenuous phrases employed by Turkish officials and propagandists is "the tragic events of 1915" or some minor variation. This is often hailed in the Western media as a magnanimous gesture of acknowledgment, but what does it acknowledge? Nothing, really—not even the existence of the Armenians, much less the Ottoman government's attempt to destroy them. See the editorial *Parsing Davutoglu's Weasel Words* for a clear deconstruction of this vile gibberish. Then read *Genocide in Increments* for another illustration of how to see through Turkish attempts to obscure history.

This obfuscation is made easier by the historic complicity of many Western writers. As the editorial *Invisible Nation* makes clear, Armenians under Turkish and Russian occupation were often cruelly caricatured while their accomplishments were ignored. The result of this treatment is a gift to Armenia's adversaries: a deep catalogue of warped or simply fictitious sources that are repeatedly cited by Genocide deniers posing as objective observers.

These mercenaries are energetic in spreading powerful propaganda. But the simple antidote to their lies is the truth, and it is within reach of every Armenian willing to take up the challenge.

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