

THE CRIMES OF 1ST MARCH 2008

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Keghart.com Guest Editorial by Sahag Toutjian, Los Angeles, 1 March 2011

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A bad tragedy performance is bad either because its author is bad or because the actors enacting it are incapable to render their talent, individuality and conviction to even a mediocre play on the stage. However, a bad tragedy played by bad actors and produced by a tasteless supporting cast will stop short of enactment if the audience is alert, critical, and expresses its discontent. The tragedy is bound to stop automatically when the audience refuses to attend. Likewise, a social, political or national tragedy will fail to materialize when the majority of citizens involved refuse to condone its performance. It will collapse on itself and will be aborted by the unequivocal stand of the critical mass of people against it when it runs counter to everything they believe and cherish as an essential part of their life.

The Armenian tragedy of 1st March 2008, authored, staged and performed by an--albeit illegitimate--Armenian president on Liberty Square in Yerevan, against a gathering of peaceful demonstrators, is just one link in a long, ugly chain. This is the chain of subterfuge, murderous rule and unaccounted crimes committed by an imposed tyrant misnamed president and his appointed successor. The ruthless tandem that usurped political power, have been masquerading for well over a dozen years as guardians of the security of Armenia, monopolizing the entire state and government leverages for their selfish ends. They have blocked the forward march of the newly independent Armenian state, replacing it with the enrichment and hollow opulence of their handpicked gang of fellow assassins, plunderers and oligarchs simultaneously mimicking as members of a government, national assembly and the judiciary--a 20th century version of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. During this

interval, the political, social and economic problems faced by the fledgling republic have been compounded to a dangerous level of intricacy, with not even partial solutions on the horizon.

Throughout its blood-drenched history, the Armenian people have been duped and helplessly watched countless dramas and heartbreaking tragedies—including a number of unsavory stereotype farces – featuring their own miseries, aspirations, destiny and slow extermination. And the Armenian people, my very own—along with many other unfortunate peoples of planet Earth, who were victims of persecution and genocide--have silently endured them interminably.

Adding insult to injury, we have recently witnessed a new breed of apologists of past and present oppressors of the Armenian people. These peddlers of national poison are endangering the survival of a free and independent Armenia. This they do when they emit confusing or mixed signals to justify and abet the present rulers who undermine the well-being of the backbone of Armenia's population by making life unbearable for them politically, socially and economically. In the end, emigration becomes the only option left for the population, with a final outcome outweighing even the long-range effects of the Genocide.

Of course, these peddlers do not represent the majority of the Armenian people. However, they do represent—very sadly – the prevailing noisy section of the Armenian establishment, those who “count”: the “celebrities”, the rich and famous, a number of organizations, including quite a few of the traditional and lately formed political parties, the splinters of what used to be the Armenian Church, the so-called benevolent unions, and the self-styled activists for the rights of the Armenian people. In brief, all those who claim to represent the so-called silent majority of the perplexed and undecided Armenian communities whom they bombard day in and day out with their mass media as passive herds or as their inherited property.

All these respectable entities comprising the Armenian community have a handy, immaculate apology for their servile stand vis-à-vis the insolent usurpers of power in Yerevan who are holding the future of Armenia and the ten-million strong Armenian people worldwide, hostage to their personal, selfish agenda. Supposedly, they want to safeguard Armenia from a worst disaster, that of perishing altogether. They want to keep the Armenian ship from sinking, they say. They do not want to shoot the pirate disguised as captain of “our” ship. They say, “We've got to be nice to our impostor/plunderer captain because we need him for our national salvation.”

With saviours like these, who needs enemies or “neighborly” genocide perpetrators?

These well-intentioned entities fail to perceive the obvious: Because of the utter uselessness and harmfulness of Armenia's unfit and disloyal rulers, our motherland is being rapidly vacated. It is being abandoned by the sector of its population that has been its backbone, namely the young, the craftsmen, the trained professionals. And our ship of national salvation is sinking before our eyes, whether we are citizens of the Republic of Armenia or disparate members of an undefined Diaspora—a cacophony to be “harmonized” by an appointed Minister of Diaspora to be exploited as a

Let the Tunisians, Egyptians, Libyans, Bahrainis and Yemenis depose their corrupt rulers and freeze the billions of their stolen funds in Swiss bank accounts to their rightful owners, the people. Let them shortsightedly shoot their ship's Captain Ahab. We Armenians know better. We keep our miscreant captains at the helm. And we sink all together.

Almost one century after the Genocide of Armenians by the Ottoman Turks, we did not need a reminder from a self-elected Armenian president that we have to brace ourselves, since our genocide is of the permanent brand, and may be committed indiscriminately by Turks and a specific brand of Armenians alike. All they need is to make more frequent 1st March type outings of their black-robed and black-masked sharpshooting mercenaries against peaceful demonstrators, and plunder the peaceful, Gandhi-like citizens of Armenia so that they'll have to resort to mass exodus to procure a livelihood for their families. That way, our problems with our neighboring countries will be simplified. And everybody will go to his preferred pursuits: one president will be free for his favorite pastime at the Monte Carlo casinos, the second will enjoy the wild animals and diamonds of Namibia, and, oh, did we forget anybody? Well, the Armenian people, you ask? But let's get serious, that's outside the presidential concerns, isn't it?

Sad? Distressing? But it's the play that's being performed at Liberty Square today the 1st of March 2011, where special events are being concocted to keep out the intrusion of freedom fighters to the holy grounds of the nobility.

But I feel a fresh breeze in the air, a breath of new vigor and hope coming from the burning deserts of North Africa, all the way to Liberty Square in Yerevan on the 1st of March 2011. This is the year of daring and hope, the year when disinherited young people of plundered and impoverished countries throughout the world realized that they, too, and their children, are entitled to a decent future. And this is the time when all Armenians of good will—of whatever social background and political leanings—have concluded that the dead end of 1st March 2008 is long past, that the Armenian people is on the threshold of setting itself free at last.

I am confident. The freedom fighters will return to Liberty Square to seal their freedom, just as their soul brothers—linked via the worldwide web—are doing in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain Yemen and elsewhere. And they'll bring with them the valiant political prisoners Nikol Pashinyan, Sassoon Mikayelyan, Harutyun Urutyan, Sarkis Hatsbanian, Murad Bojolyan, Aram Bareghamyan, Ara Hovhannisyan, Shmavon Galstyan, Roman Mnatsakanyan, and whoever else is still kept captive in the dungeons of the free and independent Republic of Armenia.

I hear their footsteps.

