**ИСТОРИЯ**

# Letters From the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Representative of the First Republic of Armenia G. Pasdermadjian to the US Secretary of State (January 1920)

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**Հայաստանի առաջին հանրապետության արտակարգ և լիազոր ներկայացուցիչ Գ. Փաստրմաճյանի կողմից ԱՄՆ Պետքարտուղարություն ուղարկված նամակները (հունվար, 1920 թ.)**

***Ղամբարյան Արմենուհի Վ.***
*պ.գ.թ., դոցենտ, Ընդհանուր պատմության բաժնի ավագ գիտաշխատող,*
*ՀՀ ԳԱԱ պատմության ինստիտուտ (Երևան, ՀՀ)*

**Ամփոփագիր.** Սույն՝ անգլերեն լեզվով հրապարակման մեջ ներկայացվում են ԱՄՆ-ում Հայաստանի առաջին հանրապետության արտակարգ և լիազոր ներկայացուցիչ Գ.Փաստրմաճյանի (Ա.Գարոյի) նամակները ուղարկված ԱՄՆ պետքարտուղարություն 1920 թ. հունվար ամսվա ընթացքում: Հրապարակվող նյութն ակնհայտորեն ներկայացնում է ոչ միայն ԱՄՆ-ի, այլև եվրոպական մեծ տերությունների իրական դրսևորումներն ու վերաբերմունքը նորաստեղծ Հայաստանի հանրապետության նկատմամբ խնդրո առարկա ժամանակահատվածում: Ներածականում համառոտ ներկայացվում է նաև հայ դիվանագետի կատարված աշխատանքը 1919 թ. վերջին՝ հոկտեմբերի 10-ից՝ ԱՄՆ ժամանելուն պես մինչև դեկտեմբերի վերջ, որպեսզի ընդծվեն այն ջանքերը, որ Ա.Գարոն ներդրեց ԱՄՆ-ի կողմից ՀՀ քաղաքական և իրավական ճանաչման գործում:
**Հանգուցաբառեր և բառակապակցություններ՝** Հայաստանի Հանրապետություն, ԱՄՆ, արտակարգ և լիազոր ներկայացուցիչ, Գ. Փաստերմաճյան, Պետքարտուղարություն, անկախություն, դիվանագիտական հարաբերություններ, Ռ. Լանսինգ

**Письма, отправленные чрезвычайным и полномочным представителем Первой Республики Армения Г. Пастермаджяном в Государственный департамент США (январь 1920 г.)**

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**Аннотация.** В данной публикации на английском языке представлены письма чрезвычайного и полномочного представителя Первой Республики Армения в США Г. Пастермаджяна (А. Гаро), отправленные в Государственный департамент США в январе 1920 года. Из Публикуемый материал реально отражает истинное отношение не только США, но и великих европейских держав к новообразованной Республике Армения в рассматриваемый период. В введении также кратко представлена работа, проделанная армянским дипломатом в конце 1919 года, с момента его прибытия в США 10 октября до конца декабря, чтобы было ясно, какие усилия А. Гаро приложил для политического и правового признания Армении со стороны США.а
**Ключевые слова и словосочетания:** Республика Армения, США, чрезвычайный и полномочный представитель, Г. Пастермаджян, Государственный департамент, независимость, дипломатические отношения, Р. Лансинг

**Introduction.**

One of the main goals of the Armenian state, which declared independence in May 1918, was to achieve international recognition and establish interstate relations. In this regard, priority, of course, was given to the Entente countries, since from the

very beginning of the World War, the sympathies of the Armenian people were on the side of the latter. However, by the will of fate or by the irony of the latter, Turkey, the centuries-old enemy of the Armenian people, became one of the first states to recognize the newly formed Armenian Republic after the proclamation of her independence. Moreover, according to the Treaty of Batum, signed on June 4, 1918, Armenia could not have diplomatic relations with states that were at war with the Ottoman Empire. [**11**, p. 107].

Thus, in the first months of the existence of the Republic of Armenia, external relations were limited to the countries of the "Quadruple Alliance" and its closest neighbors. During this period, the establishment of peaceful relations with neighbors was extremely important. On August 3, 1918, at the second session of the Parliament of the Republic, Prime Minister H. Kajaznuni, presenting the draft government program concerning the country's domestic and foreign political strategy, noted the paramount importance of establishing good-neighborly relations with neighboring states and avoiding conflicts with them [**1.2**, p. 6-7; **16**, p. 65].

With the end of the First World War (October 30, 1918) and the defeat of the Quadruple Alliance, which included Turkey, the Batum Treaty became invalid and the Republic of Armenia attempted to enter the international arena and establish diplomatic relations with both neighboring and other states. The Armenian delegation, led by A. Aharonian, which arrived in Paris to participate in the Peace Conference, also conducted active diplomatic activities in other European capitals from February 1919. Gradually, diplomatic missions and embassies of the Republic of Armenia began to open in various countries. During this period the establishment of close relations and ties with the European Allied Powers, as well as with the United States, was of great importance.

At the same time, in early 1919, the difficult internal and external situation in the Republic led to the government drafting a special bill at the end of January [**1.3**, pp. 15-17; **4**, pp. 103-107; **17**, pp. 253-254], which was adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia on February 4, 1919 [**1.1**, pp. 83-100; **5**, p. 167]. According to the latter, an official delegation was formed – a Civil mission [**6**, pp. 254-257], which was tasked with going to Europe and the USA and, first of all, to fight hunger, asking the Great Powers for economic assistanc [**8**, pp. 134-149]

Due to various circumstances, the Civil mission led by the Prime Minister of the Republic H. Kajaznuni arrived in Europe - in France only in the mid of June 1919. The visits of the members of the Armenian delegation to other European countries in order to seek support, as well as in Paris, were unsuccessful. Europe was not going to provide any economic, financial, military or political assistance to the newly independent Armenia. The only hope remained the United States of America, the establishment of diplomatic relations with which became the number one issue on the political agenda in the early autumn of 1919.

At a joint meeting of two Armenian national delegations headed by Avetis Aharonian and Poghos Nubar in Paris in September 1919, a decision was made to appeal to the American government in Washington. [**1.5**, pp. 55-60; **2**, p. 566; **11**, p. 255]. The Kajaznuni mission was authorized to address the US Government with various requests for economic, military and political support. However, it was decided that a separate military mission would leave Paris for the United States to resolve military issues [**13**, pp. 46-55], and to ensure the resolution of political issues, a member of the RA delegation and at the same time the Deputy Chairman of the National delegation in Paris Garegin Pasdermadjian (Armen Garo), who was appointed by the Government of Armenia as the RA Plenipotentiary Representative in the USA [**1.4**, pp. 1-2, 4].

The next day after arriving in the United States, on October 10, 1919, G. Pasdermadjian began his active work. [**18**, October 18, N 42, p. 1353; **13**, p. 457; **12**, p. 383; **14**, p. 230; **15,** p. 279]. Together with H. Kajaznuni [**6**, pp. 257-261; **9**, pp. 276-280; **3**, pp. 109-111], as a diplomatic representative of the Republic of Armenia, he testified [**7**, pp. 89-94; **9**, pp. 281-286; **3**, pp.111-114] at the Hearings of the Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the US Senate on the topic "Maintaining Peace in Armenia", where the issue of providing assistance to Armenia and, in particular, the issue of providing American troops was considered [**2**, p. 566; **3**, p. 3; **9**, pp. 29-30]. As part of the official Armenian delegation, G. Pasderamadjian met with the Secretary of President W.Wilson J. P. Tumulty, Vice President of the United States T. R. Marshall, Secretary of State R. Lansing, a number of senators and other senior American officials [**8**, p. 137; **13**, p. 435; **14**, pp. 235-264; **15**, pp. 273-281;]. In addition to his primary task of raising political issues, Pasdermadjian worked to ensure material, economic and military support from the United States. [**10**, pp. 49-57; **15**, p. 299; **18**, October 25, No. 43, pp. 1386-1387, November 1, No. 44, pp. 1401-1404; **19**, October 5, 12].

During official and private meetings, negotiations, and conversations, Pasderamadjian sought to inform representatives of the American administration and the public about the necessity of Armenia's existence. His work on solving political

problems was based on the issues of political and legal recognition of the newly created Republic and the need for mandatory governance of Armenia [**10**, p.48-58]. In statements sent to Congress, the White House, and the State Department, the Armenian diplomat emphasized the importance of Armenia as a legitimate and stable state and underlined the important strategic role of independent Armenia in the Caucasus [**14**, p. 291]. Noteworthy is the correspondence of Pasdermadjian as an extraordinary and plenipotentiary representative with the State Department in the last months of 1919 and early 1920 [**1.5**, pp. 50-58; **10**, pp. 48-60]. During this period, it gradually became apparent that the Armenians' expectations of the United States were in vain. The United States, due to changes in its domestic and foreign policy, during that period, with the exception of humanitarian aid, did not take any steps, either military or political, to assist the Republic, or at least in the matter of its recognition.

In letters sent to the Secretary of State Robert Lansing in November and December, Pasderamadjian constantly described the difficult situation of the Republic, surrounded by enemies, cut off from the civilized world, without any help from friendly Great Powers, economically devastated, doomed to famine, epidemics and many other obstacles. The authorized Representative of the Republic of Armenia quite boldly, even with a demand, addressed the Secretary of State, presenting the necessary needs of the Armenians. He stressed that at the moment the fate of the Republic of Armenia is in the hands of the American government.

The expected corresponding reaction did not follow either at the end of 1919 or at the beginning of 1920. However, the RA Plenipotentiary representative was not discouraged and, continuing his work, did not stop sending letters to the US State Department. At the beginning of 1920, when the United States had not yet recognized the Republic of Armenia, Mr. Pasdermadjian, based on a specific instruction from the government of the Republic of Armenia, in his work on political issues, gave priority to the recognition of the young Armenian state and tried to provide the latter with military assistance.

In a letter dated January 7, 1920 [**1.5**, pp. 42-43], the RA envoy addressed the Secretary of State with a request for immediate military assistance and explained it's importance to the American official. He noted that the experience has abundantly proven that the Turks will not attack the Armenians if they know that the Armenians are sufficiently armed.

In another letter dated January 15 [**1.5**, pp. 44-46], G. Pasdermadjian expressed concern that France and Britain, acting alone, had agreed to decide the fate of Armenia in accordance with their secret agreement of 1916 and intend to ignore the Armenians just claims. Addressing the Secretary of State, Pasdermadjian noted that Armenians have placed their only hope in the strong intervention of unselfish America to protect their just rights. Pasdermadjian pointed to those parts of Turkish Armenia that needed to be annexed to the territories of the current Armenian Republic, formed on the territory of Russia, in order to sufficiently satisfy the most pressing needs of the Armenians as a nation. Moreover, the Armenian diplomat explained that such an Armenian state would put an end to all Pan-Touranian movements and aspirations.

In a letter sent to the US Secretary of State on January 24 [**1.5**, pp. 47-48] G. Pasdermadjian expressed concern that from the telegram received from A. Aharonian from Paris on January 21, he inquired that the Peace Conference, that is, the Allies, had de facto recognized the governments of Georgia and Azerbaijan, but not the government of Armenia. Expressing surprise at such an attitude towards the Armenian people, the Armenian Plenipotentiary Representative urged the US government to recognize the de facto independence of the Republic of Armenia.

As an explanation, it should be noted that the information in the letter dated January 24 was a little late and, therefore, inaccurate. The fact is that at a meeting of the leaders of the Entente powers held in Paris on January 19, 1920, it was already decided to recognize the government of Armenia (7 days later than that of Armenia's neighbors), provided that such recognition could not prejudice the issue of the final borders of this state. However, it was not until January 23 that the British Foreign Secretary, J. Curzon telegraphed this decision of the Supreme Council to the Government of Armenia [**11**, p. 152]. Consequently, when Pasdermadjian wrote to Lansing on January 24 about the unfair treatment of Armenia, he did not yet know that Armenia was also de facto recognized by the Allies.

Below, as a supplement to the above letters addressed to the Secretary of State, is also presented a letter from Pasdermadjian dated February 21, 1920, addressed to US President Woodrow Wilson [**1.5**, pp. 49]. In the latter, Pasdermadjian, as the Representative Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia, expressed concern about the intention of the Entente countries to dismember Armenia and asked the US President not to abandon the Armenians and to help them realize their centuries-old desire for independence.

In conclusion, it can be said that the published material really represents the true attitude of not

only the United States, but also the Great European Powers towards the newly formed Republic of Armenia during the period under review.

## ***Letters From the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Representative of the First Republic of Armenia G. Pasdermadjian to the US Secretary of State (January 1920)***[1]

January 7, 1920. [**1.5**, pp. 42-43]

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

Certain Americans, particularly a few missionaries, including Mr. Barton and a Mr. Riggs have made statements, orally and in writing, to the effect that, if the United States Government were to take any affirmative step for sending munitions and supplies to the Armenian Republic, that might provoke hostilities on the part of Turks and Tartars against Armenia, induced by fear that, once the Armenians have been sufficiently armed, they might take retaliatory steps against the Turks and Tartars for their past misdeeds. Thinking that the statements referred to above may be taken as authoritative, and, therefore, influence the decision of the United States Government against the oft repeated wishes of the Armenian Republic, I will take the liberty of making a few brief observations on the subject.

The Government of the Republic believes that the absence of means of self-defense is an invitation to the Turks and Tartars to attack the Armenians as a means of carrying to a conclusion their Pan-Turanian ambitions. Experience has abundantly proven that the Turks will not attack the Armenians if they know that the Armenians are sufficiently armed. I respectfully submit that it is indefensible and most cruel on the part of the friends of Armenia to deprive them of the means of self-defense, if they are not themselves in position to defend them. It is to be noted that since the conclusion of the armistice not less than four concerted attacks have been committed by the Turco-Tartars against the Armenians, but fortunately they have been defeated in their purpose. I, therefore, on behalf of my government, assume all responsibility for the consequences of America's supplying us with necessary munitions, which act permit to say, Mr. Secretary, will be the greatest possible initial service that America may render Armenia at this critical juncture.

I am, Sir, your most humble and obedient servant.

January 15, 1920. [**1.5**, pp. 44-46]

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

According to reliable information I have received from Paris, it would appear that very shortly a definite solution will be given to the Armenian question. On the other hand from other reliable sources it is intimated that France and Great Britain, acting alone, have agreed to decide the destinies of Armenia, in conformity with their secret understanding of 1916, whereby France would receive Cilicia, and the districts of Diarbekir, Harput and Sivas. After thus allotting an important part of Turkish Armenia to France, these Allied Governments seem to plan to turn over an important part of the remaining territories of Armenia to a Kurdish state which is to be formed and whose raison d'etre would be to defend the northern frontiers of British Mesopotamia.

It would appear, if our information is not incorrect, that the above mentioned Governments intend to ignore our just claims over the territories which have more than once been irrigated by the glood of our people, and to create an Armenian state incapable of preserving its existence in the confusion of the East. According tour most recent information it would appear that the above mentioned powers have decided to annex to the present territories of the Armenian Republic, only the northern parts of the Vilayess of Van, Bitlis and Ezeroum, without an outlet to the Black Sea, and they would feel that thus they have remunerated the services which our people rendered, at such great cost, to the cause of those Allies.

We have before now emphasized on many occasions the fact that we have placed our only hope in the strong intervention of unselfish America to protect our just rights. But to-day according to press reports, the United States, unfortunately for us, is not present in the deliberations of the above mentioned powers, and consequently we are apprehensive that an important part of our territorial claims may be appropriated, under one pretext or another, by two interested power. During these gloomy and critical days of our history, our eyes turn again to the country of Washington and Lincoln. We are convinced, Mr. Secreatary, that should you deem it advisable to convey a serious warning to the Peace Conference at Paris, reminding it once more that the Government of the country is

[1] All grammatical and punctuation errors present in the letters, as well as inaccuracies related to geographical names or proper names, are given in accordance with the original documents.

not indifferent as regards the future of the Armenian people, as they may now suppose it, and that the American Government desire the creation of a stablized Armenian Christian State which will be able to contain nearly three million Armenians, to be self-sufficient from an economic and political standpoint, that such a step Armenian Republic will be an invaluable help to our cause.

In my humble opinion, in order to adequately meet the most vital needs of the Armenians as a nation, it would be necessary to add to the territories of the present Armenian Republic formed on Russian territory at least the following parts of Turkish Armenia.

1. The Vilayet of Erzeroum
2. The Vilayet of Bitlis
3. The Sandjak of Van, plus a small portion of the Sandjak of Hekkiari, inhabited by Christian Assyrians
4. The Sandjak of Harput, and Dermin.
5. The Sandjak of Tribizond as far as a point to the west of Kirassun.

I beg to submit herewith a map with a blue tracing, indicating the territories which, in my opinion, should be included in the new Armenian state. A state containing those territories will be able to live, and develop even if, contrary to our desires and expectations previously expressed, Cilicia and the best parts of southern Armenia should be excluded.

Moreover, such an Armenian state, contiguous to the French and British zones, would separate the Ottoman Turks from the Tartars and other Turks in the East, and put an end to all pan-Touranian movements and aspirations.

I venture to submit the above to your most careful and sympathetic consideration, with the firm hope that the people and Government of this country will see that no injustice is done to our cause.

I hope the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

(Signed)

G. Pasdermadjion

January 24, 1920. [**1.5**, pp. 47-48]

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

Referring to my letter of the 15th instant I have the honor to inform you that I received from Mr. Aharonian a telegram dated at Paris January 21, 1920, stating that the Peace Conference had recognized the de facto Government of Georgia and Azerbaijan, but not yet the Armenian Government. It does not occur to us at this time in any way to question the advisability of, nor the reasons for, the recognition by the Allies of the de facto governments of Georgia and Azerbaijan. We cannot however, understand why Great Britain, France and Italy have withheld such recognition from the Armenians who during the whole duration of the war showed such loyalty to Russia, the Ally of the Entente, and at enormous cost out of proportion, rendered every service they could for the Allied cause which they considered as their own.

Under these circumstances I venture once more to beg the United States Government to recognize the de facto Government of the Armenian Republic in the Manner I have requested in my previous letters and to enable us to procure the requisite indispensable quantity of food stuff, seed, clothing and other necessities as well as arms and ammunition for our defence.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) G. Pasdermadjian.

February 21, 1920. [**1.5**, pp. 49]

To the President,
The White House.

Mr. President:

The Powers, taking advantage of America's absence from Paris, are cutting up Armenia. It is only through the realization of your principles and ideals that Armenia can hope to attain the fulfillment of her age-long aspiration for freedom. Mr. President, all our hopes are centered in you. After having suffered as terribly as we have, and having waited as long as we have, we now make a last supreme appeal to you that you may not abandon us.

I am, Mr. President,

Your humble and obedient servant.

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