

**Working paper #13**

**Divided They Conquer:  
The Success of Armenian Ethnic Lobbies  
in the United States**

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## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
ANCA	Armenian National Committee of America
The Assembly	The Armenian Assembly of America
AIPAC	American Israeli Public Affairs Committee
CIC	Canada-Israel Committee
PAC	Political Action Committee
ARF	Armenian Revolutionary Front
ADL	Armenian Defense League
AGBU	Armenian General Benevolence Union
ARS	Armenian Relief Society
WCTU	Women’s Christian Temperance Union
AYF	Armenian Youth Federation
ANCHA	Armenian National Committee for Homeless Armenians
ASALA	Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia
ARA	Armenian Revolutionary Army
ACIA	Armenian Committee for the Independence of Armenia
EU	European Union
ATP	Armenian Tree Project
UN	United Nations
ARAMAC	Armenian- American Action Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGOC	Non-Governmental Organization Training Center
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
ANI	Armenian National Institute
PL	Public Law
HR	House Resolution

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## Abstract

The end of the Cold War has sparked considerable academic and policy debates on the direction and aims of US foreign policy. One aspect of that debate has centered on the role of ethnic groups in influencing foreign policy and determining the national interest. Two broad camps are visible in this debate. The first camp argues that ethnic lobbies are highly influential and a threat to US foreign policy and the national interest (Schlesinger, Jr.: 1992; Huntington: 1997; Smith: 2000). The second camp sees these groups as moderately influential but largely beneficial; specifically, they promote American interests abroad (Clough: 1992; Shain: 1999). Neither of these camps, despite their conclusions, has offered rigorous case studies aimed at measuring the impact of ethnic lobby groups on the US foreign policy process nor divulging how these groups attain their alleged influence.

One US minority in particular, Armenian-Americans, has achieved considerable success in gaining political and material support from Congress. Such achievements include roughly \$90 million in annual aid for the state of Armenia; maintenance of Section 907 of the Freedom of Support Act, which blocks aid to Armenia's rival Azerbaijan; the stalling of an arms deal with Turkey; and increased support for official US governmental recognition of the Armenian genocide of 1915-1921.

This case study of Armenian lobby groups in the US argues that the amount of aid and support for Armenia and Armenian issues is best explained by the intense lobbying efforts of Armenian-Americans in the United States. The lobbying success of this small US minority is largely the result of two factors: an intense inter-community rivalry between two factions within the Armenian-American population, which has led to *hyper-mobilization* of this ethnic group's resources, and the formation of key alliances in Washington including members of Congress and other lobby groups and organizations.

# **Divided They Conquer: The Success of Armenian Ethnic Lobbies in the US<sup>1</sup>**

## **Heather S. Gregg<sup>2</sup>**

### **I. Introduction**

Within the last decade, Armenians lobby groups in the United States have achieved considerable success in gaining political and material support from Congress. Such achievements include roughly \$90 million in annual aid for the state of Armenia, maintenance of Section 907 of the Freedom of Support Act, which blocks aid to Armenia's rival Azerbaijan, the stalling of an arms deal with Turkey, and increased support for official US government recognition of the Armenian genocide of 1915-1922.

The degree of Congressional support to the republic of Armenia and Armenian issues is surprising. Armenians number only around 1 million in the United States and, although concentrated in states such as Massachusetts and California, their voting impact is moderate relative to other ethnic groups.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, US national interests towards the Caucasus do not suggest that Armenia is the most important state to target in that region. Azerbaijan, the country with which Armenia has an active land and border dispute, holds oil and natural gas reserves in addition to a passage for transport of these fuels to Turkey, a littoral state. Turkey, a historic and contemporary foe of the Armenians, is a regionally important NATO member and US ally. In addition, Armenia has received considerable US aid despite waves of undemocratic practices, such as banning political parties, media censorship, and the occupation of 10% of Azerbaijan, not including the Armenian exclave of Nargorno Karabakh.<sup>4</sup> It, therefore, is hard to argue that Washington supports Armenia as a reward for its democratic and human rights

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<sup>3</sup> Statistics on the number of Armenian in the US vary greatly. For example, Khachig Tololyan puts the number at 800,000, "Elites and Institutions in the Armenian Diaspora," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 107-136. Robert H. Hewsen cites the 1980 US census as recording only 308,096, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001) plate 270. Yossi Shain places the number at around 1 million, *Marketing the American Creed Abroad: US Diasporas and Homelands*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 64. Statistics on other ethnic groups in the US show how small Armenians are in comparison. For example Shain outlines the rise of Mexican-American political activism in the US, an ethnic group that comprises a significant percentage of the US population (Shain: 1999, pp. 23-23 and chapter 5). Shain hypothesizes that the size of the diasporic community does contribute to its success in attaining its political objectives pp. 9-10. Tony Smith also makes this point in *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 95-101.

<sup>4</sup> David Rieff, "Case Study in Ethnic Conflict," *Foreign Affairs*, (March/April 1997), pp. 118-126.

practices. What, then, explains the degree of Washington's interest in Armenia and Armenian issues?

This paper argues that the amount of aid and support for Armenian issues is best explained by the intense lobbying efforts of Armenian-Americans in the United States. The lobbying success of this small ethnic minority is largely the result of two factors. First, an inter-community rivalry within the Armenian-American population represented by two lobby groups in Washington, the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) and the Armenian Assembly of America (the Assembly), has led to *hyper-mobilization* of this ethnic group's resources. Their different approaches to lobbying have mobilized more Armenians than one organization alone and have doubled outreach projects and resources on Armenian issues, magnifying the Armenian presence in the US. Second, the Armenians have formed key alliances in Washington including members of Congress, other lobby groups and organizations, and the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues in the House of Representatives, which has rallied behind Armenian policy objectives. Together, hyper-mobilization and alliance building have allowed the Armenians considerable success in achieving specific policy objectives.

The first section of this paper reviews literature on ethnic lobbies in the US. It argues that more case studies are needed to test hypotheses posited by scholars on the strategies and successes of ethnic lobbies in influencing US foreign policy. The second section traces the history of the schism within the Armenian-American community and highlights the history of Armenian political activism in the US. The third section describes the formation of Armenian ethnic lobbies, their methods of outreach to Armenian-Americans and the general public, and the policy objectives and strategies of the two Armenian lobby groups in the US, ANCA and the Assembly. The fourth section offers concluding remarks on what the Armenian case suggests about the impact of ethnic lobbies on US foreign policy in general.

## **II. Literature on Ethnic Lobbies in the US**

The end of the Cold War has sparked intense academic and policy debates on the direction and aims of US foreign policy. One aspect of that debate has centered on the role of ethnic groups in influencing foreign policy and determining the national interest. Two broad camps are visible in this debate: those that see ethnic lobbies as highly influential and a threat to US foreign policy and the national interest, and those that see these groups as moderately influential but largely good, promoting American interests abroad. This section argues that both of these camps offer hypotheses on ethnic lobbies but provide no in-depth case studies to test these claims. Therefore more rigorous case studies are needed in order to measure the degree to which ethnic lobbies influence US foreign policy and how that influence is attained.

The first camp on ethnic lobbies, headed by Samuel Huntington and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., argues that the rise of US ethnic groups in the foreign policy arena stems from diversity within America's population and is a threat to the national interest. Huntington asserts that the Cold War united the American people under the threat from a

common enemy, the Soviet Union. The passage of this foe has left American society and its government in a state of national “disintegration,” which, in turn, has thrown into question what our interests should be.<sup>5</sup> This state of disintegration has been reinforced by post Cold War immigration to the US and the rise of “the cult of multiculturalism,” whose proponents “deny the existence of a common culture in the United States, denounce assimilation, and promote the primacy of racial, ethnic, and other subnational cultural identities and groupings.”<sup>6</sup> The rise of ethnic lobbies in the US is an outgrowth of these international and domestic changes. Although Huntington acknowledges that the interests of ethnic lobbies can coincide with the national interest, he also claims that they are “often pursued at the expense of broader interests and American relations with long-standing allies.”<sup>7</sup> Ethnic lobbies, therefore, pose a threat to US foreign policy aims and articulation of the national interest. This viewpoint is echoed by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.<sup>8</sup>

Tony Smith offers a more nuanced yet equally as cautionary argument about ethnic lobbies in the US. Smith, like Huntington and Schlesinger Jr., posits that ethnic lobbies affect US foreign policy decision-making considerably and that their impact on the national interest may be more negative than positive.<sup>9</sup> However, Smith looks not only at the ethnic composition of the US but also the structure of its political system as an explanation for how ethnic lobbies gain influence in Washington. Smith argues that “the structure of the American political system, as much as the character of particularistic social forces, explains the importance of ethnic groups in the formulation of American foreign policy.”<sup>10</sup> Smith delineates three ways in which lobbies gain influence in Washington: through votes; campaign finance; and by creating an “organizational body” that articulates demands, mobilizes its constituents, and forms alliances with other groups.<sup>11</sup>

The second camp, headed by Yossi Shain, contends that the rise of ethnic lobbies in post-Cold War US foreign policy-making is a good thing; it is a sign that these groups have achieved “a respectable position in American life today” and that they want to acquire, “a meaningful voice in US foreign affairs.”<sup>12</sup> Shain argues that ethnic lobbies are useful for promoting US values back in the homeland: democracy, self-determination, human rights and other liberal values.<sup>13</sup> For proponents of the “democratic peace

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<sup>5</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “The Erosion of National Interests,” *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 1997) pp. 28-40.

<sup>6</sup> Huntington, pp. 31-32.

<sup>7</sup> Huntington, p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (New York: WW Norton, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Tony Smith, pp. 1-2.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, p. 86. Walker Connor also points to the structure of the US political system as important for explaining the influence of ethnic lobbies in “Diasporas and the Formation of Foreign Policy: The US in Comparative Perspective,” pp. 167-179, in *Diasporas in World Politics: The Greeks in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Dimitri C. Constatas and Athanassios G. Platias (London: Macmillan in association with The Institute of International Relations, Panteion University, 1993).

<sup>11</sup> Smith, pp. 94-110.

<sup>12</sup> Shain, p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> Shain, chapters one and two.

theory”—the argument that liberal democracies do not fight each other and therefore the spread of democracy will create a “zone of peace” among like-nations—ethnic lobbies serve US interests by spreading democracy and thus peace.

A slightly different variant of this argument is posited by Michael Clough.<sup>14</sup> He contends that US Cold War foreign policy was determined by a small group of elites but that the post-Cold war strategic environment, coupled with increases in immigration to the US and advances in communications, has opened foreign policy-making up to a wider body of the population, including ethnic groups. The rise of “grass roots” organizations in the foreign policy arena is not a threat to the national interest but rather the fulfillment of democratic participation in a nation’s destiny. These groups’ participation should be welcomed and accommodated by the US government, Clough argues.

Whether ethnic lobbies are “good” or “bad” for articulating the national interest is difficult to measure by any objective standards. This debate, therefore, will not be addressed in this paper. Measuring the impact of ethnic lobbies on determining US foreign policy is a more plausible endeavor. Although, as most scholars of ethnic lobbies will contend, foreign policy-making is an over-determined process, it is very difficult to say with certainty what domestic and international factors cause foreign policy decisions.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the debate on ethnic lobbies and their impact on foreign policy can be advanced by delving into case studies on particular groups and by exploring the history and organization of specific ethnic lobbies, the agendas they set, and their strategies for realizing their objectives.

There are almost no in-depth case studies on particular ethnic lobby groups in the US.<sup>16</sup> The notable exception is research done on pro-Israel lobby groups, particularly the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).<sup>17</sup> Of particular importance to the debate on how ethnic lobbies organize and influence the foreign policy process is David Howard Goldberg’s *Foreign Policy and Ethnic Interest Groups*.<sup>18</sup> Goldberg’s research compares the rise of pro-Israel lobby groups in the US, particularly AIPAC, with the pro-Israel force in Canada, the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC). He considers the organization of the lobby groups, their ties to Israel and to pro-Israel constituencies in the US and Canada, leadership within the lobbies, the policy-making processes of the US and

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<sup>14</sup> Michael Clough, “Grass-Roots Policymaking: Say Good-Bye to the ‘Wise Men,’” *Foreign Affairs* (January/February, 1994) pp. 2-8.

<sup>15</sup> Smith, p. 124.

<sup>16</sup> There is an edited volume on Greek diasporas throughout the world that touches on Greek lobbies, *Diasporas in World Politics: The Greeks in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Dimitri C. Conostas and Athanassios G. Platias (London: Macmillan in association with The Institute of International Relations, Panteion University, 1993). In addition, both Yossi Shain and Tony Smith touch on numerous lobby groups in their books. But none of these works provides a rigorous case study of an ethnic lobby group.

<sup>17</sup> Works on the pro-Israel lobby include Edward Tivnan, *The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), David Mittelberg, *The Israel Connection and American Jews* (Westport and London: Praeger, 1999), and Robert H. Trice, *Interest Groups and the Foreign Policy Process: US Policy in the Middle East* (Beverly Hills and London: Sage Publications, 1976), to name a few.

<sup>18</sup> David Howard Goldberg, *Foreign Policy and Ethnic Interest Groups: American and Canadian Jews Lobby for Israel* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990).



Canadian governments, the networks these groups created, and their successes and failures in implementing their goals.

This paper seeks to help fill the gap in the literature on ethnic lobbies by offering another case study, specifically by process-tracing the evolution of Armenian lobby groups in the US. Following on Goldberg's methodology, this paper will process-trace the organization of these lobby groups; the leadership they have; their ties to their diasporic constituents and to the Armenian government; and their objectives, strategies, successes and limits in attaining their goals.

In addition, this paper will test the hypotheses of Smith and Shain on the impact of ethnic lobbies on US foreign policy. First, it will test Smith's argument that ethnic lobbies gain influence through voting impact. Second, the paper will test Smith's hypothesis on campaign finance by measuring the amount of Political Action Committee (PAC) contributions given by the Armenians relative to their adversaries. Third, it will test Smith's hypothesis that ethnic groups gain influence by being organized, articulating clear demands, mobilizing their constituents, and forming alliances with other groups. Finally, this paper will test Shain's hypothesis that there is a correlation between democratic practices and US aid.

### **III. The Armenian Diaspora and Political Activism in the US**

The Armenian-American diaspora suffers from a politically motivated schism that has torn through virtually every aspect of the community's life. This split, although present from the earliest days of the community in the US, has gone through waves of heightened animosity and relative calm. The result of the schism has been the construction of parallel organizations—churches, schools, newspapers, charities, social clubs and lobby groups—that remain divided to this day.

The early Armenian-American community organized itself around political parties, which in turn shaped religious and social organizations. Four political parties were particularly important within the Armenian-American diaspora. The first party, formed in Geneva in 1887, was the *Hunchakian* Revolutionary Party. Initially this movement argued for independence of Armenia from Ottoman rule.<sup>19</sup> The second movement, the *Dashnaksutiun*,<sup>20</sup> or Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), was founded in Tiflis in 1890. This group initially called for reforms within the Ottoman system, not full independence.<sup>21</sup> In 1910, the ARF became a political party and headed the government of the Republic of Armenia from May of 1918 until Armenia's fall to the Red Army on December 2, 1920. The third movement was the *Ramagavar* Party, or the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL), which was formed in Egypt in 1921. The *Ramagavars*, composed primarily of businessmen and professionals, were supportive of

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<sup>19</sup> Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915-1923* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1984), p. 18, and Hratch Dasnabedian, "ARF History: The Realm of Ideas and the Evolution of Programmatic Objectives," ARF website, <http://arf.am/English/history>, downloaded (7/19/01).

<sup>20</sup> Also transliterated *Tashnaksutiun*.

<sup>21</sup> Nassibian, p. 18, and Dasnabedian, pp. 1-2.

Soviet occupation of Armenia; they believed that the Red Army would prevent further attacks from the Turks, thus preserving a portion of the Armenian homeland.<sup>22</sup> The fourth party, the *Armenian Progressive League*, formed in US, was pro-communist in its ideology and argued that Soviet rule over Armenia would serve the region better than an independent state ruled by the ARF.<sup>23</sup>

The political and ideological divisions within the Armenian community widened with the founding of the Republic of Armenia in 1918 and its fall to the Soviets in 1920. These developments created two camps within the Armenian-American community.<sup>24</sup> The first camp consisted of the ARF, which formed the government of the Republic and was exiled with Soviet takeover. They espoused a staunch anti-Soviet, anticommunist rhetoric. The opposing camp consisted of the *Hunchags*, *Ramagavars*, and the Armenian Progressive League, which aligned against the ARF to support the Soviet take-over of the Republic, albeit for different ideological reasons.<sup>25</sup>

These divergent political movements had an impact on religious organizations in the Armenian-American diaspora.<sup>26</sup> The Protestant Armenians opposed revolution and banned pro-revolutionary rallies in their meeting houses, largely held by Apostolic (Orthodox) Armenians.<sup>27</sup> This ideological division led to the founding of the first Armenian Apostolic Church in Worcester in 1891 and the founding of an “Armenian Academy” aimed at organizing pro-revolutionaries in the community. These opposing perspectives existed not only between denominations but within the Armenian Apostolic Church as well. Tensions within the Apostolic Church culminated with the assassination of Archbishop Tourian on December 24, 1933, as he was conducting Mass in New York. Although never determined to be an ARF plot, two ARF members were convicted of murder and seven others tried as accomplices to the crime.<sup>28</sup> The assassination split the Church in two, prompting the pro-ARF camp to establish its own Apostolic church, the

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<sup>22</sup> Jenny Phillips, *Symbol, Myth, and Rhetoric: The Politics of Culture in an Armenian-American Population* (New York: AMS Press, 1989), p. 119.

<sup>23</sup> Phillips, p. 120.

<sup>24</sup> Anny Bakalian, *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1993). Both Bakalian and Phillips describe the split as “pro- and anti-ARF (Tashnag).” Bakalian, p. 94 and Phillips, p. 119.

<sup>25</sup> Phillips, p. 119 and Bakalian, pp. 94-95. Bakalian argues that there was also a silent majority of neutrals, or *chezok*, that, although not playing into the partisan politics, still fell under the anti-*Tashnag* [ARF] banner, p. 95.

<sup>26</sup> Armenians, while all Christian, do not all fall within the same Church. The Armenian Apostolic Church was formed in 301CE, with the conversion *en mass* of the Armenian kingdom to Christianity. As part of the Orthodox branch of Christianity, it is *autocephalic* and forms one of the independent heads of Orthodox Christianity. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries to the Near East converted Armenian communities to their denominations. There are no agreed upon percentages of each denomination, but Bakalian estimates the breakdown in the US at 64.2% Apostolic, 9.7% Protestant, and 3.8% Roman Catholic, with 22.3% either practicing “other” denominations or no religion. These estimates are taken from a large-n survey of Armenians in the New York/New Jersey area. Bakalian, pp. 64-65.

<sup>27</sup> Another version of why the Armenian Apostolics formed their own church is as follows: “One Sunday in 1888, the [Protestant] minister Asadour Antreasian spoke disrespectfully about the Armenian Church, whereupon the faithful of the Armenian Apostolic Church got up and walked out in protest.” Archbishop Mesroh Ashjian, *The Armenian Church in America* (New York: Armenian Prelacy, 1985) p. 16.

<sup>28</sup> Phillips, pp. 128-130.

Armenian National Apostolic Church of America. In 1957, this church was placed under the jurisdiction of the Holy See of Cilicia, in Lebanon.<sup>29</sup> Twelve of the fifteen existing Apostolic churches remained under the authority of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin, in Soviet occupied Armenia.<sup>30</sup>

The schism within the Armenian-American community played itself out not only in the churches but also in charities and social clubs. Prior to World War I and the Armenian Genocide, hundreds of Armenian charities existed in the US.<sup>31</sup> Of particular importance was the creation of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) in 1906 by the wealthy Egyptian-Armenian Bohos Nubar Pasha.<sup>32</sup> The aims of AGBU, which remain the same today, are education, vocational training, medical access, agricultural development, and aid to the orphaned and needy.<sup>33</sup> Armenian historian Robert Mirak argues that the AGBU, although intended to be non-partisan, was created by the anti-ARF community, and has remained largely partisan.<sup>34</sup> The creation of the AGBU prompted the ARF in 1910 to found the Armenian Red Cross, which later became the Armenian Relief Society (ARS). Current-day ARS headquarters, in Watertown, Massachusetts, are in the same building as other ARF organizations.<sup>35</sup> In addition to bipartisan charities, social clubs were also divided along pro- and anti-ARF lines. The Armenian Youth Federation (AYF) was founded just weeks after the assassination of Archbishop Tourian and remains an important wing of the ARF.<sup>36</sup> The anti-ARF community sponsors its own youth movements.<sup>37</sup>

Alongside political, religious, and social organizations in the Armenian-American community, movements aimed at influencing US domestic and foreign policy also became an important part of Armenian diasporic life. Before Armenians formed their

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<sup>29</sup> Phillips, pp. 143-154 and Bakalian, p. 97.

<sup>30</sup> Phillips, p. 131.

<sup>31</sup> There were a series of pogroms and massacres against the Armenians prior to the Genocide. The first massacre was ordered by the Ottoman authorities but carried out by Kurds in Sassun and Urfa from 1894-1896. This was followed by the massacre of more than 6,000 Armenians in Constantinople in 1896. In addition, there were pogroms in Cilicia in 1909, following the “Yong Turk” coup in 1908. Each of these massacres produced waves of immigrants seeking asylum. The Genocide is marked as beginning on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1915, when “Armenian political, religious, educational, and intellectual leaders in Constantinople were arrested, deported to Anatolia, and put to death.” See Richard G. Hovannisian, “Etiology and Sequelae of the Armenian Genocide,” in *Genocide: Conceptual and Historical Dimensions*, edited by George J. Andreopoulos (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994) pp. 111-140. See also Nassibian, Chapter 1, “Britain and the Armenian Question on the Eve of the First World War.” For a summary of Armenian charities in the US, see Robert Mirak, *Armenians In America, 1890 to World War I* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983) p. 173-174.

<sup>32</sup> Today the AGBU is reported as having a \$300 million endowment, see Tololyan, “Elites and Institutions,” p. 127.

<sup>33</sup> Mirak, pp. 175-176. See also the AGBU website, [www.agbu.org](http://www.agbu.org).

<sup>34</sup> Phillips states; “The AGBU is a charitable and educational institution. Its loyalties have always lain with Soviet Armenia and the Church at Etchmiadzin. Although AGBU’ers insist that Tashnaks [ARF members] join their organization, I have yet to find one,” pp. 142-143.

<sup>35</sup> Although in an interview with this author an ARF activist insisted that neither the Armenian Red Cross nor the ARS is political (Interview 7/20/01).

<sup>36</sup> *The AYF Legacy: Portrait of a Movement in Historical Review, 1933-1993* (Watertown: Armenian Youth Federation, 1994).

<sup>37</sup> See the Armenian Assembly’s website, [www.aainc.org](http://www.aainc.org), and AGBU’s website, [www.agbu.org](http://www.agbu.org).

own ethnic lobbies in Washington, early political activism on Armenian issues was largely instigated and orchestrated by non-Armenians. In particular, churches in the US and Great Britain launched campaigns after World War I to raise money for the “starving Armenians.”<sup>38</sup> American and British missionaries to the region were also instrumental in raising awareness of Armenia and Armenian issues.<sup>39</sup> In addition, women’s organizations such as the WCTU in Britain and the US took up the Armenian cause, sponsoring rallies and fundraisers, writing to politicians, and even traveling to areas where Armenian refugees were amassed to provide aid.<sup>40</sup>

In addition to outside support, the Armenian-American community also confronted Washington with its concerns. The earliest Armenian political activism, somewhat ironically, was aimed at blocking Armenian immigration to the US. In the late 1880s, Armenians in Worcester petitioned the “Turkish legislation in Washington” with the aim of blocking further immigration of Armenians. Economic hardships in the US and fears about the survival of an Armenian presence in the Old World inspired these measures. The petition succeeded in blocking 30 Armenians en route to the US.<sup>41</sup> Prior to World War I, efforts by the AGBU, the ARF, and the Armenian National Assembly, an organization in Constantinople, sought to keep Armenians in the homeland by providing funds for subsistence and general discouragement of emigration.<sup>42</sup>

After the Genocide, Armenians in the US joined forces with other groups to thwart the restoration of economic and diplomatic ties between the US and the new Republic of Turkey. The *American Committee Opposed to the Lausanne Treaty*, a pro-Armenian body of Congress members, clergy, charity organizations, and Armenian-Americans, organized to block ratification of normalized relations with Turkey.<sup>43</sup> The Committee succeeded in preventing the treaty’s ratification in the Senate. In 1927, the State Department negotiated the restoration of ties between the two countries through an “exchange of notes” between diplomats.<sup>44</sup> Despite rigorous opposition from members of the Committee, Turkey and America exchanged ambassadors in May of 1927, thus reestablishing diplomatic ties. The Senate approved these actions *post facto* in 1928.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> There were numerous drives within churches throughout the US and Britain aimed at raising money for Armenian refugees and orphans. A few examples include the “International Golden Rule Sunday,” sponsored by Near Eastern Relief and held annually on December 7, beginning in 1923. The aim was to raise funds for Assyrian, Armenian, Greek, Syrian and Jewish orphans in the Near East. A similar effort, “Save the Starving in Bible Lands” was organized by the Sunday School War Council of the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief. Another example was the *Churches of America and Near East Relief Ecumenical Cooperation*, consisting of more than 20 denominations in the US and aimed at raising aid and awareness of refugees in the Near East, and drives within Sunday schools of several denominations. See “Armenian Pamphlets” Box, Widner Library, Harvard University, OTT 3453 02. For a description of British organizations that aided the Armenians, see Nassibian, chapters 4-6.

<sup>39</sup> James L. Barton, *The Story of Near East Relief (1915-1930): An Interpretation*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930), Chapter 1 “How and Why it Began.”

<sup>40</sup> Nassibian, pp. 40-50, 58-61 and Mirak, pp. 68-70.

<sup>41</sup> Mirak, p. 44.

<sup>42</sup> Mirak, pp. 66-68.

<sup>43</sup> Roger R. Trask, *The United States Response to Turkish Nationalism and Reform, 1914-1939* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971) pp. 37-38.

<sup>44</sup> Trask, pp. 49-51.

<sup>45</sup> Trask, pp. 54-60.

Pro-Armenian activism also mobilized to ensure Genocide survivors' entrance to the US. Beginning in the 1920s, Congress passed legislation aimed at restricting certain ethnic groups' immigration to the US. In 1927, the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act was passed, placing a quota on immigration; the Armenian quota was set at 100 per annum.<sup>46</sup> Armenian-Americans and other pro-Armenian groups fought to classify Armenians as refugees, which allowed them special entry into the US.<sup>47</sup> After World War II, the American National Committee for Homeless Armenians (ANCHA) took similar measures, calling on the Displaced Persons Act.<sup>48</sup> ANCHA succeeded in aiding 25,000 Armenians' immigration to the US, despite the quota system.<sup>49</sup>

Another important phase of political activism within the Armenian diaspora was the terrorist movement of the 1970s and early 1980s. The goal of Armenian terrorist acts was to agitate for Turkish and international recognition of the Armenian Genocide.<sup>50</sup> Two main groups associated with the ARF, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) and the Armenian Revolutionary Army (ARA), assassinated Turkish officials to avenge those who died in the Genocide and to push for greater recognition of the Genocide.<sup>51</sup> Terrorist activities later expanded to include acts like the murder of nine and injuring of 74 at Ankara's airport in 1982 and the bombing of Orly Airport in Paris in 1983, which killed six and injured 48.<sup>52</sup> These acts, while gaining publicity for the Armenian cause, divided the Armenian diaspora over their methods and morality.<sup>53</sup> Terrorism lost its effectiveness as a political tool as the Armenian community and those within the ranks of the ARF became more divided over the costs and benefits of these acts.<sup>54</sup>

In addition to these methods of political activism, the Armenians formed lobby groups aimed at influencing foreign policy in Washington. The ARF cites the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia (ACIA), formed in 1918, as their first lobby group.<sup>55</sup> Their current lobby organization, the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), evolved from the ACIA. In 1972, influential members in the anti-ARF community in the US founded the Armenian Assembly of America (the Assembly) with the hope of forming "a new Armenian organization in which leaders from various

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<sup>46</sup> Phillips, p. 104.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Bakalian, p. 11.

<sup>49</sup> The quota system was liberalized in 1965. See Bakalian, p. 11.

<sup>50</sup> Khachig Tololyan, "Cultural Narrative and the Motivation of the Terrorist," in *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 10 no. 4 (Dec. 1987), pp. 217-233.

<sup>51</sup> Tololyan, "Terrorist," pp. 226-229.

<sup>52</sup> "Armenian Terrorism: That Beirut Virus," *The Economist*, August 14, 1982, p. 46, and "The dream and the terror," *The Economist*, July 23, 1983, p. 51, respectively.

<sup>53</sup> Bakalian, pp. 153-154. See also "UnArmenian Activities," *The Economist*, February 6, 1982, p. 20.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Dr. Khachig Tololyan and Khatchik Der Ghokassian, 7/20/01.

<sup>55</sup> Garo Adanalian, "Pursing the Armenian Cause in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: An Interview with Sharistan Ardhalidjian [of ANCA]," *The Armenian Weekly Online*, (May 2001), <http://free.freespeech.org/armnenian/weekly/may> (downloaded 7/22/01).

Armenian groups would participate for the benefit of the community as a whole.”<sup>56</sup> To date, these two lobby groups continue to function independently of one another.<sup>57</sup> Their aims, strategies and achievements will be discussed below.

#### **IV. The Rise of Armenian Ethnic Lobbies**

The creation of Armenian ethnic lobbies in the US is another example of parallel organizations created by the ideological schism within the Armenian-American community. This section argues that competition between the two lobby groups—ANCA and the Assembly—has created *hyper mobilization* of resources within the Armenian-American diaspora. Competition has promoted the causes and successes of Armenian lobby efforts because, although the two lobbies have different approaches to influencing Washington, they mostly agree on policy objectives. This section outlines three dimensions of these two lobby groups: the organizational essence of each group,<sup>58</sup> their outreach projects; and their policy objectives.

##### **A. Organizational Essence—History, Structure, Mobilization, and Alliances**

ANCA and the Assembly are very different organizations in their histories and goals. ANCA traces its origins back to the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia (ACIA), the organization that lobbied on behalf of the ARF-governed Republic of Armenia, beginning in 1918.<sup>59</sup> As noted earlier, the *Hunchags*, the Progressive League, and those aligned with Noubar Pasha (the AGBU and, later, the *Ramagavars*) contested the ARF-run Armenian government. This contestation led to two delegations of Armenians at the post-World War I conferences of Versailles and Sèvres, and two delegations at the post-World War II conference in San Francisco. In the US, however, there was only one organized lobby group for Armenian issues, the ARF-backed ACIA and its successor ANCA. The presence of only one Armenian lobby group held until 1972.

In 1972, two Armenian-American professors at George Washington University hatched the idea of a new lobby group that would incorporate other already-existing Armenian organizations. These scholars, together with two Armenian attorneys from Boston, approached two prominent Armenian-American businessmen, Stephen Mugar and Hirair Hovnanian, who agreed to financially back the plan.<sup>60</sup> Their million-dollar

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<sup>56</sup> “About the Armenian Assembly,” Armenian Assembly of America website, <http://www.aaainc.org/overview> (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>57</sup> Another article on Armenian lobby groups is: Rachel Anderson Paul, “Grassroots Mobilization and Diaspora Politics: Armenian Interest Groups and the Role of Collective Memory,” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol. 6, No. 1, (Spring, 2000), pp. 24-47.

<sup>58</sup> The term “organizational essence” is taken from Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, Chapter 3, “Organizational Interests” (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 1974).

<sup>59</sup> Adanian, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Hovnanian remains the chairperson of the board of trustees to this day. *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, “Message from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees,” pp. 2, 25. The Armenian Assembly of America website, [www.aaainc.org/overview](http://www.aaainc.org/overview) (downloaded on 7/22/01).

donations were followed by numerous contributions from prominent Armenian-American professionals and business people.<sup>61</sup> Today they boast “investments” of \$13,134,187.<sup>62</sup>

Although the Assembly named as one of its primary goals to create “an organization for all Armenian-Americans,” the founding of the Armenian Assembly of America is another chapter in the rivalry between pro- and anti-ARF groups in the United States. The key founding members were contributors to the AGBU, the largest remaining anti-ARF organization. Mugar, the creator of the Star Market chain in Massachusetts, was a prominent New England philanthropist who had donated large sums of money to Boston-area universities and the AGBU.<sup>63</sup> Richard Hovannisian, a prominent scholar of Armenian history and founding member of the Assembly, was also an active member of the AGBU.

The differing goals of ANCA and the Armenian Assembly reflect the ideological split between the two groups. ANCA and the ARF define their overarching goal as “a unified, free, and independent Armenia.”<sup>64</sup> This comes from the platform of the 1919 ARF-headed Armenian government, which called for territorial and ethnic unification of Armenians in the region.<sup>65</sup> They also speak in terms of “a just solution to the Armenian Cause” (*Hai Tahd* in Armenian) and call for “a resolution of all the political, moral, and legal implications associated with [a just resolution].”<sup>66</sup> From this imperative, ANCA delineates three main goals: “to foster public awareness in support of a free, united and independent Armenia; to influence and guide US policy on matters of interest to the Armenian-American community; and to represent the collective Armenian-American viewpoint on matters of public policy, while serving as liaison between the community and their elected officials.”<sup>67</sup>

The Assembly’s goals, although less clearly stated than ANCA’s, tend to parallel US foreign policy ideals. The Assembly states a primary goal as the “commitment to prevent genocide and promote human rights...”<sup>68</sup> Another goal is “good governance” in Armenia, defined as “participatory democracy” and a market economy.<sup>69</sup> The Assembly also names as a goal that Armenians in the homeland “not only survive in Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh, but flourish.”<sup>70</sup> The AGBU shares in this last goal, emphasizing the prosperity of Armenians not just in the homeland but the worldwide diaspora.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> A list of the most generous benefactors to the endowment can be found in the *Armenian Assembly of America: Membership Spotlight 2000*, p. 17, [www.aaa.inc.org](http://www.aaa.inc.org) (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>62</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report*, p. 26. “Investments” is not further detailed.

<sup>63</sup> Phillips, p. 111.

<sup>64</sup> Adanian, p. 1 and Hratch Dasnabedian, “The Evolution of the National and Political Objectives of the ARF,” p. 3, [www.arf.am](http://www.arf.am) (downloaded on 7/19/01).

<sup>65</sup> Dasnabedian, pp. 2-3.

<sup>66</sup> Adanian, p. 1.

<sup>67</sup> “About the Armenian National Committee of America,” p. 1, The ANCA website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org), (downloaded on 3/11/01).

<sup>68</sup> *Armenian Assembly of American Annual Report 2000*, p. 3.

<sup>69</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *AGBU Biennial Report, 1998-1999*.

Another key difference between the two lobby groups is the way in which they are structured. Both organizations place their national headquarters in Washington, DC, and both organizations have offices in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, and Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno Karabakh. ANCA's structure is dispersed; it has numerous offices and chapters throughout the United States. There are Western and Eastern regional offices, in Glendale, California and Watertown, Massachusetts, respectively. The Eastern Regional Office coordinates 31 local offices west of the Mississippi.<sup>72</sup> The Western Regional office coordinates 12 offices, mostly in California.<sup>73</sup> In addition, there are ANC offices in other countries including France, Italy, and Britain and a representative for the EU.<sup>74</sup>

The Armenian Assembly, on the other hand, is more centralized than ANCA. In addition to its national headquarters in Washington, DC, it has a regional office in Beverly Hills, California. These two offices are responsible for all major efforts of the Assembly: policy issues, relations with the Armenian government, public affairs, membership, fundraising, and other projects.<sup>75</sup> In addition to these main offices, there is a small office in Cambridge, Massachusetts that supports the Armenian Tree Project (ATP), a program aimed at planting agricultural and aesthetic trees in Armenia.<sup>76</sup> The Assembly also has an office in New York that works with UN-related issues.<sup>77</sup>

Furthermore, the two lobby groups' approaches to mobilization are different. ANCA stresses its essence as a "bottom-up" organization. It claims to be "the largest and most influential Armenian-American grassroots political organization."<sup>78</sup> ANCA stresses as one of its primary goals the mobilization of support at the local level:

The ANCA is convinced that a well-educated, motivated grassroots [sic] is the most valuable and powerful weapon we have...Each ANC is composed of community members...Each ANC is structured to meet the needs of its local community.<sup>79</sup>

ANCA boasts of "over 45 chapters in 25 states across the United States—each working to ensure that the Armenian American community's collective voice is heard on the federal, state and local level."<sup>80</sup>

Primarily, the Assembly attracts and targets prominent Armenian-American professionals and businesspeople who support the lobby group financially.<sup>81</sup> In addition

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<sup>72</sup> Adalian, p. 2.

<sup>73</sup> "Chapter Contacts," pp. 3-4, The ANCA website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org) (downloaded 7/22/01).

<sup>74</sup> Alex Sadar, "A Year of Victories and Lessons for Hai Tahd," in *The Armenian Weekly Online* (March, 2001) <http://free.freespeech.org/armenian/weekly> (downloaded 7/22/01).

<sup>75</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*.

<sup>76</sup> This project alone boasts 6,000 donors, *Armenian Assembly Annual Report 2000*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>77</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 3.

<sup>78</sup> "ANCA profile," p. 1, The ANCA website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org), (downloaded 3/11/01).

<sup>79</sup> Adalian, p. 2.

<sup>80</sup> "ANCA Offices and Chapters," p. 1, The ANCA website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org) (downloaded on 3/11/01).

<sup>81</sup> Bakalian, p. 140.



to maintaining intense fundraising efforts, the Assembly launched a grassroots program, the Armenian-American Action Committee (ARAMAC). The *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000* cites “almost 8,000 Armenian-American activists across the country.”<sup>82</sup>

Lastly, ANCA and the Assembly have formed separate alliances with other organizations and interest groups. ANCA names “coalition building” as essential to its effectiveness. An ANCA representative states: “The ANCA has longstanding ties to the Greek, [Greek] Cypriot, Kurdish, and Lebanese communities. We also work with various labor and human rights organizations.”<sup>83</sup> These alliances have been particularly useful for ANCA’s bid to block military and economic aid to Turkey based on human rights violations of Armenians, Kurds, and Greek Cypriots. This will be further discussed below.

The Assembly boasts a strong and unique tie with the United Nations, with which it claims to have “the highest non-governmental organization status of any Armenian organization.”<sup>84</sup> In 1997, the Assembly’s NGO Training and Resource Center (NGOC) launched a new initiative with UNHCR to “build the capacity of NGO’s dealing with refugee problems...through a combination of training, technical assistance, assessments, and grants.”<sup>85</sup> In 1999, the Assembly was given special consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council.<sup>86</sup> In addition, the Assembly claims a unique relationship with the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and works closely with its staff to raise awareness on issues of genocide.<sup>87</sup>

## **B. Outreach Projects**

Although the histories, structures, approaches to mobilization, and alliances are different between ANCA and the Assembly, their programs of outreach to Armenians and the general public are similar. Both organizations have created parallel publications, research institutes, and youth programs. This redundancy has doubled the resources to Armenians and the general public, thus making Armenian issues more salient and arguably engaging more Armenians than would have otherwise been mobilized by one set of organizations alone.

A key means of mobilization for both lobby groups and their sibling organizations are publications. ANCA uses a website and emails to inform its constituents and circulate its position papers.<sup>88</sup> ANCA also publishes the monthly “TransCaucasus: A Chronology,” which is available on their website. In addition, they have close ties with the *Hairenik*

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<sup>82</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 7.

<sup>83</sup> Adanian, p. 1.

<sup>84</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 3.

<sup>85</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 20.

<sup>86</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 21.

<sup>87</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 24.

<sup>88</sup> ANCA website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org), (downloaded 3/11/01).

and *Armenian Weekly* newspapers, also available online.<sup>89</sup> The ARF publishes the bilingual daily *Azbarez*, founded in 1908, and boasts a circulation of over 500,000, in addition to website readers.<sup>90</sup> The ARF also publishes the daily *Yerik* in Armenia.<sup>91</sup>

The Assembly also uses newsletters, emails, “action alerts,” and their websites to inform “government officials, members of Congress, scholars, foreign policy analysts,” and Armenian-Americans of important issues.<sup>92</sup> Links listed on the Assembly’s website include *Massis Weekly*, *Armenian Liberty*, *Snark New Agency*, and the *Armenian News Network*.<sup>93</sup> In addition, the Assembly provides a link to *Azbarez Newspaper*, the official newspaper of the ARF, one of the few cross-schism links on either side’s websites.<sup>94</sup> The AGBU publishes *AGBU Magazine* quarterly and boasts a circulation of 80,000.<sup>95</sup> It also publishes the quarterly *Ararat* and several other periodicals in French, Armenian and Spanish.<sup>96</sup>

Another means of outreach are US research institutes devoted to Armenian issues. The Zoryan Institute for Contemporary Armenian Research and Documentation, Inc. was founded in 1982 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It was conjoined with the Zoryan Institute of Canada in 1984.<sup>97</sup> The Institute names as its goals the “documentation, study, and dissemination of material related to the life of the Armenian people in the recent past and present, and within the context of larger world affairs.”<sup>98</sup> Specifically, it focuses on three areas of study: the Genocide, the diaspora, and Armenia. With the University of Toronto the Institute co-publishes *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, a quarterly journal. It also holds seminars on Armenian issues, collects data and archival material, and makes its resources open to “scholars, writers, journalists, film-makers, government agencies, and other responsible organizations by special arrangement.”<sup>99</sup> The Institute is funded by private donations from “‘well-educated professionals’ and ‘business owners.’”<sup>100</sup>

The Assembly founded the Armenian National Institute (ANI) in 1997 with the goal of raising public awareness on the Armenian Genocide and seeking legal retribution

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<sup>89</sup> Adanalian, p. 3.

<sup>90</sup> “About Azbarez Armenian Daily Newspaper,” p. 1, Azbarez website, [www.asbarez.com](http://www.asbarez.com), (downloaded on 7/18/01).

<sup>91</sup> “President of Armenia Bans Leading Opposition Party,” ARF website, [www.arf.am/English/History](http://www.arf.am/English/History), (downloaded on 7/18/01) p. 1.

<sup>92</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 10. See also Mary C. Cook, “An Interview with ARAMAC’s Grassroots Director Nancy Yerian Hiteshue,” pp. 1-3, *Via Dolorosa Magazine*, [www.via-dolorosa.net](http://www.via-dolorosa.net), (downloaded on 8/9/01).

<sup>93</sup> [www.aaainc.org/links.htm](http://www.aaainc.org/links.htm) (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.* One other cross-link is the listing of the Zoryan Institute on the ANI’s website, [www.armenian-genocide.org/links.htm](http://www.armenian-genocide.org/links.htm) (downloaded on 8/8/01).

<sup>95</sup> *AGBU Biennial Report, 1998-1999*, p. 8.

<sup>96</sup> *AGBU Biennial Report, 1998-1999*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>97</sup> “About Us,” The Zoryan Institute website, pg. 1, [www.zoryan.org](http://www.zoryan.org), (downloaded on 7/24/01).

<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> “About Us: Services,” p. 3, Zoryan Institute website, [www.zoryan.org](http://www.zoryan.org), (downloaded on 7/24/01).

<sup>100</sup> Quote taken from Bakalian, p. 143.

for victims of the Genocide.<sup>101</sup> To this end it holds conferences and forums on the Genocide. ANI is currently collaborating with the Facing History and Ourselves Foundation on a project aimed at developing school curricula on the Genocide. In addition, ANI is working on *The Encyclopedia of Genocide*, in collaboration with Holocaust scholars. ANI claims a special relationship with the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, with which it is working to develop the Armenian Holocaust Museum and Memorial in Washington, DC.<sup>102</sup>

Mobilizing Armenian-American youth is another important feature of both lobby groups. ANCA and the ARF support the Armenian Youth Federation (AYF), which was founded in 1933. The AYF names its primary goal as “*hayabahbanoum*” or “keeping Armenians Armenian” and “instilling in them pride in their heritage.”<sup>103</sup> The AYF achieves these ends through education on Armenian history and issues, annual Olympics between different regions and chapters of the organization, language courses, political activism, and cultural functions.<sup>104</sup> In addition, they have a summer camp, Camp Haiastan, which hosts hundreds of young Armenian-Americans each year. They also offer college scholarships for its members. In addition, ANCA supports an internship program within its major offices for college-aged Armenian-Americans.<sup>105</sup>

The Assembly offers several programs geared at motivating Armenian-American youth. They have a summer internship program, launched in 1997, that pairs college students with members of Congress, federal agencies, NGOs, “media outlets,” and think tanks.<sup>106</sup> In 1999, the Assembly began a summer internship program that places Armenian-American students in offices in Yerevan.<sup>107</sup> In addition, the AGBU offers several programs that target youth and young professionals. They run 24 primary, secondary, and preparatory schools in addition to international “Saturday schools” that teach Armenian history, culture, and language, including six in the United States.<sup>108</sup> They offer scholarships internationally and a special graduate student loan program in the United States.<sup>109</sup> The AGBU have a Young Professional’s Club, established in Los Angeles in 1995, aimed at creating an international network of young Armenian professionals and linking that network with young professionals in Armenia.<sup>110</sup> In addition, they also hold a biennial international athletics event and a have summer camp, Camp Nubar, in New York and several other camps internationally.<sup>111</sup> See chart A for a summary of Armenian-American resources.

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<sup>101</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report*, p. 24. See also ANI’s website, [www.armenian-genocide.org](http://www.armenian-genocide.org).

<sup>102</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> *The AYF Legacy*, p. 5.

<sup>104</sup> *The AYF Legacy*, Chapter 1 “The AYF at 60: A pictorial history of the AYF,” pp. 3-23.

<sup>105</sup> Adanalian, p. 2.

<sup>106</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 19.

<sup>107</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, pp. 9, 19.

<sup>108</sup> *AGBU Biennial Report, 1998-1999*, p. 6.

<sup>109</sup> *AGBU Biennial Report, 1998-1999*, p. 7.

<sup>110</sup> *AGBU Biennial Report, 1998-1999*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>111</sup> *AGBU Biennial Report, 1998-1999*, p. 8.

Finally, it is important to note that the devastating earthquake that hit Armenia on December 7, 1988 mobilized both sides of the Armenian-American community for political and humanitarian action. The earthquake has been named as a key turning point in the mobilization of the Armenian diaspora for the homeland. One scholar notes: “Many men and women of Armenian descent who had not been active in communal structures brought in their contributions.”<sup>112</sup> For example, famous Hollywood attorney Paul Krekorian first got involved with the Armenian community in Los Angeles in response to the earthquake. Today he is an active political and social advocate for Armenian issues and supports the efforts of the Armenian Assembly and the AGBU.<sup>113</sup> In addition, both lobby groups rallied for US aid to help the survivors.<sup>114</sup> Various Armenian and non-Armenian charities also organized fundraisers. There was even an attempt to send building materials to the region for reconstruction.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Bakalian, p. 162.

<sup>113</sup> Lisa Boghosian Pappas, “People and Programs: The New Generation Taking Cues from their Ancestors, Young Armenians are Shaking the Scene,” pp. 1-8, AGBU Website, [www.agbu.org](http://www.agbu.org), (downloaded on 7/24/01).

<sup>114</sup> Bakalian, p. 141.

<sup>115</sup> “Eastern Europe’s Diasporas: The Homecoming,” *The Economist*, December 26, 1992, pp. 73-80.

**Chart A: Armenian-American Lobby Groups and Their Resources**

	<i>ANCA</i>	<i>The Assembly</i>
History	Lobbying Arm of ARF	Large ly from the AGBU
Charities	ARS	AGBU
Primary Goal	“Unified, Free and Independent Armenia”	Democracy, economic development, Prosperity
Targets of mobilization	Grass-roots	Initially money generating elites, added grass-roots (ARAMAC) in 1990s
Alliances	Kurds, Greeks, Greek Cypriots, Unions	US Holocaust Memorial Museum, UN
Youth Programs	(with ARF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AYF, 1933</li> <li>▪ Summer camp</li> <li>▪ Internships</li> <li>▪ Scholarships</li> <li>▪ Olympics</li> </ul>	(with AGBU) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schools</li> <li>▪ Summer camp</li> <li>▪ Young Professionals’ Club</li> <li>▪ Internships</li> <li>▪ Scholarships</li> <li>▪ International Athletics</li> </ul>
Research	Zoryan Institute, 1982	Armenian National Institute, 1997
Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Website, position-papers, action alerts</li> <li>▪ Transcaucus: A Chronology</li> <li>▪ Hairenik</li> <li>▪ Armenian Weekly</li> <li>▪ Azbarez (ARF)</li> <li>▪ Yerik</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Website, position-papers, action alerts</li> <li>▪ AGBU Magazine</li> <li>▪ Ararat Quarterly</li> </ul>
Congressional groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bipartisan Caucus</li> <li>▪ Democratic Council</li> <li>▪ Republican Council</li> <li>▪ Key Congressional members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bipartisan Caucus</li> <li>▪ Democratic Council</li> <li>▪ Republican Council</li> <li>▪ Key Congressional members</li> </ul>

All of these efforts predate the republic's independence in 1991. The US diaspora, therefore, was well mobilized to support lobbying efforts for the newly independent Armenia in the 1990s.

### C. Congress and Policy Objectives, Strategies and Tactics

Despite their differences in histories, goals, structure, and approaches to mobilization, the lobbying efforts of ANCA and the Assembly are united in Washington by two important factors: a bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, and similar policy objectives. The bipartisan Armenian Caucus, which has grown to 95 members in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, was initiated in January of 1995 by Democrat Frank Pallone of New Jersey and Republican Edward Porter of Illinois, now succeeded by Republican Joe Knollenberg of Michigan.<sup>116</sup> The Caucus works within the House of Representatives to encourage initiatives for Armenia and Armenian issues.<sup>117</sup> There is a tight correlation between members of the Caucus and votes to support issues pertaining to Armenia, particularly the maintenance of Section 907 of the 1992 Freedom Support Act, which blocks aid to Armenia's rival Azerbaijan.<sup>118</sup> This will be discussed further below.

In addition to the Armenian Caucus in the Congress, there is the Armenian-American Democratic Leadership Council, which posts links to both ANCA and the Assembly on its website, and the Armenian-American Republican Council, founded in 1997 in Los Angeles.<sup>119</sup> Moreover, there have been a few key advocates of Armenian issues on Capital Hill, most notably former Senator Robert Dole, who was chair of the Senate Finance Committee and served as Senate majority leader. Dole, whose life was saved in World War II by an Armenian doctor, rallied the Armenian cause for decades. He consistently called for US official recognition of the Genocide, proposing resolutions in the Senate from 1982 until his retirement in 1996. In May of 2001, Dole was presented with the ANCA Lifetime Achievement Award for his dedication to the Armenian cause.<sup>120</sup>

These unifying lobbying bodies are further strengthened by the current policy objectives of ANCA and the Assembly, which are nearly identical. Their policy demands can be broken down into six objectives. First, both lobbies are working towards the US government's recognition of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1922. Second, both groups want US government recognition of Nagorno Karabakh's independence and US aid to the exclave. Third, the lobbies have fought vigorously for the maintenance of Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which prevents the US from extending aid to Azerbaijan. Fourth, both groups lobby for continued US aid to Armenia. Two additional items, blockading arms sales to Turkey and challenging the Baku-Ceyhan Pipeline, appear to be more rigorously pursued by ANCA than by the Assembly.

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<sup>116</sup> "Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues," p. 1, The Armenian Assembly of America website, [www.aaainc.org](http://www.aaainc.org), (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>117</sup> *ibid* and the *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report 2000*, p. 5.

<sup>118</sup> See appendix A.

<sup>119</sup> The AADLC website, [www.aadlc.org](http://www.aadlc.org), (downloaded on 7/22/01). The Armenian Republicans do not provide links to either lobby group. <http://members.aol.com/aarc2000/info.html>, (downloaded on 8/8/01).

<sup>120</sup> Correspondence with ANCA ER office, (5/18/01).

## 1. US Recognition of the Armenian Genocide

Both ANCA and the Assembly name US recognition of the Genocide as one of their primary policy objectives.<sup>121</sup> ANCA is much more vocal on demands for territory and reparations from Turkey than is the Assembly, however.<sup>122</sup> Since 1982, both lobby groups have fought for the passage of legislation that would officially recognize the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1922 and honor its victims with a Day of Remembrance on April 24<sup>th</sup>. Each year the Resolution has been thwarted, usually with the claim that recognizing the Genocide will strain relations with Turkey and threaten strategic security interests of the US.<sup>123</sup> Although both lobby groups are rigorously campaigning for US recognition of the Genocide, each group employs different strategies and tactics for pressuring the resolution's passage.

ANCA, in keeping with its grassroots approach to mobilization, employs a "bottom up" strategy towards attaining US recognition of the Armenian Genocide. In addition to lobbying for its official recognition on Capital Hill, ANCA also lobbies at the state and city level for recognition and the Day of Remembrance. Currently 30 states recognize the Genocide.<sup>124</sup> In addition, several cities, such as Boston, recognize the Genocide and hold April 24<sup>th</sup> as a Day of Remembrance.<sup>125</sup> ANCA also employs the tactic of gaining other countries' recognition of the Genocide to pressure the US to follow suit. ANC chapters around the globe claim success in pressuring the governments of France, Italy, the EU, the European parliament, Great Britain, Greece, Belgium, Lebanon, Russia, the UN, Cyprus, Canada, and Argentina to recognize the Genocide.<sup>126</sup> Moreover, the ANC of the EU is trying to tie Turkey's full inclusion in the EU to their recognition of the Genocide.<sup>127</sup> ANCA is also openly critical of the state of Israel for its alliance with Turkey and what it sees as lack of support for recognition of the Armenian Genocide.<sup>128</sup>

The Assembly, in addition to its lobbying efforts among members of Congress, concentrates its efforts on increasing documentation surrounding the Armenian Genocide. The Assembly sponsors the Armenian National Institute (ANI), a center dedicated to "achieving recognition and affirmation of the Genocide."<sup>129</sup> In 2000, ANI held a

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<sup>121</sup> Sadar, p. 1, and *The Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report, 2000*, pp.2-3.

<sup>122</sup> David B. Boyaijian, "Genocide Acknowledgement: Why Turkey and the State Department Fear It," *The Armenian Weekly Online*, March 2001, pp. 1-2, <http://free.freespeech.org/armenian/weekly> (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>123</sup> "Position Papers: Armenian Genocide Commemoration," ANCA website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org) (downloaded on 3/11/01).

<sup>124</sup> "Bush Breaks Pledge to Recognize Armenian Genocide," *The Armenian Weekly Online*, May 2001, p. 2, <http://free.freespeech.org/armenian/weekly> (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>125</sup> "ANCA Issues Statement on Genocide Resolution," *The Armenian Weekly Online*, February 2001, p. 5, <http://free.freespeech.org/armenian/weekly> (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>126</sup> "Several US States Recognize the Armenian Genocide," *The Armenian Weekly Online*, April 2001, p. 1, <http://free.freespeech.org/armenian/weekly> (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>127</sup> Sadar, p. 2.

<sup>128</sup> Yair Auron, "Foreign Minister's Comments are Israeli Shift to Active Denial," *The Armenian Weekly Online*, May 2001, <http://free.freespeech.org/armenian/weekly> (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>129</sup> *The Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report, 2000*, p. 2.

conference in Washington titled “The American Response to the Armenian Genocide,” which included scholars and members of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.<sup>130</sup> ANI is also working on legal action that will require insurance companies to pay surviving members of genocide victims, similar to Jewish legal demands for Holocaust restitution.<sup>131</sup> In addition, ANI has developed a curriculum on the Armenian Genocide and the Assembly is lobbying for its inclusion in US public schools.<sup>132</sup> In 2000, the Assembly launched a project aimed at building an Armenian Genocide Museum and Memorial. Through the donations of two prominent Armenian-Americans, the Assembly purchased a 1925 building on the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> and G Street in Washington, DC, two blocks from the White House.<sup>133</sup> The Assembly has made the Museum one of its top priorities.

## 2. Nagorno Karabakh

Beginning in February of 1988, Armenians in the Soviet Republic of Armenia took to the streets over toxic nuclear and chemical plants near the Soviet Republic’s capital of Yerevan.<sup>134</sup> This unrest quickly spread to include demands for the union of Nagorno Karabakh—a predominantly Armenian exclave given to neighboring Azerbaijan in 1921—with the Armenian republic.<sup>135</sup> On February 28<sup>th</sup>, after Armenians in Karabakh voted to separate from Azerbaijan, racial rioting in the Azeri city of Sumgait killed between 35 and 350 people, mostly Armenians.<sup>136</sup> This unleashed further violence between Armenians and Azeris in the region, prompting the flow of at least 600,000 refugees between the two republics.<sup>137</sup> The conflict escalated into all-out war after the two republics declared their independence in 1991. Armenian fighters succeeded in defending Nagorno Karabakh and seizing an additional ten percent of Azerbaijan, including the “Lachin Corridor,” which connects Karabakh to Armenia.<sup>138</sup> In 1994, Azeri and Karabakh officers agreed to a Russian-sponsored cease-fire.<sup>139</sup> Currently the conflict remains unresolved, with Armenia occupying Azeri land and Azerbaijan and Turkey imposing a blockade on landlocked Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. The most recent attempts to negotiate a solution were the Key West talks in April of 2001.

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<sup>130</sup> *The Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report, 2000*, p. 24.

<sup>131</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> *The Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report, 2000*, p. 14.

<sup>134</sup> “Bang goes another republic,” *The Economist*, February 27, 1988, p. 39 and Bakalian, p. 100.

<sup>135</sup> The Armenian name for Karabakh is *Artsakh*.

<sup>136</sup> “As the sparks fly upward from Nagorno-Karabakh,” *The Economist*, March 5, 1988, p. 49. The *Economist* states that the wide range in estimates of those killed is due to discrepancies between official Soviet numbers and eyewitness accounts. See also *The Sumgait Tragedy: Pogroms Against Armenians in Soviet Azerbaijan: Volume 1, Eyewitness Accounts*, compiled and edited by Samvel Shahmuratian, translated by Steven Jones (New Rochelle and Cambridge: Aristide D. Caratzas and Zoryan Institute, 1990).

<sup>137</sup> “Enter the army,” *The Economist*, January 20, 1990, p. 47.

<sup>138</sup> Rieff, p. 118. Including Nagorno Karabakh, the Armenians hold 20% of Azerbaijan.

<sup>139</sup> “Chronology of Recent Events in Nagorno-Karabagh (1988-1996), p. 5, [www.aaainc.org](http://www.aaainc.org), (downloaded on 7/22/01).



Both ANCA and the Assembly are lobbying for the US to recognize the independence of Nagorno Karabakh and for increased aid to the exclave. ANCA, however, appears much more invested in the struggle for Karabakh than is the Assembly. ANCA is actively pushing for recognition of Karabakh's right to self-determination and claims success in gaining its recognition from the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.<sup>140</sup> Sharistan Ardhdjian, an ANCA chairperson, states:

Any power that would deny [Armenians in Karabakh] their right to self-determination—anyone who would like to see Karabagh remain a part of Azerbaijan—cannot be considered an honest broker in our view, because that would mean ignoring history, rewarding aggression and human rights violations, and denying the inalienable rights of individuals and collectives to be free.<sup>141</sup>

In addition to lobbying for Karabakh's recognition, the ARF is highly invested in the government of Karabakh. Karabakh was an ARF stronghold in the early 1990s after the first elections in Armenia failed to bring the ARF back to power.<sup>142</sup> Moreover, Armenians in the diaspora, reportedly aligned with the ARF, actually returned to the region to fight for Karabakh's liberation from Azeri control and reunification with Armenia.<sup>143</sup> It is also reported that Armenians in California and France helped fund arms transfers to Karabakh.<sup>144</sup> ANCA's and ARF's efforts to attain independence for Karabakh, therefore, are considerable, including both official lobbying channels and unofficial support of men and materiel.

The Assembly lobbies for the Karabakh cause through other means. The *Annual Report 2000* commits only two paragraphs specifically to Nagorno Karabakh, in which it calls its office in Stepanakert a "point of contact for senior government officials, leaders and local representatives of international organizations, visiting American lawmakers, and Armenian and foreign journalists."<sup>145</sup> Elsewhere in its annual report, the Assembly stresses its commitment to "confidence building measures" between Armenia and Azerbaijan including "studies of energy routes, regional transportation routes, water management, and other collaborative and humanitarian initiatives."<sup>146</sup> The Assembly's approach to the Karabakh conflict, therefore, is far less direct than ANCA's, adopting a cooperative and conciliatory tone towards the issue.

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<sup>140</sup> "Pursuing the Armenian Cause," *The Armenian Weekly Online*, p. 5, May 2001, <http://free.freespeech.org/armenian/weekly> (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>141</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> Especially while the ARF was banned in Armenia from 1994 to 1998, see Rieff, p. 123. See also "Eastern Europe's Diasporas: The Homecoming," *The Economist*, pp. 73-80, December 26, 1992, pp. 77-79.

<sup>143</sup> Armenian-American Monte Melkian fought for the liberation of Nagorno Karabakh and was eventually killed in the fighting. He is considered a modern-day hero in Karabakh and beyond, see Rieff, p. 123.

<sup>144</sup> "Nagorno-Karabakh: What we have we (mostly) hold," *The Economist*, September 21, 1996, p. 53 and Antranig Kasbarian, "Planting Roots in Nagorno Karabakh," pp. 1-8, *The Armenian Weekly Online*, p. 5, June/ July 2001, <http://free.freespeech.org/armenian/weekly> (downloaded on 8/8/01).

<sup>145</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report, 2000*, p. 8.

<sup>146</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report, 2000*, p. 4.

### 3. Section 907

The maintenance of Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act is the strongest evidence of Armenian lobbying success. The Freedom Support Act was passed in 1992 to provide US financial and technical assistance to former Soviet states.<sup>147</sup> Section 907 was passed as an addendum of the Freedom Support Act; it specifically prohibits Azerbaijan from receiving US aid as long as Azeri hostilities towards Armenians continue and the Azeri blockade against Armenia persists.<sup>148</sup> Section 907 has remained in place, despite rigorous campaigning from opposition lobbies, most notably 14 oil companies, the Turkish Caucus, and pro-Israel lobbies.<sup>149</sup> These groups promote abolition of Section 907 and the full implementation of the Silk Road Strategy Act, which calls for support to Azerbaijan and neighboring central Asian states, particularly to develop their economies in order to balance against Iran, China, and the threat of Islamic fundamentalism.<sup>150</sup> In 1999, Section 907 barely survived a vote in the Senate.<sup>151</sup> In October of 2001, in light of September 11, the Senate passed a bill with near unanimity that “allows the President to waive the restriction of assistance for Azerbaijan if the President determines that it is in the national security interest of the United States to do so.”<sup>152</sup> In particular, it is argued that countering the spread of militant Islam supercedes all other regional concerns. The Foreign Aid Bill for FY 2003 gave the President the ability to waive Section 907 indefinitely if he so chose.<sup>153</sup> In late January 2002, President Bush exercised this option and, despite intense Armenian resistance, opened the door to potential American aid for Azerbaijan.<sup>154</sup>

Both ANCA and the Assembly rigorously lobbied for the creation of Section 907 in 1992 and continue to lobby for its maintenance. Both lobby groups use similar strategies and tactics to ensure 907’s survival, namely bipartisan congressional backing and letter writing campaigns to encourage support of the Section. On March 28, 2001, ANCA representative Aram Sarafian testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations in support of Section 907, stating:

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<sup>147</sup> PL 102-511, “Freedom for Russia and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Markets Support Act of 1992,” taken from *Congressional Universe*, <http://web/lexis-nexis.com>.

<sup>148</sup> “Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act,” Armenian Assembly of America Website, [www.aaainc.org](http://www.aaainc.org), (downloaded on 8/7/01).

<sup>149</sup> Smith, p. 14 and “Armenian...and presidents go,” *The Economist*, February 7, 1998, p. 54.

<sup>150</sup> Also called the Brownback Amendment. See “HR 2867: The Silk Road Strategy Act of 1997, 105<sup>th</sup> Congress,” and “S.579, The Silk Road Strategy Act of 1999, 106<sup>th</sup> Congress,” *Congressional Universe*, *Congressional Universe*, <http://web/lexis-nexis.com>. Also available as “Congressional Record, Wednesday, June 30, 1999,” pp. 1-5, posted on the Assembly’s website, [www.aaainc.org](http://www.aaainc.org) (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>151</sup> The vote was 53 in favor of the McConnell Amendment, which keeps Section 907 in place, and 45 opposed, “Congressional Record,” p. 32.

<sup>152</sup> “S. 1521 Bill Tracking Record,” *Congressional Universe*, <http://web/lexis-nexis.com>.

<sup>153</sup> “Lowey, Knollenberg, and Pallone, Call upon Congress to Revisit Presidential Section 907 Waiver Authority in FY 2003 Foreign Aid Bill,” Armenian National Committee of America website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org), (downloaded on 7/9/02).

<sup>154</sup> “President Bush Waives Section 907,” Armenian National Committee of America website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org), (downloaded on 7/9/02).

The ANCA supports the law restricting US assistance to the government of Azerbaijan and actively opposes any effort to weaken, waive, or eliminate this prohibition. Any effort to circumvent the intent of this provision of law, particularly during the ongoing negotiations, will be viewed by the Azerbaijani government as a clear signal for renewed aggression.<sup>155</sup>

The Assembly also rigorously backs Section 907 stating: “Section 907 places reasonable restrictions on US assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan while it continues to blockade Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh...Despite various attempts to further weaken Section 907, the Assembly and our allies in Congress were able to maintain Section 907 in its current form.”<sup>156</sup>

There is a tight correlation between members of the Armenian Caucus and those voting to uphold Section 907. In particular, a September 1998 vote in the House to repeal Section 907, which was defeated, shows a close correlation between Caucus members and votes to defeat the amendment of Section 907.<sup>157</sup> Therefore alliances formed through the Caucus appear to provide strong support for legislation that supports Armenian causes. In contrast, financial contributions, such as Political Action Committee (PAC) donations to Congressional candidates, appear to have had little influence on voting behavior on Section 907. Oil PACs contributed, on average, \$6,870,672 biennially to members of Congress, whereas Armenian PACs contributed only \$26,681 biennially.<sup>158</sup> Therefore, the success of Armenian lobbies in maintaining Section 907 does not appear to be driven by financial contributions.

#### **4. Aid to Armenia**

Securing US financial and technical aid to the liberated Republic of Armenia has been a priority of both ANCA and the Armenian Assembly. The push for aid to the republic was prompted by the December 7, 1988 earthquake that killed over 25,000 Armenians, injured 19,000 and left more than 500,000 homeless.<sup>159</sup> In addition to raising money for the victims of the earthquake, both ANCA and the Assembly lobbied for federal aid to the fledgling republic, particularly as Azerbaijan and Turkey imposed blockades on Armenia, stunting the reconstruction process.<sup>160</sup> Both ANCA and the Assembly claim credit for securing a minimum of \$90 million to Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh annually, earning Armenia the nick-name the “Israel of the Caucasus.” In 1999, Congress attempted to reduce Armenian aid to \$75 million. Through the efforts of the Caucus, the \$90 million minimum was maintained.<sup>161</sup> In 2001, the lobby groups claimed victory in persuading the US Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign

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<sup>155</sup> “ANCA testifies before Congressional Foreign Aid Committee,” *The Armenian Weekly Online*, p. 2, April 2001, <http://free.freespeech.org/armenian/weekly> (downloaded on 7/22/01).

<sup>156</sup> *The Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report, 2000*, p. 5.

<sup>157</sup> “Final Vote Results for Roll Call 447: HR 4569,” September 17, 1998, *Roll Calls for the House 105<sup>th</sup> Congress*, <http://thomas.loc.gov>. See appendix A.

<sup>158</sup> See appendix B.

<sup>159</sup> Bakalian, p. 161.

<sup>160</sup> “Armenia lives,” *The Economist*, May 23, 1992, p. 54.

<sup>161</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report, 2000*, p. 4.

Operations to maintain the \$90 million for Armenia. In fact, the FY 2003 Foreign Aid Bill kept the \$90 million in economic aid while adding, for the first time, military aid totaling more than \$4 million.<sup>162</sup>

ANCA, the Assembly, and their sibling organizations raise and secure aid for Armenia in similar ways. On March 28, 2001, an ANCA representative testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations regarding Armenian issues. He stated:

The ANCA supports at least the same percentages of funding for the southern Caucasus region and Armenia as in fiscal year 2000...This appropriation will help offset the devastating effects of the Turkish and Azerbaijani blockades and help continue Armenia's political and economic transition. Specifically...[US aid will support] the economy and infrastructure, further strengthen democratic institutions, and meet the country's current development and humanitarian needs.<sup>163</sup>

ANCA claims credit for the maintenance of aid to Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh through its efforts to "educate" the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations and through its grassroots approach of encouraging Armenians nationwide to contact members of congress and encourage them to back aid legislation.<sup>164</sup>

The Assembly also claims success for the level and maintenance of aid to Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. In addition to the \$90 million annually, the Assembly takes credit for securing an additional \$15 million as a "start-up fund" for a Synchrotron Light Source Particle Accelerator (SESAME).<sup>165</sup> The AGBU has also received a federal grant of \$9 million to go toward the endowment of the American University of Armenia in Yerevan.<sup>166</sup> In addition, the Assembly initiated an NGO Training and Resource Center (NGOC) in 1994, which seeks to "help Armenians and their recently established organizations shape positive social, political and economic transformation in Armenia."<sup>167</sup> Since its inception, NGOC has provided 140 micro-grants to regional NGOs to implement projects.<sup>168</sup>

## ***5. Block Arms Deals to Turkey and Caspian Pipeline Project***

There are two principal policy objectives for which ANCA appears to be lobbying: blocking arms deals to Turkey and withholding US taxpayer funding for the

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<sup>162</sup> "Lowey, Knollenberg, and Pallone, Call upon Congress to Revisit Presidential Section 907 Waiver Authority in FY 2003 Foreign Aid Bill," Armenian National Committee of America website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org), (downloaded on 7/9/02).

<sup>163</sup> "ANCA Testifies before Congressional Foreign Aid Committee," p. 1.

<sup>164</sup> "Lowey, Knollenberg, and Pallone, Call upon Congress to Revisit Presidential Section 907 Waiver Authority in FY 2003 Foreign Aid Bill," Armenian National Committee of America website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org), (downloaded on 7/9/02).

<sup>165</sup> *Armenian Assembly of America Annual Report, 2000*, p. 4.

<sup>166</sup> *AGBU Biennial Report, 1998-1999*, p. 3.

<sup>167</sup> *Armenian Assembly Annual Report 2000*, p. 20.

<sup>168</sup> *Armenian Assembly Annual Report 2000*, p. 20.

Baku-Ceyhan Pipeline, which bypasses Armenia. As a NATO ally, Turkey is the recipient of considerable military aid from the US. ANCA, together with Kurdish and Greek lobby groups, have called for the suspension of US military and economic aid to Turkey under the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act, designed to block aid to any country that obstructs US aid to a third country.<sup>169</sup> Turkey, together with Azerbaijan, is cited as imposing a blockade on Armenia that prevents humanitarian assistance from reaching people in these areas. ANCA further calls for withholding military aid to Turkey under the Code of Conduct legislation, which restricts arms sales based on human rights abuses. Specifically, ANCA names Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide, their treatment of Kurds, the blockade on Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, their occupation of Northern Cyprus, and their treatment of Christians within their borders as grounds for prohibiting arms sales.<sup>170</sup>

More recently, ANCA has launched a campaign aimed at thwarting US aid to build a pipeline that would transport oil from the Caspian Sea through Azerbaijan to the port of Ceyhan in Turkey. The Baku-Ceyhan Pipeline has been a US prospect since the early 1990s, but the aims of the second Bush administration to develop new sources of energy have renewed interest in the project.<sup>171</sup> ANCA opposes the pipeline because it bypasses Armenian territory, thus denying the state revenue from transport fees. Four congressional members of the Armenian Caucus introduced House Resolution 162 in June of 2001. It calls for: not subsidizing any pipeline that would prevent integration of Armenia into the region; a feasibility study of cost and efficiency of routes including a trans-Armenian route; and an evaluation of the pipeline's cost efficiency.<sup>172</sup> See Chart B for a summary of Armenian-American policy objectives.

In sum, despite their differences, ANCA and the Assembly present a unified front in Washington. Armenian lobbying efforts are strengthened by two factors. First, the groups have important congressional allies, most notably the bipartisan House Armenian Caucus, Democratic and Republican Armenian groups, and key members of Congress sympathetic to Armenian issues. Second, the presence of allies is strengthened by the Armenian lobbies' unified policy objectives: recognition of the genocide, independence and aid for Nagorno Karabakh, maintenance of Section 907, and aid to Armenia. However, despite unity in objectives, the methods for attaining these policy goals do differ between ANCA and the Assembly. The result is varying means concentrated on similar ends, arguably increasing the exposure and effectiveness of Armenian lobbying on Capitol Hill.

## V. Conclusion

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<sup>169</sup> "Position Papers: Cutting US Aid to Turkey," ANCA Website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org), (downloaded on 3/11/01).

<sup>170</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>171</sup> "Reps ask congress to withhold US taxpayer funding for Caspian pipeline projects unless they include Armenia," pp. 1-2, ANCA website, [www.anca.org](http://www.anca.org), (downloaded 8/8/01). Alexander Rahr presents a counter argument, claiming that the new US strategy is to cooperate with Russia and eventually Iran for oil from the Caspian and that the Bush administration has dropped the Baku-Ceyhan Pipeline as too costly, "Caspian Oil," *Transatlantic Internationale Politik*, (2/20/01) pp. 80-84.

<sup>172</sup> "Caspian pipeline project," ANCA website, p. 2.

The success of this small ethnic minority in achieving its policy goals suggests the following about US ethnic lobbies in general. First, the size of an ethnic group does not necessarily determine its ability to influence the foreign policy process in the US. Armenians are few relative to other ethnic groups and yet have achieved remarkable lobbying success. This further suggests, in response to Smith's first hypothesis, that electoral politics are not the most important factor for determining an ethnic group's influence in Washington. The Armenian- American population is small in number and concentrated in a few locations, such as southern California, Massachusetts, parts of New York and New Jersey, and with small constituencies in Florida and Illinois. Therefore, concentrations of Armenians have only a slight impact on a few congressional elections.

Second, in response to Smith's second hypothesis that ethnic lobbies gain influence through campaign finance, the Armenian case demonstrates that an ethnic lobby group need not have vast sums of money to assert influence in Washington. The oil lobbies vastly outspend the Armenians in PAC contributions, and yet the Armenian lobbies have continued to keep legislation in place that prevents federal funds from aiding oil exploration and production in Azerbaijan. Armenian lobbies, therefore, exert their influence by means other than campaign finance.

Third, Armenian lobby success does appear to be dependent on its high degree of organization, its clearly stated policy demands, and its alliance building within Congress, such as the Armenian House Caucus, and its networking with other lobbies and organizations. In addition, the Armenian's ability to *hyper-mobilize* support both among its constituents and within Washington, aided by internal competition between a divided community, has contributed to its lobbying efforts. Together with its external allies, the Armenians have secured considerable lobbying success in Washington.

Fourth, US attention to Armenia does not appear to be dependent on that country's democratic practices. US aid to Armenia began with the earthquake of 1988 and has continued through the 1990s. The Armenian government has a spotty record for democratic practices. They have supported an armed uprising in Nagorno Karabakh that has resulted in the occupation of ten-percent of Azerbaijan in addition to the Armenian exclave. Furthermore, the government has been plagued with corruption problems, it has banned and jailed key members of the ARF from 1994-1998, and has censored the media. These are not the workings of a liberal democracy.

### **Chart B: Policy Objectives and Methods**

	<b>ANCA</b>	<b>Assembly</b>
Recognition of the Genocide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ State and City level</li> <li>▪ International Recognition</li> <li>▪ Demanding land and reparations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cooperate with US Holocaust Museum</li> <li>▪ Armenian Holocaust Museum</li> <li>▪ Insurance claims</li> </ul>
Nagorno Karabakh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lobby for US</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lobby for US</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ recognition and aid</li> <li>▪ Lobby for international recognition</li> <li>▪ State recognition of independence</li> <li>▪ Eventual Reunification</li> <li>▪ Men and materiel to fight for independence</li> </ul>	recognition and aid
Section 907	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bipartisan backing for maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bipartisan backing for maintenance</li> </ul>
Aid to Armenian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum \$90 million through bipartisan backing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum \$90 million through bipartisan backing</li> <li>▪ Additional federal aid through AGBU projects</li> </ul>
Block Baku-Ceyhan Pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Call for Armenia to be included in the pipeline project</li> <li>▪ Call for feasibility study for alternate routes</li> </ul>	
Block arms deals with Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work in alliance with Kurds, Greeks and Greek Cypriots</li> <li>▪ Cite human rights violations as grounds for denial</li> <li>▪ Cite blockade on Armenia as grounds for denial</li> </ul>	

If Armenia is being rewarded for its *potential* as a liberal democracy then this logic could apply to any number of new states, including Azerbaijan. Therefore, it is difficult to argue that Armenia is being supported because of its democratic practices in the region.

Lastly, overall, the Armenian case does suggest that ethnic lobby groups can sway US foreign policy goals. US interests in the Caucuses do not demand favoring Armenia over its neighbors, yet pro-Armenian voices in Congress have succeeded in pushing through considerable aid to the country and legislation punishing to its enemies. The maintenance of Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which clearly favors Armenia over Azerbaijan, is the strongest evidence of Armenian influence on US foreign policy legislation. The high level of US foreign aid to Armenia, which has only 3 million

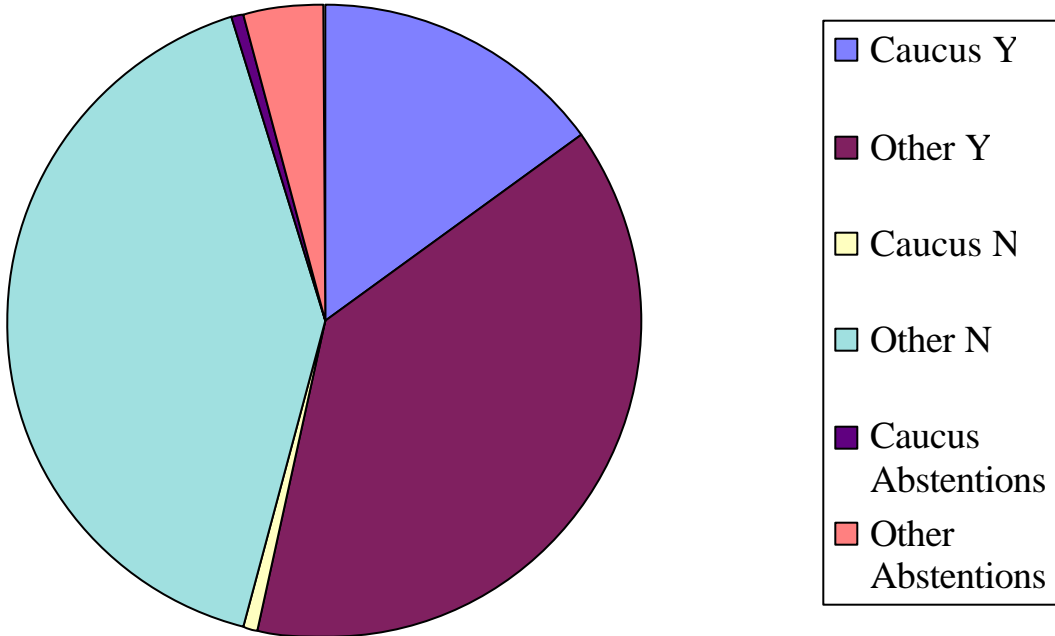
citizens, is also strong evidence in support of Armenian lobbies and their congressional allies' impact on US foreign policy.

### **Appendix A: Votes to Uphold Section 907, 105th Congress**

Caucus Y	Other Y	Caucus N	Other N	Caucus Abstention	Other Abstention
65	166	4	178	3	18

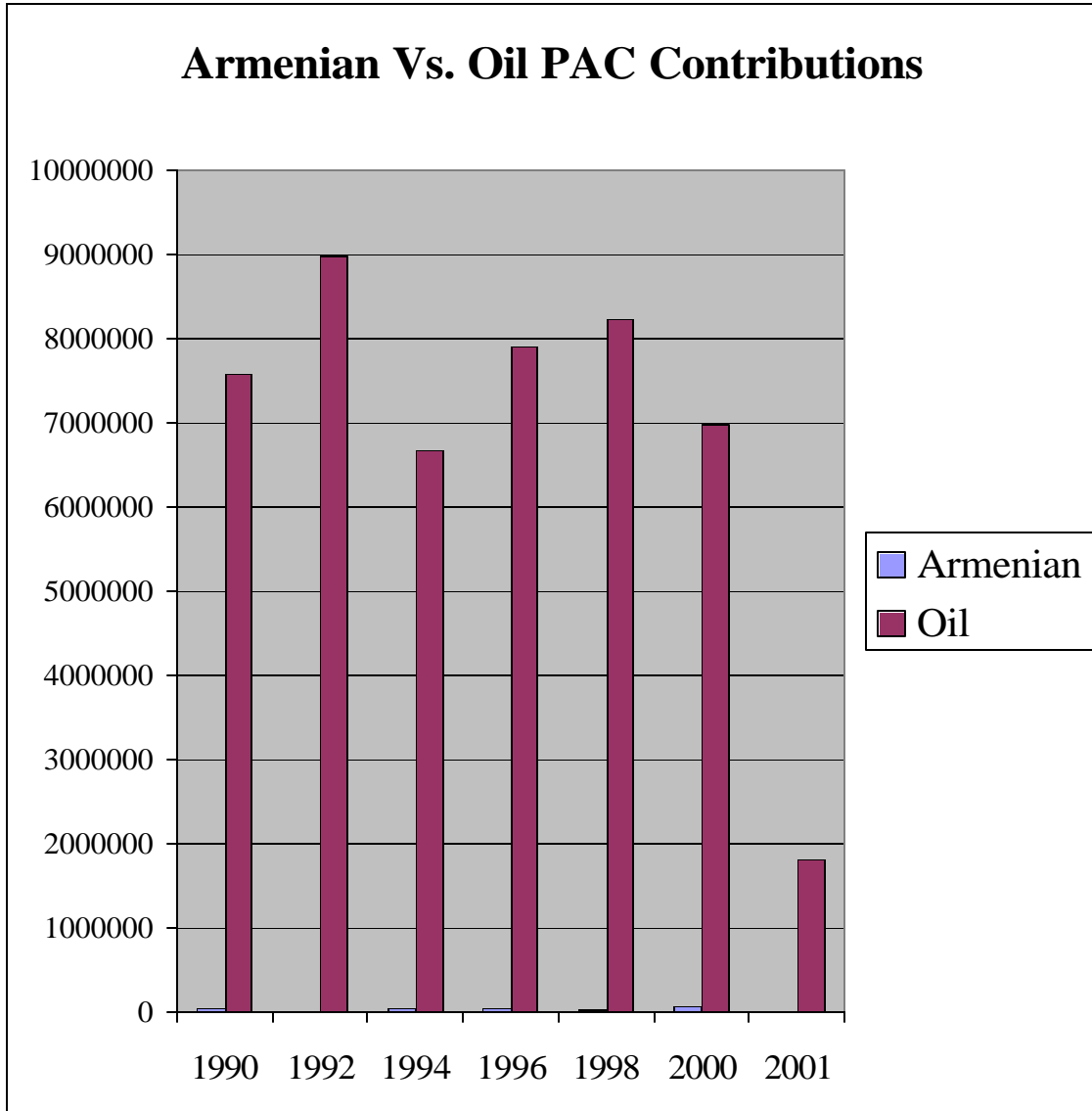


## Total Votes for House Ammendment 902



### Appendix B: Armenian and PAC\* Oil Contributions

Year	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2001
Armenian	29010	75	35525	43355	20250	57550	1000
Oil	7564589	8969450	6674857	7892568	8222798	6977585	1792857



\*Political Action Committee.  
 PAC statistics reflect only contributions to those in Congress.  
 PAC statistics taken from opensecrets.org and Political Money Line.

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