10-1-2002

Diaspora influence impacting United States' policy in the Caspian Littoral

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DIASPORA INFLUENCE IMPACTING UNITED STATES' POLICY
IN THE CASPIAN LITTORAL

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Political Science
And the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters in Political Science
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by
Daniel S. Parker
October 2002
THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,

University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the

Requirements for the degree Master of Political Science,

University of Nebraska at Omaha

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Date: October 24th 2002
DIASPORA INFLUENCE IMPACTING UNITED STATES' POLICY
IN THE CASPIAN LITTORAL

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University of Nebraska, 2002

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Abstract

The United States is a country of immigrants, from its prehistoric beginnings to the present. Squabbles between different groups have also been a part of our history. At the beginning of the 20th century, President Theodore Roosevelt recognized the potential for ethnic conflicts, imported from Europe, to render harm to the United States. In today’s international political environment, the potential for violence remains; however, ethnic groups have also been quick to grasp their constitutional rights of civic action and government participation. In so doing, these ethnic groups may unduly influence United States’ policy for their own purposes in a kind of surrogate war with other ethnic groups. Congress in its endeavor to respond to its constituency can be manipulated into enacting legislation that is not in the best interest of the United States and can interfere with the government’s ability to conduct policy. This is a paper on the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the U.S. Congress.
“Things are seldom what they seem; Skim milk masquerades as cream.”

Sir William Schwenck Gilbert, *H. M. S. Pinafore*

Introduction

In every conflict there are two sides to the story. Many myths and urban legends are told and retold until they become inseparable from the truth. In the world today, there are numerous conflicts taking place in many, if not most, of the lesser-developed countries (LDCs) with exploitable resources and unstable, non-democratic, or authoritarian governments. A ruling elite, for its own benefit, manipulates most of today’s conflicts. And unfortunately the people caught up in the conflict receive few, if any, residual benefits. Many of these new states are former European colonies or previously member states of the Soviet Union.

Many of these conflicts are ethnically or religiously based and portrayed in an aura of ancient animosities, but today, this does not make the historical origins of those conflicts true origins. Culturally, throughout the Caucasus and Central Asia, stories abound about feuds dating back many generations that are purportedly the cause of today’s conflicts. The devastating results of today’s conflicts have caused a host of ills for the people of these regions, many are left with few if any possessions and nowhere to live, they have become international refugees.

Following the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, many indigenous groups of the former Soviet republics began to rediscover ethno-religious, historical, and linguistic identities that had long been repressed. However, it is not always possible, prudent, or viable for each ethnoreligious entity to attain its own statehood. Additionally, Stalin's practice of separating ethnic
groups from traditional homelands and incorporating them into the traditional homeland of other ethnic groups in reduced numbers contributed to the region's animosities and violence. Today's conflicts in the Caucasus are compounded by this Soviet legacy and exacerbated by a combination of continued Russian meddling and United States' legislation, which for the past ten years has been heavily influenced by Armenian-American lobbying efforts.

Chapter one, the region's history, at first blush, may appear to be more in depth than would be necessary for a thesis. However, the nexus of events preceding the twentieth century—the actions surrounding the 1905 struggle for political power and national goals of Armenians and Azerbaijanis—and the events of the twentieth century provide insight into today's intransigence and mind-set between the warring and interfering sides. This is critical for understanding the Armenian diaspora's intentions and goals today and the harm done to United States' policy by a self-serving and myopic few in Congress.

At different times in history, for various reasons, emigration has taken place from many parts of the world. Immigration into the United States has helped to create a culturally rich, strong, and diverse population. Armenians are one of those diaspora groups that have immigrated to the United States over the past century. Today, according to the Armenian National Congress website, there are approximately "1.5 million Armenians" living in the United States. However, it should be noted that a February 18, 1998 Internet release by the U.S. Census Bureau showed a figure of 267,975 Armenians for the 1990 United States' Census. Regardless of the actual number, the Armenian diaspora is actively engaged in the U.S. Congress and exerts a strong influence on American policy in the Caucasus in relation to its reported population numbers in the United States.
At times, and sometimes with great difficulty, each ethnic group’s rise through the socioeconomic ladder from the status of poor immigrants, and the stigma that classification renders, to the status of productive mainstream Americans has been difficult. Unfortunately, during the closing years of the Twentieth Century, some ethnic and religious groups brought their “old world” baggage and problems with them. The concern over the commingling of new and diverse groups is not new in America. Eldridge (2001, 108) provides an historical perspective by offering this President Theodore Roosevelt quote: “The one absolutely certain way of bringing this nation to ruin . . . would be to permit it to become a tangle of squabbling nationalities.”

At some point in time, however, usually after one or two generations, the switch to being an American and no longer of the “old world” takes place. In contrast, today’s identification of being a “hyphenated American” and accentuating one’s heritage or religion over simply being an American is commonplace. There is nothing wrong in understanding one’s heritage unless it revives “old world” animosities and hatreds and begins to curdle the melting pot of American society. As the United States’ population continues to expand, its population is also becoming more diverse. Prewitt (2002, 6) reminds us that “On December 28, 2000, the Census Bureau released the first results of the decennial census completed a few months earlier, announcing, ‘Never have we been so many; never have we been so carefully measured.’” Prewitt (2002, 9) goes on to note that regardless how an American is categorized or how “we define demographic diversity-linguistically, culturally, religiously, ethnically-the United States today is the most demographically diverse nation in world history.”
Unfortunately, if ethnoreligious or nationalist, separatist divisions are introduced into the governance and decision-making process of the United States, a compromise of diplomatic efficacy may be perceived or actually occur. This diaspora divisiveness would interfere with the United States’ ability to conduct international diplomacy. The policies that are in the best interest of America, involving all of its citizens, would be compromised.

This thesis addresses the history, geospatial dynamics, and current regional political intransigence leading to the parochial goals of the Armenian diaspora on the United States’ legislative policy. In particular, this thesis addresses Section 907, the former legislative prohibition of official U.S. government support to Azerbaijan, embedded in the Freedom for Russia and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Markets Support Act of 1992, hereafter referred to as the 1992 Freedom Support Act. This legislation was an reaction to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan (maps 1 and 2, pages 11A and 11B) following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Regionally, the Caspian Littoral states have a history of hydrocarbon wealth, both oil and gas, and at one time they were the world’s leading supplier of oil. Additionally, the Caucasus and Central Asia, which make up part of the Caspian Littoral, have a rich history of geographical importance in trade between Europe and Asia via the Silk Road. As reported by the Department of Energy’s (EIA) Energy Information Agency website, there is a “[p]roven oil reserve (defined as oil and natural gas deposits that are considered 90% probable) for the Caspian Sea region estimated at 17-33 billion barrels.” Unfortunately, it is also a region of internecine conflicts spurred on by international power politics and not just conflicts
between the numerous regional ethnicities. Today, the historical conflicts and imbroglios manifest themselves as both an extension and legacy of the Cold War and newly developing energy politics driven by the potential economic gains.

In light of the events that took place on September 11th, 2001, United States' policy in the Caucasus region required modification. On October 16, 2002, Secretary of State Colin Powell went before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and requested the elimination of Section 907 of the 1992 Freedom Support Act. Congress has initiated change on this prohibitive clause due to the international terrorist situation and the requirement to pursue terrorism in previously inaccessible regions of the world by the U.S. military.
Armenia has no internal administrative divisions.

Autonomous oblast (AO) boundary
Autonomous republic (ASSR) center
Autonomous oblast (AO) center
Railroad
Road

Armenia has no internal administrative divisions.

0 25 50 Kilometers
0 25 50 Miles
Thesis Statement

Ethnic Armenian diaspora's lobbying efforts detrimentally impacted United States' legislation, affecting U.S. foreign, security, and energy policy as it relates to the Caspian Littoral and, in particular, to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Diaspora political actions are based on nationalistic myth and emotion and are not necessarily formulated based on truth nor are they necessarily consistent with the goals and aims of America or its overarching policy. Armenian lobbying groups have and do employ a vast array of technology, organization, and misrepresentation to influence Congress. In the past, this influence has diminished U.S. diplomacy and limited U.S. ability to affect the outcome of a communal war that is not in the interest of Armenians, Azerbaijanis, or the United States. The policy limitation imposed by Section 907, which is applied in a tinderbox region, at the crossroads of the Middle Eastern, Central Asian, South Asian, and European landmasses containing potentially vast hydrocarbon wealth, is self-serving and malicious. A region of the world in which United States' policy efforts to bring about lasting regional stability, root out Islamic extremists, and bring about democratization and economic prosperity for the betterment of all concerned, is overpowered by the goals of a misguided few in Congress and their diaspora constituencies.

The United States cannot afford to have its ability to conduct foreign policy or the defense of the nation and the security of its citizens to be held hostage by Congressional mismanagement based on a diaspora constituency's small-mindedness, political strong-arm tactics, and misrepresentation of issues.
Methodology

A search for the United States' policy interests and goals, and their development and implementation in a distant region previously part of the Soviet Union, was conducted through content analysis.

The materials used to research this thesis include, but are not limited to, professional and academic journals and books, numerous foreign press releases, governmental archives, and historical records. Most maps used in this paper are from either the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) or the National Geographic Maps collection (an eight CD-ROM set). Topographic data and geographical descriptions were derived from both Britannica.com and National Geographic maps.

Most of the professional journals are in print form, as are the historical books. However, the preponderance of the materials researched, although not all were used, was through the vast wealth of information available through Internet sources. The primary sources for United States policy are the White House historical file, Congressional records, Federal Election Committee web sites, and professional journals. These three sites alone provided the greatest wealth of speeches, not only from the president but also legislative committee reports and campaign financing.

In my research, as is true with all research, source reliability and source intentions were a concern. I found that academic research conducted by others, such as Drs. Audrey Altstadt and Stuart Kaufman, in the history of the Caucasus was consistently more reliable than information from either Armenian or
Azerbaijani sources. Additionally, sources not Armenian or Azerbaijani that were obviously biased in the presentation of their information were also suspect and used sparingly or to demonstrate the actual bias of the information.
Deja lu

The Region

*Geospatial Significance.* Transcaucasia is traditionally said to run northwest to southeast along the Caucasus Mountains, which consists of two ranges traditionally viewed as a part of the line dividing Europe from Asia. The Greater Caucasus Mountain range is the northern boundary of Transcaucasia and extends 750 miles southeastward across the Caucasian isthmus from the Sea of Azov to the Abseron Peninsula, jutting into the Caspian Sea in Baku, Azerbaijan (map 4, page 15A).

The Greater Caucasus' slopes are steepest in the south and narrow in the middle, with a width greater than 100 miles on the Eastern and Western ends. Elevations span from 10,000 to 18,510 feet. As will be discussed later, elevation and difficult terrain are critical to pipeline construction along an east-west axis from Baku, Azerbaijan to oil terminuses on the Black Sea in the port of Supsa, Georgia (map 5, page 15C) or the future Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline (map 11, page 36A) to the Turkish Mediterranean coast. The second oil route bypasses the Black Sea and the potential environmental disaster an oil spill in either the Bosporus or Dardanelles would create. Additionally, it favors a long-time ally, Turkey, in the tax revenue to be gained by the shipment of oil to Europe. The Caucasus Mountains divide the South from the North Caucasus and are the international boundary between Russia and Georgia and Russia and Azerbaijan.

The next geographical region of importance includes the five Central Asian states of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.
Commonwealth of Independent States - European States
The Caucasus

Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.
Central Asia extends from the Caspian Sea in the west to the border of western China in the east. Russia lies to the north, and Iran and Afghanistan lie to the south (map 9, page 30A). Central Asia is almost half the size of the United States, and mountain ranges along the southern and southeastern borders block moisture flowing through India and Pakistan, creating arid and semiarid desert conditions.

Adding to the regional mixture of overlapping groups and competitions, and contributing to the political-economic turmoil, are the five Caspian Littoral states. These states are Azerbaijan from the Caucasus, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan from Central Asia, and the two regional powers and on-again off-again allies, Russia and Iran.

The regional geography, competing political goals, and potential wealth lend themselves to the multiple axes of extra-state politics, commerce, and overlapping regional influence and interest. Today, the two primary geopolitical axes of control are an east-west axis endorsed by the United States and a north-south axis supported by Russia and Iran.

Demographics and Ethnic Interaction: The region's similar but different cultural geography is one of similarity in language and religion, but of considerable diversity in ethnic background. The region has experienced nomadic invasions by numerous peoples, including the Arabs in the 8th and 9th centuries, the Mongols in the 13th century, the Russian Empire in the 1700s, and the Soviet Union and Great Britain in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Due to years of intermarriage, some regional ethnic groups are indistinguishable from one another. Compounding the historical ebb and flow of
regional ethnic groups was Stalin’s movement of peoples (divide and conquer) and the creation of internal ethnic borders to define political and ethnic regions. Due in large part to Stalin’s endeavors, since 1936, the Central Asians have identified themselves with politically defined areas, and have been recognized by others as ethnically and culturally distinct. Most Caucasus linguistic groups (map 6, page 17A) and Central Asian languages (map 8, page 21A) are Turkic based with the exception of Tajik, which is a Persian language. As a result of Arab conquests, Islam is a principal unifying element that incorporates regional cultural traits. Even though Central Asians are Muslim, for many their religious commitment may be questionable and often varies from region to region. Shirin Akiner (2000, 62) points out that “[t]here are huge regional disparities in the historical experience of Islam.” He also notes that “[w]hatever the level of active participation in religion, the emphasis tends to be on preserving formal continuity rather than searching for enlightenment or for deeper understanding of the faith.”

The two primary groups that I will focus on are the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis. However, numerous interests are intertwined including those of both governments and NGOs. At times, these interests are in conflict, and yet at other times, they are in concert, creating a multidimensional game board, of shifting loyalties and self-serving international politics. Regionally, no other states, except for the Russia and Iran, have had a greater impact on regional history, world events, and American politics. Although a contentious relationship throughout much of their history, Russia and Iran have lived side by side in peaceful coexistence at times. Each, however, in their own right, is guilty of and shared in mutual animosities and mistrust, ethnic cleansing, and are the pawns of more powerful regional and outside military powers.
For the Armenians, a major issue today stems from their historical support of Russia and the penalties in human lives they have paid. Armenians have been punished on numerous occasions, and particularly just prior to World War I when they supported and fought with Russia in its conflicts against Turkey and suffered tremendous casualties. It is estimated that in 1915, 1.5 million Armenians were either killed outright or placed under such harsh conditions by the Turks that many women, children, and old men perished in eastern Turkey and the Caucasus region. However, this is an estimate, and although 1.5 million is the accepted figure, the actual number of deaths is unknown. The Armenian "genocide" remains a burning emotional issue. Although, in recent years, Turks and Armenians have tried to resolve the issue on numerous occasions, neither side’s interlocutors have found a solution.

In the most recent conflict (1992), Armenia and Azerbaijan fought over the Nagorno-Karabagh region (map 7, page 19A) in Azerbaijan. The conflict remains unresolved and was the impetus for U.S. Congressional restrictions against Azerbaijan in the form of Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act.

Nagorno-Karabagh Armenian separatists, supported by the Armenian military, defeated the Azerbaijani military, creating hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijani internal refugees. Armenian separatists, supported by the Armenian military, not only occupy Nagorno-Karabagh but also have been rewarded for their aggression by an element of the United States’ Congress (the Armenian Congressional Caucus) with Section 907.

According to John J. Maresca, the first American mediator in the Nagorno-Karabagh war, "When Armenian military forces captured Azerbaijani villages beginning in 1992, nearly 1 million Azerbaijanis were uprooted and had to flee for
their lives." The Ambassador's 1998 speech continued with reasons for the United States to lift Section 907. He addressed the "international communit[ies] confirm[ation] [of] the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, including the Nagorno-Karabagh region," saying, "[w]hat this means is that Azerbaijan's actions in response to the conflict over Nagorno-Karabagh cannot be 'offensive'. A country is not conducting 'offensive use of force' if it is defending its own territor[ial] integrity." Therefore, if Azerbaijan is defending its territory, then Armenia must be the aggressor in Nagorno-Karabagh. Congress must be confused and not thinking clearly and unfortunately it must be considered as part of Bertrand Russell's "most people". "Most people would sooner die than think; in fact, they do so." (Bertrand Russell 1872-1970) Unfortunately, it is Azerbaijanis and Armenians who are the ones suffering and dying.

**Historical Significance**

The Caucasus, Caspian Sea littoral, and the Central Asian states have a history that can be traced back several thousand years. Conflict and treachery are a part of that history as in most regions of the world at one time or another. Today, however, nationalists resurrect long dormant issues to serve their own purposes through, exploiting of past animosities, and exaggerating these tragic historical events, and portraying them as current issues in order to foster and perpetuate nationalist fervor. These former conflicts are just that, former, and need to be recognized in their proper historical context. There is no denying that conflict is a great part of the region's history; in the anarchic world of international
politics, each actor either conducts or refrains from acting in a manner that is in their perceived best interest. Kaufman (2001, 4) points out

The fact that people believe their ethnic groups to be primordial does not, however, mean that they are. Ethnic nationalism is a modern ideology which, for most of the eastern half of Europe, has been current for little over a century. Before that time, the peasants of the Balkans and South Caucasus did not usually identify themselves as, say, ‘Croats’ or ‘Georgians’ or ‘Azerbaijans’ at all; it is only in the twentieth century that they were convinced to adopt these identities on the basis of shared language, religion, and historical mythology.

Unfortunately, which historical account or whose version of the account is to be believed and acted upon affects U.S. policymakers both in Congress and the White House. The affects of perception management on United States’ policymakers will be explored in Armenian American Diaspora Influence on United States Policy.

For many reasons, the memories passed from one generation to the next, as well as accounts of newly developed squabbles, revive, compound, and embellish historical animosities. Contributing to these animosities (maps 6 and 8, pages 17A and 21A) are linguistics, religion, ethnicity, a Soviet legacy, and the focus of renewed outside pressures competing for the region's natural wealth.

Altstadt (1992, 1-2) notes that

The land that constitutes present-day Azerbaijan has been inhabited since earliest times. . . . this territory has been invaded and ruled by different peoples and influenced by a number of great civilizations, each passing on some of its legacy to posterity. Ancient markings have been found and offered as proof to Azerbaijani historians’ claims of their regional and ethnic legitimacy. A boulder bearing what is believed to be the eastern-most Roman inscription survives just southwest of Baku.

Historically, from at least 900 B.C., Azerbaijan was part of Persia (Iran), the Roman Empire, Alexander the Great’s conquests, and early Turkish tribes. Although Azerbaijanis are Turkic, they share much of Iran’s Sh’ia Islamic history,
Northern Iran’s population is predominantly Azeri, and Iran’s Northern province is called Azerbaijan. Today, much to Iran’s chagrin, this ethnic kinship inspires Azerbaijani nationalists to call for a uniting of Iran’s northern province with Azerbaijan (map 6, page 17A).

The Azerbaijani people (in one form or another) have inhabited the region for many centuries. Unlike the Armenians, however, their history as a definitively identifiable ethnic group with a common history is somewhat murky. Although they differ in the depth of the detail they provide, Altstadt and Kaufman help to render an understanding about the importance of Azerbaijani ethnic, regional, historical identity. Kaufman (2001, 56-57) states, “The Azerbaijani national identity is very recent . . . The very name ‘Azerbaijan’ was not widely used until the 1930s.” It wasn’t until “[a]fter 1920,” continues Kaufman that “Azerbaijani national identity was fundamentally reshaped by Soviet nationality policy.” Today, much of what is known about Azerbaijani history and that of the region was researched and written by Soviet historians. How much of the research and theoretical work was developed to support the Communist Party’s Russification goals of the region is unknown. However, in her research, Dr. Altstadt has made attempts to sift through this history and identify as well as clarify Soviet sources.

Today, Azerbaijani historians are also seeking to build a credible history, regardless of what term is used to identify the people that have inhabited the region since at least Roman times. Their interpretation of historical facts tends to support a cohesive ethnic pedigree, rivaling or surpassing Armenian history, one that corroborates Azerbaijan’s current nationalist goals. However, it is yet to be determined if the region’s history will have an Azerbaijani slant in it.
Modern Actors

Generally speaking, from my readings, the 19th century appears to be considered the beginning of modern times. However, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the Caucasus' issues today, I feel it prudent to provide a more in depth yet cursory historical perspective beginning in the 16th century.

Since the 1500s, the Russians, Ottomans, Iranians, and later the British have fought in and over the region. Altstadt (1992, 7) addresses the historical conflicts of the "Ottoman-Iranian wars [leading] to Ottoman occupation of Caucasia between 1578 and 1603." The region was a patchwork of Muslim khanates (fiefdoms), and according to Altstadt (1992, 8), the "struggles for power, often bloody, took place within the khanates or among them, making for turbulent times." These were localized wars on a smaller scale and did not involve major ethnic groups in competition. Additionally, based on the region's geography, many ethnic pockets were isolated from wars not too distant from their own villages. Comprising this patchwork of peoples, Altstadt (1992, 8) describes "[t]he population [as] mixed in term[s] of ethnicity, religion and sect, and nomadism-sedentarism."

By the early 1700's, however, Russia was an active military suitor within the region. According to Altstadt (1992, 8), the first instance of either an ethnic or religious conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, took place between "1783 and 1796" and was predicated on a request from "[t]he Christian populations, both Armenian and Georgian." The request for assistance was made by the Caucasians, who "appeal[ed] to Russia to extend sovereignty over them,
bringing Caucasia under their control, unseat the khans, and invade central Iran” (Altstadt 1992, 8).

As addressed in Demographics and Ethnic Interaction, linguistically, the Central Asian states and Azerbaijan are predominantly Turkic with numerous dialects (maps 6 and 8, pages 17A and 21A); Turkmenistan, which is linguistically Farsi and ethnically Turkic, is the exception. Additionally, Altstadt (1992, 8) points out that compounding numerous Muslim confrontations, “[t]here were also non-Muslim minority communities of Georgians, Armenians, and Jews in all regions except Talysh near the Caspian coast.” Conditions at the time dictated a somewhat different life for non-Muslims. Altstadt (1992, 8) draws on Dr. Muriel Atkin from George Washington University for a description of their life:

Non-Muslims lived under certain disadvantages, notably a higher rate of taxation, but they do not seem to have been actively persecuted... Christian and Jews lived in their own villages and enjoyed certain advantages, especially the local governance of their coreligionists. Some of the Armenian village chiefs were extremely powerful... as ‘people of The Book,’ [Christians and Jews] were able to maintain their houses of worship, obtain religious literature, and employ the clergy of their faith for their congregations.

This description would tend to indicate that Armenians living in this region did not unduly suffer, but in fact held power and sway, at least in their own villages, if not regionally. This was not unusual treatment, as Muslim rulers in many regions treated “People of the Book” differently than other subjugated tribes. However, it was common practice for Christians, in many instances, to have extra taxes levied on them or to be required to pay tribute in some other form. Depending on the piety of the Muslim ruler, their lives went on as normal, and many Christians prospered as merchants, tradesmen, government functionaries, and farmers. Brutality against Christians was not and is not a part of the teachings of Islam, but may have been inflicted on Christian ethnic groups for other reasons such as
rebellion or withholding taxes. However, harsh punishments or reactions would be the norm against any group not in compliance with the ruler's wishes.

Since the 1800s, Russia and Iran have fought in and over the Caucasus region on several occasions. "The protracted and bitter struggle for the Caucasus would bring the khanates under Russian domination during two Russo-Iranian wars, 1804-1813 and 1826-1828" (Altstadt 1992, 9). During the latter half of the 1800s and the early twentieth century, imperialist Russia was in contention for regional control and influence with its nemeses, the Ottoman and the British Empires.

Alliances and occupations prior to, during, and following World War I continue to impact today's regional alignment of players. In contrast to Muslim rule, Russian occupation brought with it a new set of inequities and harsher in the treatment of dissimilar groups. In particular, a reversal of the status and treatment of the Armenians under Muslim khanatenet rule would ensue, and past equities given Armenians under Muslim rule would not be incorporated into the treatment of the Azerbaijanis. The Russians began the subjugation of the Azerbaijanis. "The Russians had the greatest power to affect the Azerbaijani... Russian control, with its Christianization and Russification policies and discriminatory laws, was pervasive and obvious" (Altstadt 1992, 39). Unlike the paradigm of power sharing that the Armenians were permitted under Muslim rule, the reverse became true for the Azerbaijanis under Russian rule. Altstadt writes that at the time, the Azerbaijani newspaper Hayat cast blame for the region's tit-for-tat clashes on the Armenians.
be easily disguised... the Armenians would be able to play on existing biases to claim that they had been attacked and to use an alleged threat... to stockpile weapons.

Altstadt (1992, 43) goes on to note that by 1905 the differences in end goals in light of communal tensions driven by "Azerbaijanis resent[ment] of Armenians as the Russians’ surrogates, especially within the state structure" had increased.

And again, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, each community was "experiencing a cultural renaissance with political implications. By this time, both Armenia and Azerbaijan had established political groups pursuing national goals. [However,] the Azerbaijanis wanted to alter it at the Russians’ expense; the Armenians, at the Azerbaijanis" (Altstadt 1992, 43). Unfortunately, as will be discussed later, this is similar to the crisis that erupted following the collapse of the Soviet Union between Armenia and Azerbaijan, when history once again seemingly repeated itself. Referring to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Stephen Astourian (1994, 85) from Cal State, Long Beach points out that "Few students of the Soviet Union predicted in the late 1970s, even in most of the 1980s, that nationality problems would eventually lead to the breakdown of that state, and none foresaw that the Soviet collapse could in turn give great salience to hitherto minor ethnoterritorial issues."

The Soviet Era: Azerbaijan’s establishment of a rudimentary democracy for after World War I was short lived when Soviet troops occupied Azerbaijan between 1921 and 1925 resulting in thousands of Azerbaijani deaths. During this time, Azerbaijan became the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR), a part of the Soviet Union. "As late as 1925, after a long drive to 'indigenize' local organs of power, less than half of the AzCP’s members were Azerbaijani. Its
leadership was primarily Russian and Armenian” (Altstadt 1992, 110). Having
maintained 70 years of absolute control over the ASSR, as well as other
independent states that were formerly under Soviet control, Russia’s historical
chauvinism continues to drive their belief that they retain the right to dictate
regional policy over these more recently declared sovereign states.

Soviet troops occupied the Caucasus and Central Asia between 1918 and
1922. At the end of World War II, Soviet forces also occupied northern portions
of Iran, with the last Soviet troops not departing Iran until 1946. World events
have changed dramatically in the last half-century. Today, Iran, Russia, and an
ostensibly new player, China, are vociferously aligned against the United States’
overtures into the Caucasus and Central Asia; they even have doubts about its
fight against terrorism, which benefits all three of those states as well.

As previously mentioned, the Nagorno-Karabagh region (map 7, page 19A)
of Azerbaijan has been a point of contention for a number of years. There is
historical precedent for the conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis.
However, during the later period of Soviet domination, a chain of events began to
unfold that would resurrect ethnic nationalism and set the stage for renewed
communal violence between Armenians and Azerbaijanis.

suggested an opportunity was at hand, mobilization began quickly: one petition
for transfer of Mountainous Karabagh to Armenia was reportedly handed
Politburo member Alexander Yakovlev in late 1986. A second [and subsequent
third petition] followed in October 1987 [and] January of 1988.” At this time,
Armenians in both Nagorno-Karabagh and Armenia staged rallies, marches, and
strikes, much to the concern of not only the Azerbaijani citizenry but also the
government in Baku, Azerbaijan.

“As much as for the Armenians, Azerbaijani fears were marked by an ethnic
affinity problem and a history of ethnic domination” (Kaufman 2001, 58). These
ethnic fears have followed the Armenian diaspora the world over, have been born
anew, and perpetuated in the United States—even among Armenians who have
never lived in Armenia or are not old enough to have lived through most of the
tragedies of the region.

The events leading to the eruption of communal violence had smoldered for
many years. They were exacerbated by Soviet ethnic practices and economic
neglect of the region. The economic neglect had a cascade affect that impacted
the Nagorno-Karabagh region and increased tensions between Armenians and
Azerbaijanis. Armenians, rather than blaming their Russian big brother, found it
convenient to blame an old regional rival in Baku for not supporting more
Armenian language education. For instance, Azerbaijanis were given first
preference in a tight job market. However, Moscow’s neglect may have
unknowingly contributed immeasurably to the problems. “Gorbachev’s anti-
alcohol campaign, which began in 1985, made this situation worse” for the
Armenians (Kaufman 2001, 59).

“Azerbaijanis had their own complaints. Azerbaijan ranked nearly last
among Soviet republics in virtually every measure of standard of living” (Kaufman
2001, 59). It is not surprising then that Baku was not able or willing to provide
more economic assistance or programs for the minority Armenians living in the
Nagorno-Karabagh. It is also not surprising that Azerbaijanis came first for the
few meager jobs available there.
Suffice it to say that many wrongs have been inflicted against both parties in the past couple hundred years. Armenians have been subjected to violence by the Azerbaijanis, as have Azerbaijanis been subjected to violence at the hands of Russians and Armenians. This spiral of tit-for-tat communal violence and the perceived national myths employed to perpetuate violence have been fostered by both the masses and the elites of the warring factions. However, the wrongs committed will not be set right or the healing begun unless a modicum of impartiality and perceived equality are injected into the region by a state or other actor that is not manipulated by either party and is considered by both parties to be an honest broker, if there is such an entity in international politics.

It may be analogous to the purchase of a new car. The dealer must make a profit, and the buyer must feel that he has made a good buy for the money. If both leave the negotiations satisfied, a compromise of equity value or gain has been reached. If, on the other hand, one or both parties is or are not satisfied, no deal will be consummated and the status quo will remain. The salesman and the buyer have played a bargaining game for the car. In the case of Armenia and Azerbaijan, the end result should be the purchase of peace through negotiation.

Dye (1998, 30) states that "Game theory is a form of rationalism, but it is applied in competitive situations in which the outcome depends on what two or more participants do." Although it is, at times, difficult to view either party as such, they are rational actors who must satisfy populations with nationalist tendencies as well as their own political and security infrastructures.
The "Great Game" Second Time Around?

The Prism of Conflict

Whether history actually repeats itself or the nature of human conflict is just an enduring fact of life caught in a revolving door of destructive human behavior is a study for future political scientists and historians. Today, however, non-democratic, third world states are beset with conflicts that are becoming more pervasive, destructive, and have the potential for enduring catastrophic results. States in contention for political influence and economic gain through energy security and natural resources abound in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and they are wooed by expectant states hoping to gain from the regions wealth.

Exacerbating today’s ethnic identity and economic clashes in this region is the volatile mix of two of the world’s three largest monotheistic religions. Although religion itself is not the problem, individuals who interpret and use religion or nationalist causes to influence others for their own ends, are a problem. Both Islam and Christianity could be classified as fatalistic, in that just rewards are not attained until after death. Extremist elements in Islam use both apocalyptic and historical events to incite both nationalistic and religious fervor to stir emotions and awaken feelings of animosity between Muslims and Christians.

The United States has a vested interest in this region of the world. Blank (2000, 65) notes that:

Politics, not economics, dominates current and future decisions about pipelines and major investment projects. As Ambassador to the CIS Stephen Sestanovich acknowledges, U.S. policy begins from an assessment of our strategic interests. Yet he simultaneously proclaims that our highest goal is to create and sustain democratic political
Institutions. Such integration of the independent states into Western economic, political, and military institutions and practices [was] the fundamental policy aim of the Clinton administration.

The Caucasus and Central Asia are not a traditional area of influence or interest for the U.S. However, today’s events and policies bring the U.S. into conflict with regional state and non-state actors with a vested interest in the region’s economic potential and political and cultural influence. United States involvement is not without its problems. A Reuters press release from a May 9, 2002 headline reads “U.S. to Penalize Foreign Firms over Iran Ties.” The article goes on to say that due to “heightened concerns about Iran, the Bush administration has decided to impose penalties on Chinese, Armenian and Moldovan companies accused of aiding Tehran in its reported development of weapons of mass destruction. . . . Congress would soon be formally notified of the decision, which was made under the Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000.” The Reuters article goes on to note that companies being “sanctioned are engaged in activities prohibited by multilateral export control lists such as the Missile Technology Control Regime, which seeks to curb the transfer of longer-range missiles, and the Australia Group . . . [which] seeks to prevent the spread of chemical and biological weapons.”

During a Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran radio broadcast from May 7, 2002, Rear-Admiral Shamkhani stated “In view of the country’s defense policy, Iran is undertaking a boosting of the range and destructive capability of the Shahab-3 missile.”

Regional Actors: Transcaucasia (map 4, page 15B) consists of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia as well as portions of southern Russia. Adjacent to this region are Iran, Turkey, and Central Asia, which are all integral to the United
States' energy, security, and foreign policies. At this time, not including Central Asia, there are three areas that have the greatest impact on long-term regional stability. The north Caucasus region in southern Russia, and the south Caucasus states or regions of Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia and Abkazia, and Georgia and South Ossetia all are potential hot spots. Aggravating Georgia's internal strife is a large Armenian population in eastern Georgia who have the potential to break away and join Armenia.

Of the five southern Russian republics and one Kray that border either Georgia or Azerbaijan, the ethnic groups of importance in this southernmost area of Russia are Chechens, Dagestanis, and North Ossetians. It should be noted that although there is a mix of ethnicities and religions, religious conflict in this region between Christians and Muslims is not a dominant factor at this time. In fact, Russia and Iran, and Armenia and Iran exist in a more cooperative atmosphere than Azerbaijan and Iran, Georgia and Russia, or Georgia and Armenia. Political alliances, nationalism, and economics are far more important than religion. Energy economics holds top billing followed by regional influence and state security concerns.

Politics and Other Factors: "One widely articulated paradigm is based on the assumption that the end of the Cold War meant the end of significant conflict in global politics and the emergence of one relatively harmonious world" (Huntington 1996, 31). However, as can be seen, Transcaucasia's problems intensified regionally and it, along with Central Asia, has become the focal point of both internal and external conflicts and imbroglios. The region's problems, aggravated by diaspora influence in the United States, continue to manifest
themselves, dictate United States' action, and influence policy shifts. Although the Cold War is over, its legacy remains, and smoldering revanchism lingers in the Russian psyche.

Russia's fears of further erosion of its influence, even in areas that most Russians see as theirs and not necessarily as independent states, have been reflected in numerous press articles from all sides of the political spectrum. In a January 31, 2002, article in the Moscow Obshchaya Gazeta, a weekly newspaper for educated audiences by Dzhulyetto Kyeza referring to the Bush-Putin conference in Crawford, Texas, stated that

Putin almost immediately got Bush to stop the fairly generous aid to Chechen separatists which the Turkish special services were offering through Georgia and Azerbaijan with the CIA's blessing. Moreover, silently swallowing the loss of Uzbekistan and Turkistan, the master of the Kremlin in exchange received assurances that the zone of Russian influence that extends to Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan would remain inviolable in the near future.

As evidenced by these statements, a division within the region is supposedly underway, and Russia is being allowed to retain its dominance over some of the states it traditionally influenced.

As have many Russian writers in the past who have contributed to Moscow's propaganda war in the Caucasus and Central Asia, Kyeza casts doubt on Georgia and Azerbaijan, but includes Armenia within the Russian sphere. However, it is in the next paragraph that another and much more important thrust of the article comes to light. The region, as can be seen on most maps, is Russia's soft underbelly and comes with myriad problems even without real or imagined outside influence. Kyeza goes on to say, "In Moscow, no doubt, they had not forgotten the lessons of the mid-1990s, when as a result of the joint efforts of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United States, which had undertaken an ambitious project to lay gas and oil pipelines to deliver the Caspian's
incalculable energy resources through the territory of Afghanistan, Russia almost
found itself on the sidelines of the big-time Central Asian game.”

Russia’s concern for its deteriorating regional influence has recently been
expressed in a number of news stories from both conservatives and liberals alike.
In a Moscow Moskovskiy Komsomolets article compiled by Lyuba Shariy on
February 12 2002, Vladimir Romanenko, a retired major general and deputy
director of the Institute of CIS Countries, stated that “by settling down in Central
Asia the Americans affected also the Chinese interests, which had been
repeatedly declared by Jiang Zemin. [He also observed that] Americans have
always been quick to come and very slow to go.”

The Cold War, zero-sum game, hysteria is alive and well in post-Cold War
Russia. In an article from another Russian daily, Nezavisimaya Gazeta, pitched
to an elite audience, Armen Borisovich Khanbabyan titles his article (a reference
to Central Asia) “Mortal Danger Threatens Unrecognized ‘Foursome’; West
prepares to Eliminate Self-Proclaimed States.” The opening salvo begins, “In the
immediate future unrecognized states on post-Soviet territory will cease to exist.
The events of recent weeks makes it possible . . . for the use of NATO forces
under the pretext that official authorities of the metropolitan countries are not
capable of stabilizing the situation on ‘their own territory.’” Somehow,
Khanbabyan maneuvers the reader through a regional cascade effect from
fighting the Taliban via U.S. bases in Central Asia to Transcaucasia, including the
conflict in Nagorno-Karabagh. Khanbabyan churns the waters by saying “As the
head of Karabakh diplomacy stated, ‘having abolished the 907th amendment
which prohibits giving US federal aid to Azerbaijan, the Congress, at the same
time adopted a document which emphasizes that the resumption of such aid
must not be used against the ‘Armenian communities.’ And we are hopeful for the compliance with this condition.” The article ends by concluding that Russia will lament its loss of influence and leave Central Asia to its own devices. It should be noted that Russian oligarch Boris Berezovskiy owns Nezavisimaya Gazeta, and although he may not have any real problems with United States military forces conducting counter-terrorist operations in the region, he does have an ongoing feud with Russian President Putin. This article appears as much an attack on Putin’s policies as it does as an attack on the United States, Central Asia, or Transcaucasusian states. And at the same time, exhibits veiled pandering to Russia’s conservative foreign policy and security elite.

In Georgia’s Pankisi Gorge, which borders Chechnya, Chechen Islamic extremists, probably supported by al Qaida terrorists, have taken up refuge. Both Russia and Georgia would prefer to have them removed. However, Georgian forces are not at a combat proficiency that will enable them to employ force against the terrorists to encourage their departure. Russia, on the other hand, is somewhat reluctant to employ force into Georgia, but did so in October 2002. This is a sensitive issue since Russian forces have assisted Abkaz forces, and this new incursion is now another violation of Georgian sovereignty. Georgia’s situation is further complicated by some of its own indigenous or semi-indigenous ethnic groups in its north and west.

South Ossetia, in the northern part of Georgia, has demonstrated aspirations to join with its brethren in North Ossetia, which is located in southern Russia. Compounding Georgia’s separatist population problem in South Ossetia is its ongoing conflict with its western-most region of Abkazia. Russian peacekeeping forces separate Georgian and Abkaz forces, but unfortunately,
Russia is not an honest broker in this conflict either and uses its United Nations peacekeeping forces to fulfill its own regional policy.

Since Russia is not an honest broker, Georgian skepticism is well founded. The breakaway Abkaz Republic has elected government officials, as would any independent state; however, it is not an independent state. And its elected Prime Minister, Anri Djergenia, stated in a Russian TV6 interview that “His unrecognized republic seeks ‘associate status’ with the Russian Federation.” Additional aggravating statements by the Abkaz leadership lend further credence to Georgia’s concerns. Abkazia’s ultimate intentions, and Russia’s regional self-interest.

United States Involvement

Regional influence has taken on a new dimension since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Since the signing of the 1992 Freedom Support Act, the United States had been making efforts to engage the (IS) independent states of the (FSU) former Soviet Union. While Russia welcomes U.S. economic assistance, its foreign policy and security elites remain highly suspicious of any United States overtures through which it fears the loss of regional positions or influence. This attitude of either win or lose is reminiscent of the zero-sum game of the Cold War.

As with most international situations, and in the Caucasus in particular, there are competing national and international interests. While Russia lost most of its sway with the IS, the U.S. has gained influence. Also, the IS have played international politics to their advantage by using the United States’ new found
influence and policies as well as Russia's zero-sum, telescopic, worldview in an attempt to gain concessions from both Russia and the U.S. However, tensions remain. During a CIS Collective Security Treaty meeting held in Armenia during May 2001, in which Russian President Putin was present, numerous press statements by the CIS Collective Security Treaty, Secretary-General of the Collective Security council Valeriy Nikolayenko stated that “[m]ilitary force can be used in the case of a CIS country which is not a member of the Collective Security Treaty issuing a military threat against a member-state of the Collective Security Treaty.” His statements were picked up and reported in both Armenian and Azerbaijani press.

For example, Georgia continues to be bullied by Russia and plagued by breakaway minorities (supported by Russia), while receiving assistance from the United States in the hopes of extricating itself from heavy-handed Russian influence. Additionally, Georgia is a member of the nearly defunct organization, (GUUAM) consisting of Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova. Also, NATO's (PFP) Partnership For Peace has been defined as a cornerstone organization for the United States' policy in the region. However, GUUAM with the election of communists in Moldova and political instability in the other four states is a marginal door for United States policy to enter the region. The PFP is a military organization and exacerbates the fears of Russia and others opposed to the U.S. military presence regionally. On March 21, 2001, the Georgian press reported that U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell had said, “Georgia can rely on Washington’s help ‘to protect it from Russian pressure [and also that] Russia is behaving in a manner ‘unacceptable to a neighbor.’’” Even more importantly, and to highlight Georgia’s regional position, the press release also quoted the
Secretary of State as stating the U.S. “reaffirmed [its] readiness to support the implementation of the Baku-Tiblisi-Cheyhan oil pipeline” (map 11, page 36A).

Another facet of United States involvement is Turkey’s role which is crucial to U.S. regional goals and an active regional participant for a number of reasons both good and bad. First, Turkey has aspirations of pan-Turkic influence as far east as the Chinese border. Second, it has historical regional conflicts with both Russia and Iran, which also feed its big brother aspirations in the first reason which may provide a stabilizing influence in the region. Third, it is a NATO ally of the United States and during the Cold War was NATO’s southern guard against the Soviet Union. Fourth, although Turkey is a Muslim state, it is moderate, secular, and straddles Europe and Asia. It also has aspirations of joining the European Union. Fifth, the economic benefits to be derived from the transportation of oil through pipelines along the Baku-Tiblisi-Cheyhan route have great potential for Turkey and the region. Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia, and Turkey need social stability in their ethnic minority populations in order to derive the most from the economic benefits to be obtained from allowing oil transit through their states. Azerbaijan has the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict; Georgia has Abkazia and to a lesser extent South Ossetia; Russia has its debacle in Chechnya; and Turkey has the Kurds in its eastern and southern regions. All stand to gain economically and politically if stability is brought to the region.

Iran, a Caspian littoral state, is in a different category than the other regional actors. The United States has imposed sanctions against Iran in an effort to get Iran to cease both its covert and tacit support of regional and international terrorism. These sanctions have come at a cost to U.S. business. Congressional
efforts to dissuade Europeans and others not to trade with Iran have not been effective. Cohen, Paul, and Blecker (1996, 18) acknowledge that

For better or worse, trade sanctions built around export controls became the U.S. program of choice for attaining a wide range of foreign policy goals. Sanctions were employed to contain its former cold war adversaries, the Soviet Union and its communist bloc allies; . . . to respond to what was branded state-sponsored terrorism (Libya, Iran, etc.); . . . Government officials and businesspersons in the other industrialized countries frequently laugh all the way to the bank . . .

It would appear that economic embargos are not helpful in attaining results in foreign policy, and it would be best if they were not used except as a punitive measure against the targeted state with the realization that it will have marginal or mixed results.

Many in the U.S. petroleum industry would like to have seen a lifting of sanctions in order to compete against European oil companies. In 1997, Scott Peterson of the Christian Science Monitor wrote, “Sanctions have kept US companies from lucrative oil and gas contracts, [which in turn have], made Iran more self-reliant. [And even] Turkey, a NATO member and close ally of the United States, nevertheless signed a $20 -billion gas deal with the Islamic Republic last year.” Even with the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars to American business in the waning years of the twentieth century, could not have envisioned a strengthening of the United States’ policy against Iran as stated by President Bush in his State of the Union Address to Congress in January 2002, citing Iran as one of the states in the “axis of evil.”

Oil-Black gold: Cullen (1992, 2-35) points out, that as far back as 700 years ago, “Marco Polo noted [oil’s] abundance” and at the turn of the 20th century, the Caspian region was “producing half of the world’s oil.” Today, estimates vary, but
Russia and Iran regard the Caspian as a lake with common resources. The other three coastal states maintain that it's a sea with national sectors. At stake in the ongoing debate: oil and natural gas fields, transport routes, and fishing rights. As governments wrangle for control of resources, corruption thrives in unstable bureaucracies, fueling black market economies and traffic in illegal arms and drugs. In Azerbaijan, for example, so-called unofficial trade is thought to account for half of all economic activity.

Map Legend
- Gas field
- Oil field
- Polluted area
- Refinery
- Below sea level
- Desert
- Swamp

Declining sturgeon catches (graph, above) reflect loss of spawning grounds, water pollution, overharvesting of sturgeon prey, and massive poaching in most areas of the Caspian. The largest beluga sturgeon—14-foot-long females weighing 1,300 pounds—carry 200 pounds of roe that a U.S. caviar retailer can sell for $26,000. Belugas and the smaller Russian and stellate species make up most of the Caspian sturgeon harvest, which provides 90 percent of world caviar supplies.
according to Lubin (2000, 66) there could be “200 billion barrels” of oil in the Caspian Basin. At the apex of the United States’ policy in the greater Caspian littoral is Azerbaijan. Lubin (2000, 66) supports Akiner, noting, “Azerbaijan [was] one of the world’s largest oil producers at the turn of the century, [and] still has significant oil resources at the turn of the 21st century.”

Today, the (EIA) Energy Information Agency’s Caspian Sea Country Analysis Briefing states:

The prospect of potentially enormous hydrocarbon reserves is part of the allure of the Caspian region (includes Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and the regions of Iran and Russia that are near the Caspian Sea). Besides the 18-34 billion barrels currently proven, the region’s possible oil reserves could yield another 235 billion barrels of oil. This is roughly equivalent to a quarter of the Middle East’s total proven reserves (however, the Middle East also has its own vast possible reserves). Possible gas reserves in the Caspian region, including Uzbekistan, are as large as the region’s proven gas reserves, and could yield another 328 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of gas if proven.

However, the actual volume of oil and natural gas to be found in the Caspian Sea is yet to be determined, as are the economic and political benefits to be derived from the oil and natural gas extractions, sales, and transportation. Additionally, the legal division of the Caspian Sea has not been codified, inhibiting further exploration and leaving in doubt the actual extent of the oil and gas and the potential profits.

Exacerbating the political and economic situation is the region’s mountainous geography. Due to the many regional conflicts and nationalistic movements the pipeline routs have had to be placed in such a manner so as to avoid the conflicts. The cost of routing around conflict areas has added to the overall cost of constructing the pipeline. This has turned out to be economically
beneficial for Georgia, but Armenia has lost untold revenue due to its conflict with Azerbaijan.

The five-member states of the Caspian Sea littoral are divided as to the final national territorial divisions, leading to the current stalemate and lack of a treaty. Although all must agree to the final disposition, the alliances between states fluctuate. Iran is “adamant about receiving an equal 20 % share of the Caspian, as opposed to 14 % it would receive by agreeing to Russia’s median line approach” (Jane’s Intelligence Review 2001, 27). Due to Iran’s geographical location at the southern end of the Caspian Sea, Iran feels politically and economically slighted, and Russia’s approach provides Azerbaijan possible lucrative oil fields in an area that Iran would control if there were an equal 20% division of the Sea. (map 12, page 38A)

There is a much more subtle economic conflict being played out in the Caspian than is openly apparent. Russia has lucrative oil and gas fields, “Moscow’s state-owned enterprises once produced more than 12.5 mbd before the Soviet collapse--the largest amount of oil ever produced by a single country, . . . That sum is one-third more than Saudi Arabia’s peak share at the end of 2000” (Morse and Richard 2002, 17). Given Russia’s continued influence over the Central Asian, Caspian littoral states, and existing transshipment agreements of Azerbaijani oil through its oil pipelines, the economic battle for control of oil will only increase. Morse and Richard (2002, 18) point out “that [the] global oil demand could grow from the current 77mbd to 120 mbd in 20 years, driven by the United States and the emerging markets of South and East Asia” particularly China.
United States’ policy in the region is critical and carries with it a double-edged sword. On the one hand, Iran, a named supporter of terrorism, is to be contained and Russian economic growth is good for its political and economic stability. Russian economic stability, it is hoped, will lead to a more democratic state with western thinking. However, given Russian bullying, former republics fear a stronger Russia, and as Morse and Richard (2002, 26) observe “significant room remains for U.S. influence, whether good or bad. If it takes the wrong track, the U.S. government could prevent Russian industry from becoming more transparent.”

The relationship between Russia and United States, although contentious at times and remain so for the foreseeable future, is better moved in a more internationally sound direction. The resolution of Russian transparency in its business transactions is a win-win situation for the states and business parties involved. “Moreover, [Russia’s] Lukoil recently stated it would even consider participating in the U.S.-backed Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, which will bring oil from the Caspian to Turkey’s Mediterranean coast” (Morse and Richard 27).

Considering OPEC’s grip on the world’s oil production, the constant turmoil in the Middle East and the propensity of Islamic extremism to blame and target the U.S. and our allies, having an additional (relatively) stable oil supply to counter-balance potential interruption of the flow of world oil is a positive approach to U.S. as well as international economic stability and prosperity.

To emphasize the United States’ growing energy needs, last year California experienced numerous power outages and more may be in its future. The EIA, State Energy Data Report for 1999, (Table 41) depicts California’s consumption data for 1960 through 1999. In 1960, California’s total petroleum consumption (in
thousand barrels) was listed as 325,526, and in 1999 it had nearly doubled to 617,760. Also, the EIA report lists California as second nationally, in most categories of petroleum consumption, just behind Texas. This information is critical in understanding Armenian diaspora influence over Congressman Schiff, which will be discussed in Congressional Representatives.

The United States’ demand for oil and its lack of self-sufficiency has been on a steady rise since before 1973. Nivola (2002, 25) said that even “In 1973 the United States imported little more than a third of the petroleum it consumed.” He also observed that “the U.S. economy then proved far more, no less, exposed to the shock of rising international oil prices than two years ago when those prices soared again while our dependence on foreign oil reached an all-time high.” Toman (2002, 20) reports that “In 2000 the United States imported almost 60 percent of the petroleum it consumed . . . [and] Energy security was a central theme in the Bush administration’s energy policy report released by Vice President Cheney in 2001.”

Thus, support to Russia and Azerbaijan would help to ease Russian hard-liners’ fears of U.S. unilateralist intentions regionally and lessen U.S. dependence on Middle Eastern oil. Additionally, alternate pipeline routes from the region would help build the economies of the Caucasus and Central Asia and lessen Russian dominance through building a more equal state-to-state relationship. Fiona Hill (2002, 29) noted that “By the end of 2001, Russia was becoming a real international energy player. Hill (2002, 31) also identifies Russia as “An emerging but not yet ‘super’ energy power.” If Russian petroleum companies continue to develop internationally, providing Russia with financial security, that interaction may create a more transparent business environment, soften cultural
xenophobia, and push Russia into a more European mindset. However, it could also provide the capitol to power a new Russian military industrial complex and provide the capitol to propel Russia on a new road of irredentism.

**Armenia in the Middle:** As previously mentioned, Russia is a critical element for regional stability. Unfortunately, Russia's transition to a fully democratic state with liberal economic policies is still in transition and may remain in transition for years to come. One of its historical political tools and allies regionally is Armenia, where it continues to maintain a sizable military presence.

Armenia is a full member of the Russian dominated CIS and continues to play the dutiful handmaiden for Russia, as it has historically. However, due to the Armenian-American diaspora's organizational skills, political clout, and multimedia pervasiveness, Armenia is reaping the rewards bestowed upon it from both Russia and the United States Congress as the aggressor state in the conflict with Azerbaijan.

Russia's security dilemma is primarily based on two real or imagined threats which are in turn based on its own historical xenophobic tendencies and current military and political weaknesses. Hostile Islamic extremists in its Transcaucasia region pose the first threat. The second threat is a perceived NATO and United States' encroachment into the southern Caucasus states of Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Armenia, the third state in the Transcaucasia trio may be viewed as Russia's last bastion in the region. Russia's chauvinistic, paranoid worldview, undergirded by its economic goals, is looking for a place to make its mark and hold the line against U.S. encroachment. Russia's efforts and fears are
exacerbated by American military power projections and its lone, preeminent, superpower status. Current global hostilities place Russian and U.S. policy, economics, and military forces in close proximity with overlapping national agendas in an unstable Transcaucasian region.

Russia needs Armenia as a foundation to maintain regional influence, and project its political, economic, and military presence regionally. Both Georgia and Azerbaijan have voiced NATO aspirations, and although they are members of the CIS, they are not members of the CIS security agreement, and are being courted by and are courting the United States as a counterbalance to Russian domination. Additionally, for energy security issues as well as economic and political reasons, Russia would prefer to control Caspian Sea oil and gas from its exploration to its shipment from the region.

For many of the same reasons that the United States has for ensuring that Russia does not gain an undue advantage or control in the Caspian, it has applied political leverage against Iran to ensure it does not gain advantage either. The United States has an interest in the Caspian Sea hydrocarbon resources and the economic gain and does not wish to see anyone state become the regional hegemon. Azerbaijan has been the focus of U.S. foreign, energy, and now security policy. For political and economic reasons, Georgia has been second. Inconsistent with stated United States’ policy and goals for the last 10 years has been strong Congressional support for Armenia due to its organized, vocal diasporal influence. Armenia has received the largest share of funds per capita of any state in the region. The Center for Security Policy reported that in 1998, “[a]fter Israel, Armenia . . . [received] $87.5 million in U.S. aid.” In contrast,
section 907 prohibits direct aid to the government of Azerbaijan, and funds provided must be transferred through NGOs or other circuitous routes.

USAID reports that between “October 1, 1994 [and] September 30, 1995, the U.S. Government provided [only] $26 million in humanitarian assistance and $1.5 million in educational assistance and exchange programs.” Some of the organizations identified by USAID said that the funds which were funneled through to Azerbaijan are “Save the Children Umbrella Grant, World Food Program, and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.”

The Dark Side: Even with millions of dollars in aid to Armenia, nationalism squabbles heat up. Before 9/11/2001, elements of the Armenian diaspora in the U.S. ignited a terror campaign with Turkey via bombings and murder. The (ASALA) Armenian Secret Army of the Liberation of Armenia is a terrorist group that has killed in both the U.S. and Europe. Their targets were and continue to be Turkish diplomats. ASALA was most active in the U.S. from 1980 -1982, conducting three bombings and attempting a fourth. Also, the head of the Armenian National Congress of America was tried in connection with these terrorist acts for “storing over one hundred pounds of high explosives and possessing machine guns. United States v. Mourad Topalian (N.D. Ohio) (Case No. 1:99 CR 358).”

New Perspectives Quarterly quotes former director of both the FBI and CIA, William Webster, noting that “In 1978, when I became director of the FBI, we were experiencing about 100 terrorist incidents per year from a wide variety of
organizations. The two most active and violent groups at the time were left-wing ASALA and the right-wing Justice Commandos for Armenian Genocide."
Armenian American Diaspora Influence on United States Policy

United States Policy

The foundation of current United States policy in Transcaucasia and the Caspian Littoral, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, is outlined in the full text of then President George Bush’s letter to Congress and the subsequent legislation passed and signed into law in the form of the 1992 Freedom Support Act of October 1992. Additionally, other legislation affecting overall United States' policy regionally includes, but is not limited to, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974, including the Jackson-Vanik Amendment.

At first, United States policy may appear as a tangle of ideas, competing goals, and national arrogance replete with a mutable history of fickle engagement. In many cases, due to U.S. party politics; international politics of the moment, special interest groups including diaspora influence on Congress and to a lesser extent on the White House, this is true. In many historical cases during the Cold War, signals or indications of United States support were given to states or groups of people struggling against communism. The hope was that democracy would come charging forth on its steed of military might to free them of their oppressor, the Soviet Union. However, the U.S. had let down the Hungarians in 1956, the Czechoslovaks in 1968, and others. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the steed was put to pasture for its well deserved “peace dividend.”
Unfortunately, as a result of Congressional as well as President Clinton's desires to transfer funds to social issues from the U.S. military draw down, it left not only a reduced military but also an intelligence community of diminished corporate knowledge and depleted technological tools to protect Americans. Unknowingly, this "peace dividend" may have contributed to September 11 2001, triggering an international event window of cataclysmic proportions and opening the door for the executive branch to break the Armenian diaspora's hold on Congressionally legislated United States' policy in the Caucasus.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, United States policy took on a supposedly new calculus-democracy with an economic flair. New markets, which would be good for U.S. business, and democracy, which would help to stabilize the formerly non-democratic new states by providing, needed markets.

President George H. Bush, on the basis of this recognized need and the United States' ability to capitalize on its Cold War victory, initiated Congressional action for a new direction in United States policy.

1992 Freedom Support Act: On April 1 1992, during a press conference, President George Bush said "I have just met with the congressional leadership to request bipartisan backing for a new, comprehensive, and integrated program to support the struggle of freedom underway in Russia, Ukraine, and other new States that have replaced the Soviet Union." The result of that meeting was the "Message to the Congress Transmitting the FREEDOM Support Act Proposed Legislation" in a letter on April the 3rd from President George Bush. The legislative proposal, initiated by the President of the United States offered an opportunity to capitalize on an unforeseen international event that opened a
political and economic window of opportunity for a change in U.S. policy. More importantly, this event allowed the United States to advance its interests in previously closed regions and to open new economic markets in the IS due to the political disarray and change in Russian government.

In order to foster democracy and expand the U.S. economic base, this proposed legislation was intended to open the door of opportunity into previously closed areas of the Soviet Union. As he stated, President Bush's proposal was designed to provide the president "the tools to work with the international community to help secure post-Cold War peace." The President proceeded to outline his plan to galvanize the executive and legislative branches of government with the private sector "to support democracy and free markets in Russia and the other independent states of the former Soviet Union."

Section 907: In October 1992, before a conference on U.S. and Azerbaijani relations, hosted by the U.S.-Azerbaijani Chamber of Commerce, the first U.S. mediator to the Nagorno-Karabagh negotiations, Ambassador John J. Maresca, stated in a speech:

The U.S. Congress passed the Freedom Support Act in the fall of 1992 to facilitate economic and humanitarian aid to the former republics of the Soviet Union, hoping it would help stabilize democratic forms of government and foster economic growth. All 15 republics are eligible for assistance with the exception of Azerbaijan. The countries that receive aid under this legislation include Armenia, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Since 1992 the Armenian government has received more than $1 billion in aid under this legislation. Azerbaijan's government has received none. The clause restricting aid to Azerbaijan reads as follows:

Restriction on Assistance to Azerbaijan (Title 9: Section 907) "United States assistance under this or any other Act . . . may not be provided to the Government of Azerbaijan until the President determines, and so reports to the Congress that the Government of Azerbaijan is taking
demonstrable steps to cease all blockades and other offensive uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.”

Building upon an already established Bush initiated policy, in 1994, President Clinton articulated the more mercenary aspects of engagement policy in his “budget message to Congress by proclaiming, ‘We have put our economic competitiveness at the heart of our foreign policy’” (Brinkley 1999, 41). And Blank (2000, 65) notes that at least “[r]hetorically, geoeconomic rivalry is allegedly supplanting the classical forms of geostrategic competition.”

As Blank (2000, 66) also points out, at this time, “[b]esides ideology, strategic calculations of energy prices and accessibility through pipelines, and traditional issues of security in Europe, the CIS, and the Middle East drive U.S. policy.” President Clinton’s policies then were not new, but rather an extension of President Bush’s initiatives even though renamed and embellished. There is very little separation between foreign, security, economic, and energy policy. Due to the increasing complexities of state-to-state relations and international treaties, the elements of U.S. policy are blended and have become different sides of the same policy goal.

A 1998 Dr. Ariel Cohen article published online by the Heritage Foundation states that “U.S. interests in the Caucasus include ensuring the independence and territorial integrity of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan; keeping Iran and Islamic fundamentalism in check; ensuring access to energy resources; and preventing a re-emergence of Russian imperialism.” These goals, although addressed in The Heritage Foundation’s more conservative style, are not divergent from President Clinton’s goals.

Brinkley (1999, 39) noted that during president’s 1993 “speech to the United Nations General Assembly, President Bill Clinton tried to elucidate his foreign
policy agenda by offering up a concept of ‘democratic enlargement’.” Again, this would also tend to support President Bush’s initiatives and concepts. Brinkley (1999, 41) also states “In July 1994, Clinton tried to weave the enlargement theme into the so-called EN-EN document: the National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement.”

Today, the war on terrorism has also thrust the United States on a policy collision course with numerous states in Central Asia, the Middle East, the Caucasus, Russia, and China. Once again, U.S. policy, though now dominated by national security concerns and terrorism, is also focused on improving its relations and support for regional states that are considered U.S. allies and placing political, security, and economic pressure on those states with hostile intent towards the United States.

Baku Space TV, reporting on 8 March, 2002, stated, “the fifth conference of the US-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce . . . [quotes] US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage, . . . [as stating] the USA had been cooperating with Azerbaijan for 10 years’. [And] [a]s for Iran exerting pressure on Azerbaijan, he said that the USA would not allow Iran to do so under any circumstances.” And building on the policies begun by President Bush and continued by President Clinton, the article continues by noting “US aid to Azerbaijan for security issues will be increased from $2m to $10m dollars in the next year. In addition, the USA has allocated a $1m-dollar grant to Azerbaijan towards its admission to the World Trade Organization” (WTO).

The overarching direction and basic political philosophy of the United States has been consistent in this region for almost ten years now. In 1995, according to Blank (2000, 67), “Glen Rase, head of the State Department’s energy policy
section, bluntly rejected Russian efforts to dominate the Caspian.” It would appear then that even with a change in state actors, U.S. policy has held steadfast. The only self-imposed impediment for full U.S. participation in the region would seem to be Section 907.

The Process

Twice a year, by law, the president submits a report to Congress substantiating whether or not a state meets the stipulations set forth in Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 including the Jackson-Vanik Amendment. Once the president has accomplished his affirmation of state compliance, and Congress accepts it, those states are renewed for (MFN) most favored nation trading status. According to the Department of Commerce, “The law proscribes [that] MFN treatment for the country’s exports to the U.S. and eligibility for U.S. government credits and investment guarantees for business in that country.”

However, once submitted, Congress has 90 days to accept or reject the president’s submission and initiate the legislative procedures to refuse the president’s submission. This procedure is not dissimilar from the passage of other legislation if there is disagreement between the White House and Congress.

Although this legislation is designed to assist other states, it also stipulates requirements and provides guidelines to the various organs of the U.S. government on how to conduct the business of the government in regard to different states. Just as important, however, is the conditionality placed on foreign governments to meet certain requirements laid out in the legislation to
comply with United States requirements to receive monetary aid and benefits. In most instances, it is incumbent on the recipient state to conform to or make attempts to attain the end result or make real or acceptable progress, unless political expediency or other mitigating circumstances are deemed appropriate in the best interest of the U. S. government.

In addition to the prohibitions of this legislation, due to international security and stability issues, there is legislation prohibitive in nature regarding Iran. Iran is on a list of states considered as terrorist sponsoring or supporting. In 1996, two key pieces of legislation, the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act and the Antiterrorist Act, prevented American industry from doing business with sanctioned states or companies in these states.

In March, May, and September 1995, President Clinton reinforced or initiated additional punitive measures against Iran. Following consultations with the State Department, he issued a new (EO) Executive Order, number 12957, prohibiting trade with Iran. The EO letter to Congress placed Iran under economic sanctions “pursuant to the International Emergency Economics Powers Act [and the] National Emergencies Act.” Another EO, number 12959, the second letter to Congress, concluded by saying that “The Iranian Transaction Regulations issued pursuant to [EO numbers] 12957 and 12959 continue to advance important objectives in promoting the nonproliferation and antiterrorism policies of the United States.”

Over the years, there have been complaints about the deleterious economic effects these sanctions have had on specific types of firms. Legislation, in particular sanctions, designed to elicit or force conformity by the intended target state have historically been ineffective. In many instances, unilateral sanctions
are criticized by those businesses incurring hardship, allies and foes alike, and most of all the state, or states, that the legislation is directed against.

**Congress**

Congress is the law-making branch of the federal government as established and defined by the first article of the United States Constitution. That statement in and of itself is straightforward. In our country’s infancy, there were concerns about our legislators’ ability to understand their constituent’s needs. As we can see today this issue may still hold some question. However, Madison, in the Federalist Papers, numbers 55 and 57, posed some interesting thoughts that are pertinent even today and are quite applicable to the problem at hand—Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act.

In *The Federalist*, number 55, “The House and Knowledge of Local Circumstances,” in answer to accusations of opponents of change and the new Constitution, Madison writes “secondly, that they will not possess a proper knowledge of the local circumstances of their numerous constituents.” Madison goes on to note the great disparity between states and the proportion of representation of each. The essence of this thought as applied today, to diaspora influence in any Congressional district, is the term “numerous constituents.” The vast majority of U.S. citizens have no concept or ideas surrounding the true situation of the problems in the Caucasus region.

Madison, in *The Federalist*, number 57, “The People Basis of the House,” states that “The aim of every political constitution is, or ought to be, first to obtain for rulers men who possess most wisdom to discern, and most virtue to pursue, the common good of the society.” Again Madison appears to exhibit a more
altruistic concern for the greater good of all constituents. This last concept has surpassed a minority element of a constituency by expanding to the “common good of the society.” Unfortunately, today our Congressional representatives acquiesce all too often to diaspora constituency pressure and party politics in developing and passing legislation. Different diaspora and lobbyist groups have done write-in campaigns, staged protests, and initiated a host of other pressures.

Armenian Diaspora Influence and Constituencies: Armenian lobbying groups in the United States are politically savvy, financially generous, and extremely energetic in their attempts to influence legislation favorable to their goals. Also, they have a demonstrated history of strong-arm tactics bordering on criminal extortion style practices when confronting congressional representatives who are not in step with Armenian diaspora aims in support of the myths surrounding Armenia.

As an example of the types information available on Armenian diaspora websites I have selected the AADLC’s website. The methods employed appear to be within the norms for any or most lobby groups in their support of legislators that support the lobbyist’s causes. However, it is the subtlety of the terminology used to show displeasure or offer kudos that is of interest. Additionally, as would any effective lobbyist, all votes pertaining to issues of importance to the Armenian community are watched and counted. For example the AADLC Home Page starts the reader with “[i]n June 1999, when the U.S. Senate voted to save Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, 75% of the Democrats voted with our community, as opposed to only 34% of the Republicans.” The opening article continues with additional congressional vote statistics on issues with basically the same results being noted between Republicans and Democrats. The author,
Richelle Noroyan observes “[t]his is why the AADLC works with the Democratic Party to foster support within the Armenian American community.”

Legislators that find favor with the AADLC receive favorable articles praising their support. It was noted that Congressman Schiff upon election to the House had “long been a staunch supporter of issues to Armenian-American voters. [And] [a]s a California State Senator, he led efforts to secure almost $500,000 in state funds for the completion of a documentary on the Armenian Genocide.

However, if you are not in the Armenian camp such as Nancy Dorn you can expect the opposite treatment. Following her assuming the position as Foreign Policy advisor to Congressman Hastert, Dorn is linked to China, Pakistan, a former lobbyist for Azerbaijan, and a number of other controversial issues. The article notes that “Dorn was ‘at her desk in the speakers office yesterday even as congressional staff members critical of the Pakistani regime and of U.S. policy in China privately raised question about her selection.” The problem is not necessarily what is actually said, but what is implied. The article goes on to infer that there is something wrong, that Dorn may have been investigated by the Justice Department for having worked in a law firm that was contracted as the lobby agent for Azerbaijan. The article then provides two websites to mine the information from. However, any group that represents or a foreign government must register as would an Armenian diaspora lobby effort for Armenia.

The final AADLC attack is of local interest and dated from March 6, 1999. The title, “Senior Republican Congressman Attacks Armenia as ‘Anti-American.” The opening paragraph begins by taking exception to “Nebraska Republican Congressman Doug Bereuter question[ing] the civic participation of Armenian
Americans and threatened a wholesale reassessment of U.S. support for the
Republic of Armenia." The article notes that

"[d]uring the hearing, Bereuter stated emphatically and for the record that:
'The Armenian lobby, which is so influential in California, has got about a year
to try and change the anti-American, pro-Russian attitude in Armenia or there
will be some changes made around here.

The attack by the AADLC begins with

"[w]e find it deeply troubling that any Congressman, especially one who
receives major funding from multinational interests involved in both Turkey and
Azerbaijan would, in any way, question the right of American citizens of Armenian
heritage to participate in civic life in our country."

Throughout the rest of the article it defends Armenian-Americans, notes their
patriotic contributions, and alternates this with additional attacks on Nebraska
Congressman Bereuter.

At this point it should be pointed out that the primary policy issues or
platforms of importance to the Armenian diaspora as stated by the AADLC and
the AAA are first and foremost is the recognition of the "Armenian Genocide" by
the Ottoman Turks and its commemoration; United States aid to Armenia and the
Nagorno-Karabakh; and "self-determination" for the Nagorno-Karabakh.

The second Armenian diaspora organization of note is the AAA. Some of
their activities listed on their website include opening a new NGO office at the
United Nations and the offering of summer internships in Washington D.C. and in
Armenia. In fact the article states that "[s]ince 1977, the Assembly has place
nearly 750 interns in the offices of prominent Senators and Representatives, the
Department of Commerce, the World Bank, the Federal Reserve Board, [and
numerous other influential offices] and advocacy groups."
An observation and distinction should be made with regard to Armenian lobbying groups. Rogan Kersh (2001, 237) identifies the relation ship between those being represented and the representatives as:

Client Interest ----→ Lobbyist Action ----→ Public-official Target ----→ Policy Outcome

Lobbyists thus appear as vehicles for their clients' interests, laboring to modify legislators' preconceived positions on an issue. In this instance however, the lobbyists are an embedded element of those being represented and actually guide their own "actions," provide their client (the diaspora) with the "interest," and "target" legislators in order to attain the desired "outcome." Salam (2001, 309) notes "In Canada, Spain, India, Nigeria, and Britain, among other states, the accommodation of cultural differences has involved various forms of asymmetric federalism, . . . Other states, however, have resisted this strategic creation of collective cultural rights as an illiberal innovation that undermines state coherence and cohesion." The Armenian diaspora and those like them, or at least those in control of influence within its community and have something to gain by the status quo, nudge the U.S. a little further off center and towards ethnic fractures each time they gain a victory against the interests of all in the United States.

Goltz (1999, 79) has observed, "Armenia enjoys the popular image of being the victim in its victorious war of territorial aggrandizement." Goltz’s (1999, 82) further analyses of the problem of repealing Section 907 in the Congress notes that "as part of the so-called Silk Road Amendment in November of 1998, . . . [the] Armenian lobby groups became very worried about its repeal." When a new vote was imminent, Goltz notes,

American Armenians in places like Mississippi and North Carolina [initiated] a Spam-mail campaign to their congressmen, and threatened 'fence-sitting lawmakers in other states where the jobs in the defense industries are
foremost in the minds of constituents with a lack of legislative cooperation for further funding if said congressman did not fall in line with the Armenian Caucus on 907.

These actions and threats are accomplished by groups of Armenian organizations throughout the U.S. These groups include the (ANC) Armenian National Committee of America, (AAA) Armenian Assembly of America, and the (AADLC) Armenian Democratic Leadership Council. All of these groups are influential in both their diaspora communities and the legislative process.

The ANC website boasts of having 105 Congressional Representatives as members of the (AIC) Armenian Issues Caucus. A review of those representatives listed reveals legislators from 20 different states, both Republican and Democrat. However, a quick look at four of those states provides a sampling of party affiliation support slanted towards the Democratic Party. California congressional participation includes 18 Democrats and eight Republicans; New Jersey has six Democrats and four Republicans; New York has 12 Democrats and three Republicans; and Ohio includes three Democrats and one Republican. This is not an attempt to affiliate AIC membership with any particular political party affiliation, but notes that the Armenian diaspora has greater influence within the Democratic Party. The AADLC provides the following release on the purposes of the AIC in Congress:

Founded in 1995, the Caucus is comprised of members of the House of Representatives who work to strengthen the U.S.-Armenia relationship, support Armenia’s effort for self-sufficiency, strengthen the U.S.-Karabagh relationship, commemorate the Armenian Genocide and elevate Armenia-American issues to a higher profile on Capitol Hill.

In addition to the strong-arm tactics mentioned by Goltz, softer more mainstream approaches are also employed by these organizations. The ANC website provides position papers, media guides, ANC chapter contacts, methods
to donate and much more. Additionally, should a legislator not find favor with the ANC and the other groups through their actions in Congress (voting against legislation favored by the Armenian diaspora), “action alerts,” a call to arms as it were, and press releases are expeditiously posted on their websites chastising these errant legislators, and Armenian constituents are encouraged to contact their representative in Congress.

The three websites not only post information on the issues and legislative results but also provide instructions on how to contact representatives. Readers are informed on how their representative should have responded (voted) on preferred legislation. The two primary areas of concern are the Turkish genocide of Armenians and Section 907. However, the Armenian diaspora’s most influential and powerful tool is the pocketbook.

Congressional Representatives: For the scope of this thesis, it would not have been feasible to develop an extensive financial profile for each of the 105 Congressional members listed in the AIC. However, in November 2000, there was one Congressional race in the Twenty-Seventh Congressional District of California that caught the attention of Drew Lizner and David Menfee-Libey. That Congressional race pitted the Democratic challenger, Adam Schiff, against the Republican incumbent, James Rogan.

Several factors are important about this Congressional race. First, as Linzer and Menfee-Libey point out, “The election contest in California’s Twenty-Seventh Congressional District between Democratic state senator Adam Schiff and incumbent Jim Rogan was the most expensive U.S. House race ever.” Second, the demographic shift in the district contributed to Schiff’s success. Linzer and
Menfee-Libey’s research indicated, “young couples had moved into South Pasadena; Iranian, Korean, and Filipino immigrants had settled throughout the district, and [more significantly] Glendale had become home to the largest Armenian community in the nation.” Last, the Democratic Party targeted Republicans considered to be vulnerable in their congressional districts.

The first two points have the most bearing on this thesis. The financial aspects of the race, as reported by Linzer and Menfee-Libey and corroborated by the FEC website, listed Rogan’s receipts as $6,871,077 and Shiff’s as $4,660,714 for a total of $11,531,791. Linzer and Menfee-Libey also cite additional FEC figures that not only include the candidates “$11 million, [but also point out that] political parties spent approximately $5.5 million and outside organizations spent over $2 million, bringing the total price tag to over $18.5 million” for California’s 27th Congressional District seat.

A search through the FEC’s website for supporters of Adam Schiff identified 3,533 individual contributors by name. Each of the 3,533 names was cross-referenced against a listing of Armenian surnames. Of those names, 74 individual contributors were identified by surname. Their combined contributions totaled $43,900.

Additionally, a further cross-referencing of the FEC records of Armenian surnames was run against the 45 individual contributors listed as donating to the ANC PAC in Glendale and the 3,533 individuals listed as individual contributors to the Schiff campaign. Anomalies noted were of four contributors who were the same on both lists, and one of those individuals gave two donations.

The next step was to determine whether or what the Armenian diaspora constituents of the 27th district gained from their $43,900 investment in the
electoral process. Has the Armenian diaspora support of Congressman Adam Schiff actually paid dividends? According to FEC data, other legislators that are listed in the AIC did not receive substantial funds, and in one case, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi (Democratic Whip, Appropriations Committee, and House Armed Services Committee), from the California 8th Congressional District, received contributions from only seven individuals of 918 individual contributors that could be identified as Armenian by their surname.

So what then did the $43,900 in individual contributions purchase for the Armenian diaspora? For starters, Congressman Schiff was elected. Second, he is on the House International Relations Committee. In August of 2001, Congressman Schiff led a U.S. Congressional delegation to Armenia. While in Armenia, the delegation made a trip to the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. Again, it should be noted that this area is not a recognized state and it is in an occupied territory of a state that the United States formally recognizes and with whom the U.S. maintains diplomatic relations.

Prior to departing Armenia for a side trip to the Nagorno-Karabakh region, the Yerevan Arminfo in Russian quoted Congressman Schiff as saying, “the NKR’s people had the right to decide their destiny themselves.” In another interview on the same visit, Congressman Schiff was extremely critical of the Armenian-Turkish reconciliation commission and its work to resolve problems relating primarily to Armenia’s charges that Turkey committed acts of genocide against Armenians in the early 1900s.

Other California legislators, such as Congressman Sherman (House International Relations Committee), from the 24th Congressional District, received funds from both the ANC PAC and ARMENPAC and from 10 individuals identified
with Armenian surnames from a list of 253 individual contributors. In California's 39th Congressional District, Congressman Royce received no PAC money and only received contributions from 14 contributors with Armenian surnames from a total of 592 individual contributors. Clearly, in many Congressional races, contributions obtained from individuals of Armenian background may not be the driving force behind individual Congressional membership in the AIC.

Armenian organization's tactics and pressure, as well as threats, may play a more important role in membership for many of our Congressional leaders in the AIC. Others may truly believe the myths and legends put forward by the Armenian diaspora. The real story during Congressman Schiff's election and his actions since then revolves around his choice to support a diaspora constituency to the detriment of the rest of his supporters, the population of California, and United States policy. A search of all organizational contributions indicated that hundreds of non-Armenian organizations and PACs contributed to his campaign, as did thousands of non-Armenian individual contributors. In fairness to all constituents, as pointed out on page 40, California is a state that uses energy second only to Texas. Last year, numerous California cities suffered brownouts and blackouts on a number of occasions. Congressman Schiff's actions would seem to run contrary to the energy needs of his district and California through his support of pro-Armenian legislation.

Congressman Schiff's priorities not only to his district but also to California and the country as a whole should be viewed with skepticism in regards to what drives the legislative making process and is detrimental to U.S. policy in the Caucasus and beyond.
In the end, it is not just the methods used by the numerous PACs to capitalize on political windows of opportunity, for that is historically embedded in our political culture; however, for a minority diaspora to hold sway at the risk of national interests is to be strongly questioned. It is a given that we elect our Congressional representatives to voice constituent’s concerns and causes in our nation’s capitol; else they may not be reelected. However, in these changing times, it is imperative that our legislators conduct the business of government in a more insightful and informed manner without preconceived ideas. They need to legislate for all of America, doing no harm and giving forethought to their actions.

The potential exists or may in the not too distant future for our representatives to appease minority constituency and lose sight of the greater need to do what is right for the whole of America. As Blank observed based on the population numbers of the 2000 census, America continues to grow and diversify. And Cohen (2001, ix) introduces his work noting “In 1831, when the United States of America was barely born—a child, crawling, stumbling, just beginning to discover itself . . . [but] Today, the United States of America has grown to more than double its physical size and has matured into the richest and most powerful member in the family of nations.” And our representatives do not only represent their constituents, but they represent the entire nation, how will we, in the future, remain an international leader, influence others to adopt our political and economic ideology, and attain greater maturity and national depth if our legislators do not make more informed decisions?
Conclusion

In researching the material for this thesis, I have, over the years, amassed a relatively large volume of background information. I may have enough historical news articles to produce another document on Russian and Caucasian media trends as they relate to United States' political initiatives in the region and regional manipulation of the United States' policy and Russia's Caspian Sea foreign and security policy. Also, the availability of data from the web is astounding but used cautiously. In addition, somewhat by accident I received a copy of Barbara W. Tuchman’s, *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam*. By this time, I was well aware of the organizational capabilities, technological astuteness, political savvy, perception management, and sheer doggedness of the Armenian diaspora and its influence on the AIC. Although Armenia, its American diaspora, Russia, and a host of other international state and non-state actors all play an integral part on the stage of the region's international relations, the crux of the problem lies with the elected officials in the United States Congress and what Tuchman (1984, 7) would describe as “wooden headedness.”

The question is not just one of fault, but why and how this situation could happen in the first place. Did Section 907 have to be made public law? Why was Congress not able to see the situation for what it was and is? And how detrimental has Section 907 been to the United States’ ability to achieve its stated policy goals as outlined in the 1992 Freedom Support Act? Is Tuchman right?

Tuchman (1984, 4) has researched and identified “A phenomenon noticeable throughout history regardless of place or period is the pursuit by
governments of policies contrary to their own interests.” This phenomenon, I believe, is what has taken place with the debilitating limitations placed on United States’ policy in Section 907. Section 907 is in the interest of the Armenian diaspora, Armenia, and legislators’ self-interests in their positions, not the majority of Americans or the country as a whole. This type of restrictive legislation is more self-serving than is most “pork barrel” legislation.

Tuchman (1984, 5) describes four types of “misgovernment,” and the fourth form, “folly or perversity,” is what Congress, through the passage of Section 907, has demonstrated. The facts that Section 907 is not in America’s best interest, that other choices were available, and that the legislative body of government created it, dovetail with Tuchman’s description.

To qualify as a folly for this inquiry, the policy adopted must meet three criteria: it must have been perceived as counter-productive in its own time, not merely by hindsight. This is important, because all policy is determined by the mores of its age. ‘Nothing is more unfair,’ as an English historian has well said, ‘than to judge men of the past by ideas of the present.’ Secondly a feasible alternative course of action must have been available. To remove the problem from personality, a third criterion must be that the policy in question should be that of a group, not just an individual ruler, should persist beyond any one political lifetime.

Although the criterion may be subject to interpretation in this comparison, had there not been an intervening event on September 11th, this folly may have been perpetrated in perpetuity on the American public and our government. Additionally, Section 907 outlived the terms of two United States President’s and defied their efforts to reverse it. However, the question remains: why is this folly more damaging since “folly or perversity is inherent in individuals, should we expect anything else of government? The reason for concern is that folly in government has more impact on more people than individual follies, and
therefore governments have a greater duty to act according to reason" (Tuchman 1984, 6). And to reiterate Madison's statement in Federalist number 57, "the common good of the society," which I interpret to mean the good of all (the nation) not just a constituency, is more critical to the well being of the country.

To add further clarification into my learning adventure in fault-finding as well as my growing disenchantment towards not just the Armenian diaspora altitudes, other diasporas (that cling excessively to home religions and cultural identity), and the U.S. Congress, I discovered my Rosetta Stones from two sources. First was Barbara Tuchman and the second was President Theodore Roosevelt. Tuchman helped to shed some light on my developing views of congressional decision-making and bring about a new realization of the decision calculus problem. And President Roosevelt's speech on Americanism brought about a repeat of similar concerns from an historical perspective with different actors. This is not to say that I believe that the United States should not continue to accept new immigrants; rather, this acceptance should be with restrictions. The length of waiting time to become a citizen should be extended; the language requirement for English should be enforced, classes on citizenship and American history should be have greater depth; and the essence of the Constitution needs to be understood by immigrants upon gaining citizenship and pledging loyalty to the United States. I firmly believe that the most important document in the United States is the Constitution not some religious philosophy. For without that document all others would be meaningless. No belief, be it religious or otherwise, would be safe from tyranny nor would the multitude of ethnic differences contribute to the strength of this nation.
As Smith (2000, 14) points out, “Armenian groups often stress their diasporic character, and since the establishment of an Armenian state in 1991, some of their publications have repeatedly referred to the United States as a 'host country' and to Armenia as the ‘homeland’ or the ‘Mother Country.’” The sad and disheartening element of Smith’s revelations is the term “repeatedly.” He quotes articles from “the Armenian International Magazine,” and specifically from an article published in July 1998 in which the author says, “[w]e in the Armenian Diaspora have a unique opportunity to exercise our dual allegiance to our host country and to Armenia. We should take advantage of our rights as citizens of the host country [the United States] to gain its support of Armenia.”

In light of September 11th, which forced Congress to change U.S. policy in the Caspian and Caucasus regions, in essence rescinding Section 907, regarding Azerbaijan, in spite of future Armenian lobbyist efforts for a one-sided policy, the U.S. may actually make inroads into the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

“Since the Federalist Papers more than two centuries ago, Americans have pondered the ethical and the practical problem in democratic life of particular special interests securing policies of benefit to themselves that may have adverse consequences for the general citizenry. The Founding Fathers may have feared the ‘tyranny of the majority’ and so provided special protections for minority rights, but in the event, the ‘tyranny of the minority’ became a possibility as a wide variety of the civic interests found ways to gain access to power in Washington” (Smith 2000, 4-5).

The United States’ immigration and naturalization practices demand attention, as does a reevaluation of the qualifications to become an American.
Our governmental institutions and laws should not only encourage a melding of cultures but at the same time not lose sight of the greater needs of all Americans. Additionally, diasporas' internecine practices should be viewed with extreme caution permitting loyalty to only one state unencumbered by conflicting or overriding allegiances.

Recently, the president and Congress have legislated and signed into law a school voucher system to support expanded religious based education in competition with public schools. This may be a well-intentioned political act based on the president’s and Republican members of Congress religious beliefs. However, I believe it also holds the potential to further divide and erode the American multicultural cohesiveness that may already be strained at the edges. In the future, it may be possible to see an America not only divided ethnically, but also fractured along religious lines. Our public schools bring together children from various backgrounds and are the institutions in which we first learn about citizenship, other cultures, and religions. It is here, in that mixing bowl of education, that we first mix with others that are different from ourselves. If the government itself provides for separate (but equal) education, does it potentially establish an elite classes of students that may develop a narrow understanding of their fellow Americans and prolong divisiveness of new immigrants and foster intolerances of other Americans for being cloistered in religious schools during their formative years? This country is not a host country for any diaspora. As America continues to diversify, events and activities that heighten differences and provide a forum to foment discontent should be discontinued. For example, any ethnic group should receive only one week devoted to it as opposed to a month as in some cases. Even then, there will still not be enough weeks in the year to
provide each group its own week. However, events such as those that draw all races together (a taste of Omaha, Chicago, Minneapolis, and other unifying activities or multicultural events provide a venue for agglomeration of people, a better understanding of similarities, and not an amplification of our differences.

The United States cannot afford to have its ability to conduct foreign policy or the defense of the nation and the security of its citizens to be held hostage by undue influence on our Representatives and Senators based on a diaspora constituency’s pettiness, political strong-arm tactics, misrepresentation of issues. Our Representatives, through the Congressional Research Office analytical staff have the ability to obtain unbiased information on international issues. Also, they have the ability to call Defense Department intelligence analysts or Central Intelligence Agency analysts before various committees to ascertain the correctness of information on international issues. This would not necessarily preclude Representatives from following their convictions and support constituents, but they would be better informed on issues as the Armenian and Azerbaijan conflict.

In light of recent events, Congressional practices, Executive Branch indulgences, and my research into diaspora itinerant loyalty, I believe that there is no more a fitting conclusion and final thought to this paper than Theodore Roosevelt’s 1915 speech advocating and defining what is Americanism. It has been copied in its entirety from the Internet at Appendix A. I believe that it was Mark Twain that said, “History doesn’t repeat itself, but it does rhyme.” The questions are; will we in the United States, at some future time, be home to ethnoreligious squabbles that resemble those of the Caucasus, Middle East, or Africa? What would a multiparty Congress that is divided along ethnoreligious
lines be like and would it function? How much influence should anyone group hold in Congress?
Presidential Determination on Azerbaijan
January 25, 2002
Presidential Determination
No. 2002-06

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: Waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act with Respect to Assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan

Pursuant to the authority contained in Title II of the ”Kenneth M. Ludden Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2002” (Public Law 107-115), I hereby determine and certify that a waiver of section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-511):

- is necessary to support U.S. efforts to counter international terrorism;
- is necessary to support the operational readiness of U.S. Armed Forces or coalition partners to counter international terrorism;
- is important to Azerbaijan’s border security; and
- will not undermine or hamper ongoing efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement between Armenia and Azerbaijan or be used for offensive purposes against Armenia.

Accordingly, I hereby waive section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act.

You are authorized and directed to notify the Congress of this determination and to arrange for its publication in the Federal Register.

GEORGE W. BUSH
Appendix A

Theodore Roosevelt Advocates Americanism, 1915

There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism. When I refer to hyphenated Americans, I do not refer to naturalized Americans. Some of the very best Americans I have ever known were naturalized Americans, Americans born abroad. But a hyphenated American is not an American at all. This is just as true of the man who puts "native" before the hyphen as of the man who puts German or Irish or English or French before the hyphen. Americanism is a matter of the spirit and of the soul. Our allegiance must be purely to the United States. We must unsparingly condemn any man who holds any other allegiance. But if he is heartily and singly loyal to this Republic, then no matter where he was born, he is just as good an American as any one else.

The absolute certain way of bringing this nation to ruin, of preventing all possibility of its continuing to be a nation at all, would be to permit it to become a tangle of squabbling nationalities, an intricate knot of German-Americans, Irish-Americans, English-Americans, French-Americans, Scandinavian-Americans, or Italian-Americans, each preserving its separate nationality, each at heart feeling more sympathy with Europeans of that nationality, than with the other citizens of the American Republic. The man who does not become American and nothing else are hyphenated Americans, and there ought to be no room for them in this country. The man who calls himself an American citizen and who yet shows by his actions that he is primarily the citizen of a foreign land, plays a thoroughly mischievous part in the life of our body politic. He has no place here, and the sooner he returns to the land to which he feels his real heart-allegiance, the better it will be for every good American. There is no such thing as a hyphenated American who is a good American. The only man who is a good American is the man who is an American and nothing else.

For an American citizen to vote as a German-American, an Irish-American, an English-American, is to be a traitor to American institutions; and these hyphenated Americans who terrorize American politicians by threats of the foreign vote are engaged in treason to the American Republic.

Americanization

The foreign-born population of this country must be an Americanized population - no other kind can fight the battles of America either in war or peace. It must talk the language of its native-born fellow-citizens, it must possess American citizenship and American ideals. It must stand firm by its oath of allegiance in word and deed and must show that in very fact it has renounced allegiance to every prince, potentate, or foreign government. It must be maintained on an American standard of living so as to prevent labor disturbances in important plants and at critical times. None of these objects can be secured as long as we have immigrant colonies, ghettos, and immigrant sections, and above all they cannot be assured so long as we consider the immigrant only as an industrial asset. The immigrant must not be allowed to drift or to be put at the mercy of the exploiter. Our object is to not to imitate one of the older racial types, but to maintain a new American type and then to secure loyalty to this type. We cannot secure such loyalty unless we make this a country where men shall feel that they have justice and also where they shall feel that they are required to perform the duties imposed upon them. The policy of "Let alone" which we have hitherto pursued is thoroughly vicious from two stand-points. By this policy we have permitted the immigrants, and too often the native-born laborers as well, to suffer injustice. Moreover, by this policy we have failed to impress upon the immigrant and upon the native-born as well that they are expected to do justice as well as to receive justice, that they are expected to be heartily and actively and single-mindedly loyal to the flag no less than to benefit by living under it.

We cannot afford to continue to use hundreds of thousands of immigrants merely as industrial assets while they remain social outcasts and menace any more than fifty years ago we could afford to keep the black man merely as an industrial asset and not as a human being. We cannot afford to build a big industrial plant and herd men and women about it without care for their welfare. We cannot afford to permit squalid overcrowding or the kind of living system which makes impossible the decencies and necessities of life. We cannot afford the low wage rates and the merely seasonal industries which mean the sacrifice of both individual and family life and morals to the industrial machinery. We cannot afford to leave American mines, munition plants, and general resources in the hands of alien workmen, alien to America and even likely to be made hostile to America by machinations such as have recently been provided in the case of the two foreign embassies in Washington. We cannot afford to run the risk of having in time of war men working on our railways or working in our munition plants who would in the name of duty to their own foreign countries bring destruction to us. Recent events have shown us that incitements to sabotage and strikes are in the view of at least two of the great foreign powers of Europe within their definition of neutral practices. What would be done to us in the name of war if these things are done to us in the name of neutrality?

One America

All of us, no matter from what land our parents came, no matter in what way we may severally worship our Creator, must stand shoulder to shoulder in a united America for the elimination of race and religious prejudice. We must stand for a
reign of equal justice to both big and small. We must insist on the maintenance of the American standard of living. We must stand for an adequate national control which shall secure a better training of our young men in time of peace, both for the work of peace and for the work of war. We must direct every national resource, material and spiritual, to the task not of shirking difficulties, but of training our people to overcome difficulties. Our aim must be, not to make life easy and soft, not to soften soul and body, but to fit us in virile fashion to do a great work for all mankind. This great work can only be done by a mighty democracy, with those qualities of soul, guided by those qualities of mind, which will both make it refuse to do injustice to any other nation, and also enable it to hold its own against aggression by any other nation. In our relations with the outside world, we must abhor wrongdoing, and disdain to commit it, and we must no less disdain the baseness of spirit which lamely submits to wrongdoing. Finally and most important of all, we must strive for the establishment within our own borders of that stern and lofty standard of personal and public neutrality which shall guarantee to each man his rights, and which shall insist in return upon the full performance by each man of his duties both to his neighbor and to the great nation whose flag must symbolize in the future as it has symbolized in the past the highest hopes of all mankind.

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*New Perspectives Quarterly, Vol 12 #3.*

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NOTES:

1 This article (Armenia Supports Terrorism: Under Cover of Genocide Allegation) is from the Internet and appeared to be of Turkish origin. However, the article appears to be valid and can be corroborated from other sources. The dates, places, number of terrorist incidents, the death of the Turkish Counsel in Los Angeles, and court information is accurate and difficult to manipulate. Additionally, no author or date was provided.

1 As listed by the Federation of East European Family History Societies website, Armenian surnames can be identified by their ending. Armenian surnames end almost exclusively with either an ian or a yan.

Executive Order 12957
Prohibiting certain transactions with respect to the development of Iranian petroleum resources

- Signed: March 15, 1995
- Federal Register page and date: 60 FR 14615; March 17, 1995
- Revoked in part and supplemented by: EO 12959, May 6, 1995
- Revoked in part by: EO 13059, August 19, 1997
- Continued by: Notice of March 8, 1996; Notice of March 5, 1997; Notice of March 4, 1998; Notice of March 10, 1999; Notice of March 13, 2000; Notice of March 13, 2001

Executive Order 12959
Prohibiting Certain Transactions With Respect to Iran

- Signed: May 6, 1995
- Federal Register page and date: 60 FR 24757; May 9, 1995
- Revokes in part and supplements: EO 12613, October 29, 1987; EO 12957, March 15, 1995
- Revoked in part by: EO 13059, August 19, 1997
• See: Notice of March 8, 1996; Notice of March 5, 1997; Notice of March 4, 1998; Notice of March 10, 1999; Notice of March 13, 2000; Notice of March 13, 2001