

tiny enclave cut off from outside, and in no way against Azerbaidzhan, which Turkey can re-arm as soon as the opportunity arises whereby it is in a position to attack Karabakh and Armenia.

Peace and the right to self-determination

That is why, against the well-advertised desire by international powers to isolate the republic of Karabakh from negotiations, and to accord its representatives the status of representative of the Armenian community, we must line up entirely behind the government of the republic of Karabakh.

Peace can only exist if the right of peoples to self-determination is respected. The lack of interest among the Azeri people in this war, despite all sorts of manipulations, shows

that they will easily accept the self-determination and independence of Karabakh. The fanatical Azeri leadership alone retains its interest in this conflict and clearly states its aim, which is the final solution: "We will give the Armenians the lesson they deserve," said Hassanov; and "we will not stop until we have kicked all the Armenians out of Karabakh," said the Azeri military chiefs, according to the March 10 issue of *Turkiye*.

The western powers must exert pressure on Turkey not to embark on an adventure that risks costing it greatly. Being firm with the Turkish government, they must support more lucid currents within Turkey. For, in the final analysis, that is who will lose: When a man has no means to fulfill his cravings, he loses what little he does have.

Staged massacre at Khodjalou

In its May 1 issue, the French newspaper Nouvelle Solidarité questioned the credibility of media claims that Armenians had committed a massacre against Azeris in Khodjalou, which have been used especially in France to justify the government's failure to defend Armenia:

- Khodjalou was the object of bitter battles for several weeks, and there were practically no civilians left (just read the press during this period), in any case infinitely less than the 1,400 civilians "savagely" massacred, according to Azeri accounts.

- When an army occupies a strategic position captured with difficulty, it above all tries to consolidate its control and does not go off in hot pursuit of women and children over kilometers in a mountainous, wooded region, where, behind every tree or rock, an enemy soldier might be hiding.

- The Armenians were in the process of also of winning the battle of Shousha, the last Azeri stronghold and a grave threat to the Armenians' safety. Perched on a mountain top, the town allowed the Karabakh capital of Stepanakert and its outskirts to be pounded into ruins by bombardments. With the sympathy of world public opinion, the Armenians had no interest whatever in tarnishing their image with such atrocities, never mind the fact that never in history have the Armenians acted that way.

Had Armenians committed such ignominious crimes, they would have had to hide the bodies, but not after the hysterical din that the world media outlets have conduct-

ed. However, four days later, these bodies were still there, in the mountains. The Azeris—who literally took an AFP reporter for an outing for only a few minutes—were the only ones who knew their location.

To these few reflections appealing to good sense, we add other indices to strengthen the thesis of a Turkish conspiracy: The pictures that horrified the world (in fact, it was the commentaries that accompanied the pictures, where only a few bloody bodies were seen) were instantaneously transmitted throughout the world beneath the Azeri agency's trademark. How were they able to get on the scene so fast, when the bodies were supposed to be found in a region controlled by the Armenian enemy?

Elsewhere there was a very important line, unnoticed in a March 6 article by the Turkish daily *Milliyet*, saying that information on the "massacres" had been transmitted for the first time direct from the Azeri town of Agdame by the Turkish reporter Elif Kaban, a Reuters correspondent who also covered the conflict for *Le Monde*. Another reporter, for the BBC, named Gotz, who is married to a Turkish woman, also played a ranking role, occasionally causing suspicion among foreign journalists.

Then Turkey threw its weight behind harassing the newspaper editors, activating all their networks among politicians, financiers, and friendly reporters to make the impact of this montage as great as possible. *Milliyet* published the text of a letter sent to the western heads of state at the U.N. in its European editions.

The aim is to destroy the struggle to survive and the freedom of the Armenians of Karabakh. The trip of French President François Mitterrand to Turkey shows how, last year, France was the first country to make investments in Turkey. This makes it all the more clear why the French government has been complicit mystifying the events at Khodjalou.