
THIS AMERICAN ROSE TO LEAD AN ENTIRE ARMY IN A FOREIGN WAR

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Note to reader: On 16 September 2019, we published an article on the ongoing problem of the veneration of terrorists in Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora.[\[1\]](#) One of the examples we used to illustrate the seriousness of this problem is the veneration of Monte Melkonyan, one of the leading members of the terrorist organization ASALA that murdered Turkish diplomats and their family members in the 1970s and 80s. Melkonyan also played a key role in the violence perpetrated against Azerbaijanis during the Nagorno-Karabakh war. Despite all of this, nationalist Armenian historiography has whitewashed the various misdeeds of Malkonyan and those like him. Furthermore, lobbying by various Armenian groups have sought make sure that Western audiences do not find out what kind of a shady, violent, and immoral man Melkonyan truly was. The following article by an American news outlet demonstrates the results of this whitewashing and propaganda:

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We Are the Might (9 September 2019)

Blake Stillwell

It's not everyday you hear about an American rising through the ranks of a foreign army, at least not in the last century. But it was surprisingly recently that one American did in an army in just that way. A U.S. citizen rolled over to Armenia during its Nagorno-Karabakh War with neighboring Azerbaijan. He entered the Armenian army having never fought with an actual army and rose through the ranks to command a force of 4,000 men.

California-born Monte Melkonian's training regimen looks like the resume of a radical terrorist or Communist. But while he held some leftist views, his experience came fighting only for the lives of Armenians □ and when the time came, Armenia itself. If you ask Armenians, who today live in a parliamentary republic, he's a hero.

In 1988, the breakaway Azerbaijani oblast (province) of Karabakh voted to join the vote to leave not just the crumbling Soviet Union, but also the new country of Azerbaijan. It declared the creation of a new state apart from the USSR while the autonomous oblast of Karabakh declared itself free of Azerbaijan, joining Armenia instead. After all, it did have a majority Armenian ethnic makeup. In 1992, things really hit the fan, and Armenia made decisive territorial gains. At the center of some of those gains was Monte Melkonian, an Armenian-American who had traveled to

Armenia at the end of the USSR's lifetime.

Armenians, after facing a genocide and forced exile from their homelands, are a proud and patriotic people, and Melkonian was no different. He believed that if Azerbaijan were allowed to force Nagorno-Karabakh back into Azerbaijan, then other parts of Armenia would be taken by the Azeri military forces. This was unacceptable to Melkonian, who joined the fighting in 1991. By early 1992, he was a regional commander and quickly began to turn the tides of the war in favor of Armenia.

The California native might have had little experience running an army, but he knew how to fight. As a youth, he helped overthrow the Shah of Iran while a student in Tehran. After witnessing Iranian troops firing on student protesters, he moved north where he learned to fight with the Kurdish Peshmerga, still one of the most effective fighting forces in the Middle East to this day. He then traveled to Beirut during the Lebanese Civil War to protect the Armenian Quarter of the Middle Eastern city from right-wing militants.

While in Beirut, he decided to work toward the independence of Armenia and after years of imprisonments and living underground in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, he found himself in Armenia's disputed territory, leading thousands of men. His training at the hands of the Peshmerga and Palestinians was paying off as he not only pushed the Azerbaijani forces out of Karabakh in less than a year, he captured the region between Nagorno-Karabakh and the Republic of Armenia, unifying the two on the map.

Just two months later, he was dead.

The Armenian hero was killed in a firefight after Azerbaijani troops got lost in the dark and stumbled into his camp. He was given full military honors at his funeral and is interred outside the Armenian capital of Yerevan, where he is still revered as a legend and brilliant military strategist. His ability against the enemy combined with his political views and personal charisma means Armenians and historians remember him as a sort of Armenian Che Guevara.

He is still revered in his adopted homeland, and the Armenian Military Academy, as well as a number of villages, streets, and schools were renamed in his honor. Armenia still controls the areas captured by his forces, even if the borders are still disputed.

<https://www.wearethemighty.com/history/american-lead-army-foreign-war>

[1] Mehmet Oğuzhan Tulun, Armenia And The Veneration Of Terrorists □ IIÇenter For Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Analysis No: 2019/21, September 16, 2019, <https://avim.org.tr/en/Analiz/ARMENIA-AND-THE-VENERATION-OF-TERRORISTS-II>