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ANOTHER SAMPLE FOR THE ERRONEOUS ONE-SIDED HISTORICAL MEMORY

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The Armenian President made an official visit to Lebanon last week. At his speech delivered at the dinner held in his honor by his counterpart, while referring to the historical ties between the two countries, he significantly mentioned Ohannes Kouyumdjian, the Ottoman Governor General of Lebanon between 1913-1916, the last Ottoman administrator there, who carried the title of pasha which the Ottoman government bestowed upon him. Considering that no significant Armenian population existed back then in Lebanon (the Armenians having to relocate had not yet arrived in Lebanon), he contented by indicating that Ohannes Pasha did his utmost to protect the Lebanese Christians from the misdeeds of the Young Turk administration.

Is it possible to ignore the following points which put forth the contradictions with the Armenian allegations while the Armenian President has tried to shape a historical event through his own interpretation: Discrimination against Armenian citizens was not made even during the final years of the Ottoman Empire, that there were no scruples in making an Armenian deputy foreign minister a governor by granting him the title of pasha. Meanwhile, the Foreign Minister himself at the time was again an Ottoman citizen of Armenian origin. The period in which Ohannes Pasha was appointed to Lebanon and served there was a period during which the First World War had started and the Armenian population in specific regions of the country was subjected to relocation.

It has been indicated in the press that the conflict in Syria was addressed during the talks the Armenian President held in Lebanon with a view to preventing any possible harm that the numerous Armenian population there could face. Likewise, the existence of a large Armenian population in Lebanon has frequently been mentioned during his visit. Since it is evidenced in historical records that no significant Armenian population lived in Lebanon and Syria while Ohannes Pasha served as governor and in view of the allegations of the Armenian nationalists that the Ottoman administration had carried out a policy of annihilation against the Armenian population, the numerous Armenian population in Lebanon and what is today Syria, as well as the numbers of the rest of the Armenian Diaspora inevitably evokes Nasreddin Hodjas well known dilemma of disappeared meat and weight of cat.

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