

*Mr. Berge Setrakian
191 Cedar Street
Englewood, NJ 07631
U.S.A.*

Dear Mr. Setrakian

Chernex the 30th October 2003

I have learned with dismay, that the AGBU is planning to sell the grounds and the buildings of the Melkonian School which was built and maintained with funds from the donation of my two great-uncles Krikor and Garabed. Needless to say that my cousins Mr. and Mrs. Fermanian as well as my brother Christoph and I will strongly object to any such action.

If the school does not serve anymore its purpose to help children of no parents, or parents with no means to give their talented off-springs a decent education, lets find another solution to make this school a jewel of education amongst Armenians. Eton which was founded in 1440 by King Henry VI and gave free education, not unlike the Melkonian school, could be used as a model. When Parliament annulled all its grants in 1461 it was saved from extinction by a miracle. To-day Eton College is one of the finest educational institutes in the world where about 1300 children in the same age group as in our school come from all over the world.

Rather than simply turning one of the most prestigious heritages into cash, and erasing the memory of two great Armenian patriots, lets find a better solution. If the school may need restructuring and eventually should stand on its own feet, I would fully support this. In Moscow for instance there are almost 1 million Armenians with children often not feeling safe, being mistaken for Chechens or other Caucasian Moslems. Parents are ready to pay for a good education which will allow them to join universities later in Russia or elsewhere. Cyprus has always been sympathetic to the Armenian cause and provided tranquility and peace to our boys and girls.

My feeling is that the AGBU is responsible for not having taken seriously into consideration the future of the school.

And finally I would also like to express my astonishment that the AGBU did not find it necessary to inform me in writing of its intentions; inviting my cousins, my brother and myself to those meetings where the fate of our donation has been discussed.

I look forward to receive, dear Mr. Setrakian, your comments and assurance not to support such an irresponsible action.

With kind regards.

Jack R. Melkonian.