

The atmosphere grew even more tense when the daily *Vatan Yolenda* [meaning “On the road to the homeland” in Turkish] started publishing in Tabriz. The paper belonged to the secret police of Soviet Azerbaijan now stationed in the city. It was forcibly sold in the streets and in the schools. Almost every article called for the separation of Iranian Azerbaijan and its unification with Soviet Azerbaijan. The paper anathematized the Dashnaktsutiun, the Musavatists and the Fascists. It called them all German agents and threatened to destroy them. These provocations encouraged the mobsters in their anti-Armenian activities and fired them up to mount audacious attacks on the Armenian quarters. Of course, they were driven away each time by the armed young ARF watchmen guarding the streets.

It became necessary to meet the people in charge of *Vatan Yolenda* and explain our pro-Soviet and pro-Allied position. Obviously, I was the one to go meet them. The editorial office was located in a big building the Red Army had appropriated for its use on Pahlavi Avenue in the city center. A large part of the sidewalk in front of the building was blocked off with chains and two soldiers with machineguns were posted on either side. The guards checked me at the door and let me enter.

In the editor’s office, I was met by an Azeri Turk from Baku, a short, heavy man with a dark complexion. He was pompous and arrogant, one of those types who think they own the world, with all mankind at their beck and call. Since I wasn’t very fluent in Turkish, I asked for an interpreter. An Armenian officer joined us, a