**World War I and the Armenian Genocide**

With onslaught of World War I, the Ottoman Empire and Russian Empire engaged during the Caucasus and Persian Campaigns, the new government began to look on the Armenians with distrust and suspicion. This was due to the fact that the Russian army contained a contingent of Armenian volunteers. On April 24, 1915, Armenian intellectuals were arrested by Ottoman authorities and, with the Tehcir Law (29 May 1915), eventually a large proportion of Armenians living in Anatolia perished in what has become known as the Armenian Genocide. There was local Armenian resistance in the region, developed against the activities of the Ottoman Empire. The events of 1915 to 1917 are regarded by Armenians and the vast majority of Western historians to have been state-sponsored mass killings, or genocide. However as Turkey is an ally of the west and holds a strategic position near to the Middle East, both the United States and United Kingdom governments continue to maintain that there is a lack of unequivocal evidence to categorise the events as genocide. Turkish authorities maintain that the deaths were the result of a civil war coupled with disease and famine, with casualties incurred by both sides. Most estimates for the number of Armenians killed range from 650,000 to 1.5 million. Armenia and the Armenian diaspora have been campaigning for official recognition of the events as genocide for over 30 years. These events are traditionally commemorated yearly on April 24, the Armenian Martyr Day, or the Day of the Armenian Genocide.

Although the Russian army succeeded in gaining most of Ottoman Armenia during World War I, their gains were lost with the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. At the time, Russian-controlled Eastern Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan attempted to bond together in the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic. This federation, however, only lasted from February to May 1918, when all three parties decided to dissolve it. As a result, Eastern Armenia became independent as the Democratic Republic of Armenia (DRA) on May 28.