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The role of the Minister of Justice
in the Armenocide

As Minister of Internal Affairs, Talât Bey appointed Ibrahim Pirizadé Bey, Vali of Salonika, and later called him to Constantinople to assume the position of Minister of Justice. He was finally chosen to serve as Senator.

Ibrahim Bey went to Talât's home every morning, in the Aya Sofia sector, to receive instructions, especially those concerning the Teshkilat-ı Mahsusa. He never missed any of the meeting at Nur-el-Osmanié, Central Headquarters for the Young Turks of the Union and Progress Party, at Constantinople.. Ibrahim Bey approved all decisions agreed upon at those meetings. As Minister of Justice he signed, respectively, all the orders and instructions concerning the deportation and massacre of the Armenians and the confiscation of their property.

He signed orders to release convicted criminals from Turkish prisons to massacre caravans of deported Armenians. He sent orders to all the provinces and essentially to the Attorneys-General, not to pursue the perpetrators of the massacre, except those who would not relinquish a previously determined share of the spoils to the Turkish Government and to the Union and Progress Party.

Ibrahim Bey personally organized the criminals into chete bands and sent them to areas to which the caravans were being routed, and which were previously designated as most auspicious sites for the actual massacre of these unfortunate people. Most of the chetes were conscripted in a special office set up "ad hoc" in the Palace of the

^{Department}
(Minister) of Justice, adjacent to the Office of the Imperial Ottoman Attorney-General, at the latter's request.

The most bloodthirsty and unscrupulous criminals were released from prisons, by order of the Minister of Justice. The Attorney-General of the Court of Appeals and another high-r^ganking officer designated by the War Office made the actual selections. The latter selected only the most highly qualified criminals, based on their past criminal records. Prior to induction into this special corps, the murderers were thoroughly examined by specially appointed physicians.

Ibrahim Bey and his colleagues at the ^{Department} Ministry of Justice, the Imperial Attorney-General, the previously mentioned high-ranking officer chosen by the War Office, Halil Pasha, (uncle of Enver Pasha), Military Commander of the Capital, Dr. Behaeddin Shakir Bey, Dr. Nazım Bey, Atif Bey and A'ziz Bey, Director General, Public Security, combined their energies for weeks and months to develop the Special Organization (TEŞKILÂT-I MAHSUSA), starting July 1914.

The Minister of Justice presided over daily meetings with the Judges of the Penal Code, the Attorneys-General, Penal Officers from the Courts and the Attorney-General of the Court of Appeals. All these meetings were held at the office of the Attorney-General, Palace of the ^{Department} Minister of Justice.

Daily, Talât Bey, informed the Minister of Justice the position of the caravans; the number of the Armenians who had been massacred and how many remained yet to be subjected to deportation and massacre. He personally issued orders and instructions both in the capital city and in the pro-

vinces for the release of criminals, and also that all Armenian Officials: Judges, Attorneys-General and Secretaries be relieved from their positions of responsibility. The Minister of Justice sent them in groups of ten, twenty and more to be massacred along the highways by the "ad hoc" Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa chete bands.

10- Turkish newspaper "Sabah"s "Open Letter to the Former Minister of Justice", in "Jamanag", November 22, 1918.