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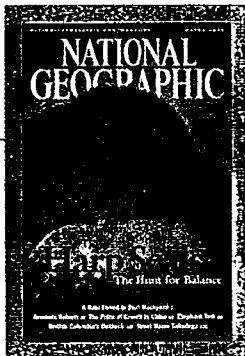
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Forum



March 2004

"Armenia Reborn" inspired more than 1,600 letters—the most mail elicited by any one story in the past five years. Mail streamed in from Turks around the world (many of whom participated in letter-writing campaigns) protesting as biased our reporting on the 1915 Armenian genocide by Ottoman forces and relations between Turkey and Armenia. Hundreds of Armenians responded with praise for the story.

Armenia Reborn

I felt deeply disturbed and saddened by the uniformly prejudiced and slanted presentation of facts and events. Significant scholarship on this sad chapter of history fails to corroborate the Armenian allegations against the Turks. There are two entirely different narratives about these tragic events of long ago. It is only through direct dialogue that the Turks and the Armenians will be able to address these issues and renew their centuries-old friendship.

There is no excuse for insulting the memory of Turkish diplomats murdered by terrorists. Callously referring to their murders "... allegedly by Armenian terrorists," when in the United States alone several were found guilty and are serving prison terms, is reprehensible and legally irresponsible.

"Armenia Reborn" also does injustice to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Armenia's responsibility in this respect is fully established in the various resolutions of the UN Security Council and other international bodies. NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC should have insisted on a higher level of objectivity before printing "Armenia Reborn" and owes it to its readers to set the record straight on Turkey.

O. FARUK LOĞOĞLU
*Ambassador to the United States
Embassy of Turkey
Washington, D.C.*

While the majority of the assassinations of Turkish diplomats remain unsolved, Armenian terrorists have been convicted in some of these crimes. Therefore, our use of the word "allegedly" to apply to all cases was incorrect.

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The article captured the essence of the Armenian identity historically and the values that animate our people today. As for the cataclysmic event in our past—the Armenian genocide under cover of World War I—NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC has not only told the truth, but is also in good company. One hundred and

is devastating to our people's current and future well-being. I went back to China in 2001 with my family, and I was so delighted to see the great changes everywhere. People's lives have improved significantly since I left in 1992. Yet I was dismayed to see the hazy sky in Beijing, piles and piles of trash in the outskirts of the city, and open sewage running everywhere. It's important that we face the problem and find a long-term solution. There is nothing wrong with working hard for a better life for ourselves and for our children, but a better quality of life depends on a clean environment.

GINGER FISHER
Cook, Nebraska

FROM OUR ONLINE FORUM
nationalgeographic.com/magazine/0403

When I read your piece, I was ashamed to be part of the Chinese population. If only the government would give up the idea of westernization just for a bit and work on improving the health and well-being of its citizens, China would gain so much more respect from the world. Because of China's hunger for Western lifestyles and greed for being the best, the cost will be a huge burden on many generations to come.

Y. LONG
Burlington, Ontario

To North American readers who have little knowledge of the history of China and its transformation in the past decades, the article must seem like just another confirmation of their view that China is a miserable place that exploits the poor to produce cheap goods for the United States. Nothing can be further from the truth. I have traveled in China as an international business consultant

and a tourist. It is making huge strides in alternative energy. China's problems are inherited from a colonial and feudal past. Historians agree that China in the 16th century was among the most prosperous and advanced countries in the world, but three centuries of foreign invasion and domination destroyed Chinese

I find it difficult to be sympathetic to the fishermen's desire "to maintain a way of life they cherish," when that lifestyle involves clubbing young seals to sell their pelts to an industry that caters to the whims of fashion.

development. The British opium trade with China also contributed. Without such background, your article is misleading.

KENNETH ABEYWICKRAMA
Silver Spring, Maryland

Geographica

I have been monitoring the rhino horn trade between Africa and Yemen since 1978. I read with great dismay in *Geographica* that the cost in Yemen for a kilo of black rhino horn is \$60,000. The correct price is \$1,200. By your stating this very high price for rhino horn, poachers and traders will have a greater economic incentive to kill rhinos and send their horns to Yemen. The South African

press has published high prices for rhino horn, which some conservationists believe has encouraged poaching of rhinos.

ESMOND BRADLEY MARTIN
Nairobi, Kenya

Black market prices vary widely throughout Asia. Upon further investigation, however, the \$60,000 figure appears high for Yemen.

You state that hunters "cash in on the market for bear gallbladders" and refer to a hunter making "an illegal kill in a national park." Hunters did not commit these crimes. Poachers did. Hunters abide by rules set by local authority. Poachers follow no regulations. Hunters generate millions of dollars for conservation. Poachers only take.

MARK COOPER
Independence, Missouri

The text says shell casings are shown in the foreground of the photograph of the confiscated polar bear. The picture shows bullets and complete cartridges, but no shell casings.

TED WARNICA
Grand Junction, Colorado

Thinking I was clever, I was about to point out that Bermuda, one of the few countries in the world where motorists travel on the left side of the road, was not highlighted on your map. However, on closer inspection, I discovered that your map does in fact portray Bermuda—the tiniest of dots that can only really be spotted using a magnifying glass.

DAVID ALLENDER
Emerald Beach, New South Wales

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