



CONCORDIA ST. PAUL'S OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1966

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Letter from the Editor

BY ANNA FRITZE

UP UNTIL RECENTLY, I often had to remind myself that it's okay that people have different opinions and views than I do. Notions such as, "Not everyone has to like The Office, Anna, it's not personal," or "You do not need a handwritten list of reasons why that person they just don't like that kind of music" often run through my mind. However, it's no secret that recent events have brought up some issues that leave less room for opposing opinions, because in this case, the "wrong" opinion has real potential to cost lives.

In this issue of *The Sword*, both sides of the argument of who could be elected as our next president are stated. The editorial staff of *The Sword* voted on who to endorse in our last meeting. My personal stance is made pretty obvious, but even so, this issue brought me to write a letter from the editor so I could say to the readers of *The Sword* what you have been hearing everywhere: please, please vote, no matter what side you're on. People have died so you could have the right to vote. For a long time, not everyone was allowed to vote. This will be the first presidential election I will vote in. Even though it's my first, I will not be surprised if, on my deathbed (hopefully at a relatively old age), I look back and realize that the 2020 election was the most important election I ever voted in.

I am very fortunate to have the team I do this year. It's no surprise that I was worried about the number of writers I would have due to both the pandemic and the large number of seniors who graduated last year. Every single editor on the team is new this year, and I am very proud of what we have all accomplished so far.

On that note, I will always welcome constructive criticism and new ideas from and for the newspaper. Email me; stop me in the hallway; send a messenger pigeon—whatever works best for you. Despite the fact that the pandemic exists, I want each issue of *The Sword* to be an improvement of the last. Just as this semester has been off to a rough start, so was our first publication of *The Sword*. Even though this is true. I am very thankful to have had the opportunity to learn from that experience, and I believe I have. We will continue to grow from our past and from our suggestions from you, our readers. :)

Violence Escalating Between Armenia and Azerbaijan

BY OWEN LIEBERT

RECENTLY A SERIES OF deadly clashes took place within the Nagorno Karabakh region located between the countries of Armenia and Azerbaijan. The events led to Armenia declaring martial law and mobilizing its military. Finally, Azerbaijan's parliament declared a state of war against Armenia. The conflict resulted in the most casualties experienced since 1988.

As of September 27th, 600 people in the Nagorno Karabakh region have been killed due to the state of war. Many have been displaced from their homes. The administration of Nagorno Karabakh has reported that over 50 percent of the population has been affected. As the violence escalated, there have been reports of an Azerbaijani missile impacting the roof of a cultural center in the town of Shushi that was sheltering Armenian security forces. The town that was hit is a mainstage of the conflict, and it holds deep religious and ethnic significance to both groups involved in the conflict.

The prime ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan have had discussions of entering another ceasefire. The plans they discussed were intended to begin on October 10th, but Azerbaijan had already violated them by continuing to attack Armenian cities. Now foreign officials in Iran, Russia, and the European Union have been pushing the two countries to resume peace and follow the agreements that have been established.

Turkey and Iran have both taken a prominent stance in the conflict as well. Turkey has provided support to, and completely backs, Azerbaijan, while Iran does the same for Armenia. The United States and Russia have also been involved in the war. They have maintained a primarily neutral stance until President Trump recently provided an additional 100 million dollars of security aid to Azerbaijan.

Other countries in the Middle East have begun deploying combatants to support different sides of the conflict. While Turkey has deployed hundreds of Syrian opposition fighters, Lebanon has provided soldiers and aid to Armenia.

Those affected by this conflict have received support from all over the world. Tens of thousands of Turkish protesters have gathered in solidarity with Armenia. Meanwhile, a prominent Armenian community located in Boston has organized to raise awareness of the conflict across America, and Armenian business communities have also united to raise money to support their home country.

Since 1994, the two countries have been in conflict. The fighting began after the Armenians in the Nagorno Karabakh region, which was controlled by Azerbaijan, expressed a desire to return to Armenia. The Armenian President, Armen Sarkissian, is desperate to prevent more violence. He has been reported stating, "God help us all if the conflict escalates".