

S. 1150, a bill authorizing agricultural research, a matter within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture, should not be construed to diminish or otherwise affect the jurisdiction of the Committee on Resources over subject matter contained in the National Aquaculture Act.

I look forward to working with you and the Committee on Resources, of which I am a member, on aquaculture and other issues of shared jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

ROBERT F. (BOB) SMITH,
Chairman.

ROBERT SMITH,
LARRY COMBEST,
BILL BARRETT,
CHARLES W. STENHOLM,
CALVIN DOOLEY,

Managers on the Part of the House.

RICHARD G. LUGAR,
THAD COCHRAN,
PAUL D. COVERDELL,
TOM HARKIN,
PATRICK LEAHY,

Managers on the Part of the Senate.

□ 1800

APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL CONFEREES ON H.R. 2400, BUILDING EFFICIENT SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND EQUITY ACT OF 1998

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Without objection, the Chair appoints the following additional conferees on H.R. 2400:

As additional conferees from the Committee on Commerce, for consideration of provisions in the House bill and Senate amendment relating to the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program; and sections 124, 125, 303, and 502 of the House bill; and sections 1407, 1601, 1602, 2103, 3106, 3301-3302, 4101-4104, and 5004 of the Senate amendment and modifications committed to conference:

Messrs. BLILEY, BILIRAKIS, and DINGELL.

Provided that Mr. TAUZIN is appointed in lieu of Mr. BILIRAKIS for consideration of sections 1407, 2103, and 3106 of the Senate amendment.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will appoint further additional conferees from other committees at a subsequent time.

The Clerk will notify the Senate of the change in conferees.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

TRIBUTE TO VICTIMS OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as my colleagues and I do every

time at this time of year, I should say, in what has become one of the proudest traditions in this House and that is to remember and pay tribute to the victims of one of history's worst crimes against humanity, the Armenian genocide of 1915 through 1923.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I know there are a number of Members who would like to participate in the special orders tonight on this subject, and I would ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the topic of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the Armenian genocide, we are describing one of the most horrible events of the 20th century and in all of human history. Yet many, perhaps most, Americans and most people around the world are barely aware of this extremely significant historical event. There are those who even try to deny that the genocide ever happened. But it did happen.

The Armenian genocide was the systematic extermination of 1½ million Armenian men, women, and children during the final years of the Ottoman-Turkish empire. This was the first genocide of the 20th century, a precursor to the Nazi Holocaust and other cases of ethnic cleansing and mass exterminations which are still all too common around the world.

Friday, April 24, marks the 83rd anniversary of the unleashing of the Armenian genocide. This evening, here in the Capitol building, the Armenian National Committee of America is sponsoring a ceremony and reception of remembrance for the genocide; and the ANC and the Armenian Assembly have both been at the forefront for calling for recognition of the genocide, not just for the people of Armenian descent who have heard the history from their parents or grandparents but for all of us as an active education and witness about the evils of genocide and the danger of forgetting.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, I regret to say that the United States still does not officially recognize the Armenian genocide. Bowing to strong pressure from Turkey, the U.S. State Department has for more than 15 years shied away from referring to the tragic events of 1915 to 1923 by the word "genocide."

President Clinton and his recent predecessors have annually issued proclamations on the anniversary of the genocide expressing sorrow for the massacres and solidarity with the victims but always stopping short of using the word "genocide," thus minimizing and not accurately conveying what really happened beginning 83 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the United States should go on record clearly and unambiguously recognizing the Armenian genocide and setting aside April 24 as a

day of remembrance. To that end, I urge renewed efforts to, on the part of Congress, to pass a resolution that puts the United States firmly on record on the side of truth. We will also keep up the pressure on the President to call the genocide by its proper name.

And what is almost as appalling as the act of genocide itself is the fact that the Republic of Turkey simply goes on denying that the genocide ever took place. Indeed, Turkey has mounted an aggressive effort to try to present an alternative and false version of history, using its extensive financial and lobbying resources in this country.

The Turkish Government has embarked on a strategy of endowing Turkish study programs at various universities around the United States. And while Turkish and Ottoman studies are cleared worthy of academic interest, the Turkish Government is attaching conditions to these funds that make it clear that the program will be carried out under the watchful eyes of the Turkish Government and other pro-Turkish elements. One of the major goals of this propaganda effort is to minimize, distort, and outright deny the facts of the Armenian genocide.

Mr. Speaker, adding insult to injury, the Republic of Azerbaijan has mounted an effort to try to accuse Armenians of committing genocide against the people of Azerbaijan, in many cases directly mimicking Armenian statements and simply turning them around against the Armenians.

Recently, the Assembly of Turkish-American Associations circulated a booklet to congressional offices denying the Armenian genocide and fabricating a wide range of half-truths, slanders, and lies against the Armenian people. But these denials fly in the face of the preponderance of evidence.

The U.S. National Archives holds the most comprehensive documentation in the world on this historical tragedy. Formal protests were made at the time by the U.S. Ambassador, and Congress approved of allowing a private relief agency to raise funds in the United States. American consular officials and private aide workers secretly housed Armenians at great personal risks to themselves and in direct defiance of Turkish orders not to help the Armenians.

Mr. Speaker, I know many of my other colleagues would like to address this subject tonight, and I would like to say that the Armenian genocide is a very painful subject to discuss, yet we must never forget what happened and never cease speaking out. We must overcome the denials and indifference and keep alive the memory and the truth of what happened.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I want to thank the gentleman for his remarks and associate myself with them.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleagues in remembering the Armenian people who lost their lives in one of history's

greatest atrocities, the Armenian genocide.

Mr. Speaker, on April 24, 1915, Turkish officials arrested and exiled more than 200 Armenian political, intellectual and religious leaders. This symbolic rounding up of Armenian leaders began a reign of terror against the Armenian people that lasted for the next eight years, and resulted in the death of more than 1.5 million Armenians. Acts of deportations, torture, enslavement and mass executions obliterated the Armenian population and changed the world forever. These mass exterminations and incidents of ethnic cleansing are the first examples of genocide in this century, and have often been referred to as the precursor to the Nazi Holocaust.

It is most important that we remember the Armenian people and recognize the Armenian Genocide so that we never again see such a heinous disregard for human life. The memory of this event, no matter how cruel and brutal, must serve as a lesson to us all to never ignore such actions. We owe that to the Armenian people who showed such bravery in a time of great pain and tragedy.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, during the First World War, the Armenian people suffered greatly under the hands of Turkey, leading to what we now have come to call the Armenian Genocide.

It was one of the first state ordered genocides of this century, and would later become one of the many genocides that have marred the recent history of our World.

During the First World War, the willingness of the Armenians to serve in the Allied forces, was seen as a threat to the Turkish government. The Turks ordered a mass deportation of almost the entire Armenian population from their homeland to two provinces of the Turkish Empire.

More than one million Armenians died during this long forced march, many from disease and malnutrition.

Once a year, we pay tribute to those who survived and we honor the memory of those who perished in the genocide. Nearly 1.5 million persons were killed and another half million were deported from their home country.

Unfortunately, the atrocities of the past have been replayed in the Holocaust of World War II, Cambodia, Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia, and many other places world wide where leaders have turned their backs on human rights and human suffering.

The crime of genocide must never again be allowed a part of our lives, and today we stand with our Armenian friends, to remember and share in their grief, and to make a commitment to prevent such acts in the future.

We must work to remember and never forget the genocide, and to fight for peace in this region and worldwide.

I will be going to Armenia in May, and look forward to meeting with Armenians on the ongoing issues that they have with Turkey and an overview of the history that they have endured.

I am proud to join Armenians around the world as we remember the terrible massacres suffered in 1915–23.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, together with my colleagues, to commemorate

the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923. This is an episode of human history so dark, and so repulsive to our sense of decency and morality, that it deserves our special attention. In the eight years of the genocide, more than 1.5 million Armenians of the Ottoman Empire were systematically slaughtered. Their property was confiscated, and many were forced on long marches, often without food and water, during which thousands of victims died. Others were forced into slave labor, while many were simply tortured and executed. These atrocious acts comprised the first instance of genocide in the twentieth century—and tragically it was not the last systematic attempt to destroy an entire race of people.

It is of the utmost importance that we not allow this tragedy to lapse from our memory. Equally important is that we should not by means of obfuscation and equivocation attempt to deny these horrifying events. It has been said that denial of genocide is the final state of genocide: by attempting to erase the memory of the act and trivialize the suffering of its victims it destroys the dignity of all those who died.

I therefore call on the Turkish government to right a wrong and recognize the occurrence of the Armenian Genocide. In this way, we can finally come to terms with this tragedy, not as Turks or Armenians or members of any particular ethnic group, but as human beings. For it is only after we have acknowledged the evils of which humankind is capable, that we can prevent these evils from occurring again.

Many are aware of the remark made by Adolph Hitler as he was planning the “final solution” for the “Jewish problem” that “who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?” The fact that he could take comfort in our collective amnesia only proves the need to remember these atrocities. I am honored to be joining with all those who are commemorating the Armenian Genocide today throughout the world, and I thank my colleagues, Congressmen JOHN PORTER and FRANK PALLONE, for helping to keep Members of the House focused on this very important issue. I implore everyone, young and old, to heed well the all-important phrase: “We must never forget!”

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. PALLONE and Mr. PORTER for their leadership in bringing us together to remember a time in world history when the Armenian people were singled out for a brutal attack on their very existence, an attack that would come to be known as the Armenian Genocide. On April 24, 1915, the rulers of the Ottoman Empire set out to annihilate the Armenian minority. Over the course of the next eight years, the Turkish government systematically murdered 1.5 million Armenians and deported 500,000. By the end of 1923, the entire Armenian population of Anatolia and Western Armenia was either murdered or deported.

This anniversary serves to remind us of the importance of vigilance against oppression and acts of violence against the rights of ethnic minorities around the world. In my home state of California, the story of the Armenian Genocide is included in the social studies curriculum as mandated by the State Board of Education in 1987. Similar curricula on human rights and genocide exist in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts.

And while a growing number of Americans come to understand the horror of this episode in history, the perpetrators continue their de-

nial. Just last year, Turkey attempted to endow a chair on Turkish and Ottoman history at UCLA. School officials were forced to temper their initial enthusiasm when concerns were raised that this effort was a stab at historical revisionism.

Turkey continues to violate the human rights of the Kurdish minority, at times in ways that are reminiscent of its historical treatment of the Armenians and Greeks. The Turkish government has failed to ensure the safety of the Ecumenical Patriarch and the seat of the Orthodox Church in Istanbul. In Cyprus, the Turkish army enforces a partition of the island that has been universally denounced since it invaded in 1974. This consistent and constant disregard of international convention is a hallmark of a nation that ignores the obvious lessons from its own history.

Despite the near obliteration of their ancient culture, the Armenian people have survived. Throughout the world they have made enormous cultural and economic contributions to the communities in their adopted homelands. Recently, Armenia held presidential elections, and while there were some problems, this fragile democracy continues to move forward. I congratulate the Armenian people for their resilience. Their triumph over adversity is a story from which we all draw strength.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE—83D ANNIVERSARY

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, as a proud member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, and the representative of a large and vibrant community of Armenian-Americans, I rise today to join my colleagues in the sad commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

First, I would like to commend the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER), co-chairs of the caucus, for all of their hard work on this issue and other issues of human rights.

April 24, 1998 marks the 83d anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian genocide. It was on that day in 1915 that over 200 Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were arrested and subsequently murdered in central Turkey.

This date marks the beginning of an organized campaign by the “Young Turk” government to eliminate the Armenians from the Ottoman Empire.

Over the next 8 years, 1.5 million Armenians died at the hands of the Turks, and a half million more were deported.

As the United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., has written: “When the Turkish authorities gave the orders for these deportations, they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race. They understood this well and made no particular attempt to conceal the fact.”

As a supporter of human rights, I am dismayed that the Turkish government is still refusing to acknowledge what happened and instead is attempting to rewrite history.

In a sense, even more appalling than Turkey's denial is the willingness of some officials in our own government to join in rewriting the history of the Armenian Genocide. It is vital that we do not let political agendas get in the way of doing the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, the issues surrounding the Armenian genocide should not go unresolved. I call upon the United States Government to demand complete accountability by the Turkish

Government for the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923. To heal the wounds of the past, the Turkish government must first recognize the responsibility of its country's leaders at that time for this catastrophe.

Nothing we can do or say will bring those who perished back to life, but we can imbue their memories with everlasting meaning by teaching the lessons of the Armenian genocide to future generations.

The noted philosopher, George Santayana, has taught us that "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." We should heed this wise principle and do all we can to ensure that the martyrdom of the Armenian people is not forgotten.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today, I join voices with my colleagues in Congress and Armenians all over the world as we commemorate the 83d anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Between 1894 and 1923, approximately two million Armenians were massacred, persecuted, or exiled by the Ottoman Empire. Today, fewer than 80,000 declared Armenians remain in Turkey. The Eastern provinces, the Armenian heartland, are virtually without Armenians.

The years since the Armenian Genocide have magnified its tragedy, not diminished it. It is true for the hundreds of thousands who lost their lives as well as their families for whom the void can never be filled.

It also has been true for all the world. The Holocaust of the 1930's and 1940's has been followed by a number of genocides in the last three decades. The failure of the Turkish government to acknowledge the sinful acts of its predecessors sent the wrong message to the rulers of Cambodia, Rwanda and Bosnia. The failure of countries of the world to take prompt notice of these modern atrocities should remind all of us of the failure of other nations to promptly acknowledge the massacre of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

In a word, it is the duty of all Armenians to join Armenian-Americans in remembering the Armenian genocide. We have been fighting this battle for formal acknowledgement by the Turkish government for many years. We must not give in until the battle is won.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, each year, for the past six or seven years of my memory, my colleagues, Mr. PALLONE and Mr. PORTER, have organized this special congressional opportunity for this body to pause to honor the memory of the 1½ million Armenians who were killed between 1915 and 1923 by agents of the Turkish Ottoman Empire in what is known in infamy as the Armenian Genocide. In essence, we retell a story of a moment in history, an even which began some 83 years ago. I have noticed that each year, I find myself using the same words to tell this story, and I realize that this process of retelling the facts of genocide, committed against the people of Armenia is in itself a very important event. For in retelling this story of the horror which was perpetuated, we remember to be vigilant against the planting of the seeds of future atrocities.

I would like to add that my district, the 34th Congressional district of California, has what I believe is the only monument in the United States which commemorates and records the Genocide against the Armenian people. The citizens of the 34th Congressional district have strong feelings about today's commemoration,

and on their behalf I am here today to share with you this retelling of an old and difficult story.

Some would claim that our remembrance today fans the flames of atavistic hatred and that this issue of the Ottoman government's efforts to destroy the Armenian people is a matter best left to scholars and historians. I do not agree. One fact remains undeniable: the death and suffering of Armenians on a massive scale happened, and is deserving of recognition and remembrance.

This solemn occasion permits us to join in remembrance with the many Americans of Armenian ancestry, to remind this country of the tragic price paid by the Armenian community for its long pursuit of life, liberty and freedom.

Today, I rise, with my Colleagues to recall and remember one of the most tragic events in history and through this act of remembrance, to make public and vivid the memory of the ultimate price paid by the Armenian community by this blot against human civility.

We come together each year with this act of commemoration, this year being the 83rd anniversary of this genocide, to tell the stories of this atrocity so that we will not sink into ignorance of our capacity to taint human progress with acts of mass under.

The Armenian genocide was a deliberate act to kill, or deport, all Armenians from Asia Minor, and takes its place in history with other acts of genocide such as Stalin's destruction of the Kulaks, Hitler's calculated wrath on the Jews, Poles, and Romany Gypsy community in Central Europe, and Pol Pot's attempt to purge incorrect political thought from Cambodia by killing all of his people over the age of fifteen, and more recently, the ethnic cleansing atrocities in Bosnia and Rwanda.

We do not have the ability to go back and correct acts of a previous time, or to right the wrongs of the past. If we had this capacity, perhaps we could have prevented the murders of millions of men, women and children.

We can, however, do everything in our power to prevent such atrocities from occurring again. To do this, we must educate people about these horrible incidents, comfort the survivors and keep alive the memories of those who died. I encourage everyone to use this moment to think about the tragedy which was the Armenian Genocide, to contemplate the massive loss of lives, and to ponder the loss of the human contributions which might have been.

Although the massacre we depict and describe started 83 years ago, the Armenian people continue to fight for their freedom and independence today, in Nagorno Karabakh. Again, this year, I would like to close my remarks with an urgent plea that we use this moment as an occasion to recommit ourselves to the spirit of human understanding, compassion, patience, and love.

For these alone are the tools for overcoming our tragic, and uniquely human proclivity for resolving differences and conflicts by acts of violence.

This century has been characterized as one of the bloodiest in our archives of human history. Certainly, the genocide perpetuated against the Armenian people has been a factor in this dismal record.

The dawning of a new millennium offers our human race two paths. One continues along a road of destruction, distrust, and despair. Those who travel this path have lost their con-

nection to the primal directives, which permit us as a society to maintain balance, continuity, and harmony. I would ask my colleagues, on this 83d anniversary of one of history's bloodiest massacres of human beings—and during a time in history when violent solutions to problems between peoples continue to hold sway—to contemplate the second path. The map to this path exists within the guiding teachings of all major world religions and are encapsulated in what Christians refer to as the 10 Commandments. I would ask my colleagues, no matter their religious or political persuasions and beliefs, to revisit these core teachings which form a common bond between all peoples. To use these common beliefs as the basis for action and understanding in these trying times. The surface differences between peoples, offer only an exciting diversity in form. At the core all peoples are united by common dreams, aspirations, and beliefs in a desire for harmony, decency, and peace with justice.

Let these testimonies of the atrocities perpetuated against the Armenian people serve as a reminder that as a human race we can, and must, do better. It takes strength and wisdom to understand that the sword of compassion is indeed mightier than the sword of steel.

Certainly, as we reflect over the conflicts of this closing century, we can only come to the conclusion that violence begets violence, hatred begets hatred and that only understanding, patience, compassion, and love can open the door to the realization of the dreams which we all hold for our children and for their children.

Let our statements today, remembering and openly condemning the atrocity committed against the Armenians, help renew a commitment of the American people to oppose any and all instances of genocide. As we enter the new millennium let us commit ourselves to finding new and peaceful paths for resolving differences which inevitably arise.

I thank my colleagues for permitting me the honor of sharing these thoughts and words with you today.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, tonight we gather to commemorate those who lost their homes, loved ones, and lives in the Armenian Genocide at the beginning of this century.

I am the only Member of Congress of Armenian descent. Every other day of the year, my heritage is a source of honor for me because not only do I represent a congressional district, but I also represent a community of people who have made tremendous contributions to the world. However, tonight being Armenian carries with it an obligation to bear witness * * * to remember what began in 1915 * * * to remember what happened to my family and over a million other Armenians when the Ottoman Empire forgot its humanity and set out on a path of destruction.

We gather here to remember the first genocide of this century so we don't forget that it was not an isolated incident. The Armenians were followed by the victims of Stalin's purges, the German Holocaust, Cambodia's Killing Fields, the "ethnic cleansing" of Bosnia, and the tragedy of the Great Lakes region in Africa.

Despite these examples we still do not understand why one day a community can be living peaceably among another, and the next they are singled out, rounded up, imprisoned and eventually killed. We may not understand why the Ottoman Empire decided to kill the Armenians, but we do know that it did happen and that it was, without question, morally wrong. Despite continued attempts to downplay or deny the scale of the tragedy, the forced removal of a half a million people, and the massacre of 1.5 million more has no other name but genocide.

This past year several books written by members of the Armenian diaspora have been published, and in conclusion, I would like to quote from one of these books, "Black Dog of Fate," by Peter Balakian. He writes the following:

Commemoration is an essential process for the bereaved and for the inheritors of the legacy of genocide. It is a process of making meaning out of the unthinkable horror and loss. Because the dead have not been literally or emotionally buried in the wake of genocide, commemoration is also a ritual of burying the dead—that first act of civilization. Because genocide seeks to negate all meaning, to unmake the world, the survivors and their children must find a way back to civilization. Commemoration, then publicly legitimizes the victim culture's grief. The burden of bereavement can be alleviated if shared and witnessed by a larger community. Only then can redemption, hope and community be achieved.

I thank Representatives PALLONE and PORTER for organizing tonight's remembrance. You help to provide a larger community, where Armenians can share and witness, and give hope for redemption.

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in commemoration of the 83rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. On April 24, 1915, over 200 Armenian religious and political leaders were taken to Turkey and systematically executed. The years that followed brought further persecution upon the Armenian people. It is important to recognize the horror of the Armenian genocide as it is a lesson for all time. Recognition and education are the best tools available to help us learn from the mistakes of the past and insure human dignity for people worldwide. As we remember the persecution that the Armenians endured, we as Americans must not take for granted our freedom and security. We must always work to ensure human rights for all people.

The atrocities that occurred in the Ottoman Empire from 1915 until 1923 were more than a series of massacres in a time of instability, they foreshadowed the nightmare of the Nazi Holocaust and other cases of ethnic cleansing in the twentieth century. A failure to be honest with the past led to the terrors that followed later in the twentieth century. The Armenian people were driven from their homes and deprived of their freedom, their dignity and finally their lives. By 1923, 1.5 million Armenians had died, and 500,000 more had been evicted from their homes at the hands of the Ottoman authorities. We look back with sadness at these tragic occurrences and mourn the tremendous losses of the Armenian people.

To ignore the Armenian genocide and its impact on history would dishonor the victims of this tragedy. This was the first genocide of the twentieth century, and, sadly, it was not the last. On this, the 83rd anniversary of the

Armenian genocide we must not forget the victims and we must be prepared to prevent further crimes against humanity.

Mr. GEJDENSON. On this day I stand with Armenians worldwide in remembering the anniversary of the genocide committed against the Armenian people between 1915 and 1923.

Eighty-three years ago today, representatives of the Ottoman Empire arrested Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders. During the 8 years that followed, an estimated 1.5 million Armenians were executed. Many were raped, tortured, or enslaved. In addition to those killed, an estimated 500,000 Armenians were deported from the Ottoman Empire. Thankfully, many of those exiles made their way to freedom in the United States where they and their descendants continue to make significant contributions to the cultural, political, and commercial fabric of the United States.

Despite the formidable challenges they have faced over the years, the Armenian people have demonstrated remarkable resilience. Today's anniversary of the genocide affords us a chance to reflect upon the challenges Armenian faces today. While it continues to struggle under blockades imposed by its neighbors, Armenia continues to make economic progress and just concluded an improved democratic election. This continues the progress begun on September 21, 1991, when more than 94 percent of Armenia's eligible voters turned out to vote in a referendum for Armenian independence. Two days later, the Armenian Parliament made the people's desire official when it declared Armenia's independence from the Soviet Union.

There are two ways to fight to prevent genocide from occurring again. One way is to do what we can as a nation and as individuals to take notice, to condemn, and to intervene when necessary before those who would kill are emboldened. The second is to embrace the truth, to remember history, and to confront those who would otherwise ignore or distort the occurrence of genocide.

My family history intertwines with the tragedy of the Armenia's past. My father's entire family was exterminated as was most of my mother's during the Holocaust. My father and mother escaped Hitler and Stalin and met in a displaced-persons camp in Germany after the war and took me and my sister away to peace and freedom in eastern Connecticut, which I now proudly represent in Congress.

When Hitler proposed his extermination of the Jews, he heard some opposition in the room. He silenced his opposition by asking the question, "Who remembers the Armenians?" I stand today so that everyone remembers the Armenians and the Jews, so no one can commit the atrocities of the past again.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, today we remember the Armenian Genocide, and honor the memory of the 1.5 million Armenians who died between 1915 and 1923.

It has been 83 years since the Ottoman Empire began the systematic slaughter of Armenians living in Turkey. It started in 1915, when the Turkish government rounded up and killed Armenian soldiers. Then, on April 24, 1915, the government turned its attention to slaughtering Armenian intellectuals. They were killed because of their ethnicity, the first group in the 20th Century killed not for what they did, but for who they were.

By the time the bloodshed of the genocide ended, the victims included the aged, women

and children who had been forced from their homes and marched to relocation camps, beaten and brutalized along the way. In addition to the 1.5 million dead, over 500,000 Armenians were chased from their homeland.

We take time every year to remember the victims of the Armenian genocide. We hope that, by remembering the bloodshed and atrocities committed against the Armenians, we can prevent this kind of tragedy from repeating itself. Unfortunately, we have been unsuccessful. From Germany to Cambodia to Rwanda, the horrors of the genocide have repeated themselves.

So, Mr. Speaker, we must continue to talk about the genocide. We must keep alive the memory of those who lost their lives during the eight years of bloodshed in Armenia. We must educate other nations who have not recognized that the Armenian genocide occurred. We must be vigilant and guard against this kind of wholesale slaughter from happening in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Armenian-Americans—the survivors and their descendants—who continue to educate the world about the tragedy of the Armenian Genocide and make valuable contributions to our shared American culture. Because of their efforts, the world will not be allowed to forget the memory of the victims of the first 20th Century holocaust.

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Armenian community in Rhode Island, I would like to recognize and commemorate the observance of the 83rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, a solemn, yet historically significant event.

On April 24, 1915, 200 intellectuals, political and religious leaders from Constantinople were executed by Turkish officials. Over the next 8 years, 1.5 million Armenians were driven from their homes, forced to endure death marches, starved, forced into slavery, deported, tortured and executed in mass numbers. The period of 1915–23 marks one of the darkest periods of modern times—the first example of genocide in the 20th century.

Today, we honor the victims, who suffered at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, and express our condolences to their descendants. The world has chosen to ignore this tragedy and because we must ensure that history does not repeat itself, we need to properly acknowledge the horrors of the Armenian Genocide.

I join with my colleagues and the Armenian community to proclaim that the genocide did indeed happen, despite the protests from the Turkish Government. Unfortunately, we cannot change the past, but by honoring the victims of the Armenian Genocide and sharing the grief of their families, we can begin to heal the many wounds and work together to ensure that these injustices never occur again.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I join many of my colleagues today in commemorating the 83rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. For many Armenians, April 24, 1915 signifies the beginning of the systematic and deliberate campaign of the Ottoman Empire to extinguish the Armenian population under their rule. On this day, Armenians from around the world will be joined by many others, not only to remember one of this century's worst tragedies, but to use it as a lesson for future generations to preserve human rights around the world.

This somber occasion marks the anniversary of that day in 1915 when members of the

Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leadership were arrested and executed. This incident was not isolated and marked the beginning of a mass persecution of Armenian men, women, and children. At that time, the U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., stated that "When the Turkish authorities gave the orders for these deportations, they were giving the death warrant to a whole new race. The great massacres and persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared to the sufferings of the Armenian race in 1915."

Tragically, from 1915 to 1923, 1.5 million Armenians were killed, with another 500,000 that were exiled from their homes. By the end of 1923, the two million Armenians that had resided in Turkey were either killed or deported.

Throughout my life I have had the privilege of becoming friends with a number of Armenians who have shared the tales of the horrible and inhumane experiences their relatives endured. As we reflect on this tragedy today, we will certainly remember those who suffered and pay tribute to the memory of the millions of Armenian victims.

Today I ask my colleagues to condemn the atrocities committed against the Armenians and continue in our efforts to prevent similar tragedies from developing. We must recognize and openly acknowledge the atrocities committed against humanity before we are able to prevent them from happening again in the future. If we fail to speak out against such crimes, we are only ensuring that these atrocities will continue to occur as time goes on. That is a tragedy we cannot afford to risk.

Thank you for allowing me to participate in this special tribute to the Armenian community. I am honored to be here.

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the first of this century's many examples of man's inhumanity to man: the brutal suppression perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against 1.5 million Armenian men, women, and children at the beginning of this century. On April 24, 1915, Ottoman authorities arrested 200 political, religious, and intellectual leaders of the Armenian community of Constantinople. In the eight long years that followed, the Armenian population of Asia Minor was subjected to forced privation, deportation, torture, and death.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to remember this event, just as it is important to remember the suffering of millions of other victims of hatred and violence. It is important to remember because by remembering we say no Holocaust, no "ethnic cleansing," no mass extermination must ever happen again.

No observer of the world scene today can ignore the long-lasting repercussions of such atrocities. In the Balkans and Central Asia, we see how memories of past injustice and mass human rights violations complicate the search for peace. In commemorating the Armenian Genocide today, we must renew our commitment to help prevent future ethnic and religious hatred.

This day of remembrance also highlights the endurance and the spirit of the Armenian people. Many displaced Armenians joined the ranks of those who sought haven in our country. Many settled in my home State of California, where they achieved prosperity, contributed to civic life, and added to the cultural richness of our State. California today is home to the largest—and thriving—community of Ar-

menian-Americans. Their success says to the tyrants and the perpetrators of mass persecution in the world that the human spirit cannot be suppressed.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues Mr. PALLONE and Mr. PORTER for organizing this special order, and join my colleagues here today, the Armenian-American community, and Americans across our country in commemorating the Armenian Genocide.

Mr. MANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in remembering the 83rd Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. I want to thank my colleagues Congressmen FRANK PALLONE and JOHN PORTER for organizing this Special Order to commemorate the victims of one of the most tragic events in history.

On this day in 1915, a group of distinguished Armenian leaders—intellectual, political, and religious—were arrested and brutally murdered by the Ottoman Empire. This began a long and abysmal process by which 1.5 million Armenians lost their lives. A disgraceful and inhuman process which also resulted in more than 500,000 deportations. The accounts by survivors go beyond the massive killings, there were rapes, forced slavery and the deprivation of land and homes.

Unfortunately, the infringement on Armenian human rights continues today with the conflict over Nagorno-Karabagh. This ongoing and needless confrontation has ripped families and communities apart and killed more than 1,500 Armenians. However, I hope and pray the newly elected President of Armenia, Robert Kocharian, will continue to lend his expertise towards a solution on the Nagorno Karabagh dispute. I congratulate President Kocharian and wish him the best as he leads the people of Armenian into the next millennium.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my colleagues every year in commemorating the Armenian Genocide. Unfortunately, many people continue to deny these events took place in the years between 1915 and 1923. I cannot stress enough the importance that we as members of Congress continue to officially recognize this genocide because it is a part of our world history. We cannot deny, nor forget it.

Although many of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide are no longer with us, it is important that we recognize this tragedy in honor of their relatives who continue to live with the memory of the event and teach their children about this tragedy. New York State is one of the few states which has offered a human rights/genocide curricula for teachers to use at their discretion, including the story of the Armenian genocide. I encourage my colleagues to work with their state educators to implement a similar program. Education programs, along with family discussions, are ways to ensure a peaceful future not only for the people of Armenia, but for all peoples.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me as a member of the Congressional Armenia Caucus where they will have the opportunity to work on issues affecting Armenians and Armenian-Americans while strengthening U.S.-Armenian relations in a bipartisan manner.

I commend the people of Armenia for their tremendous contributions to the world while continuing to strengthen their own democracy. I look forward to working with my colleagues and the people of Armenia to ensure a stable and bright future for the years to come.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 83d anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, an act of mass murder that took 1.5 million Armenian lives and led to the exile of the Armenian nation from its historic homeland.

It is of vital importance that we never forget what happened to the Armenian people. Indeed the only thing we can do for the victims is to remember, and we forget at our own peril.

The Armenian Genocide, which began 15 years after the start of the twentieth century, was the first act of genocide of this century, but it was far from the last. The Armenian Genocide was followed by the Holocaust, Stalin's purges, and other acts of mass murder around the world.

Adolf Hitler himself said that the world's indifference to the slaughter in Armenia indicated that there would be no global outcry if he undertook the mass murder of Jews and others he considered less than human. And he was right. It was only after the Holocaust that the cry "never again" arose throughout the world. But it was too late for millions of victims. Too late for the six million Jews. Too late for the 1.5 million Armenians.

Today we recall the Armenian Genocide and we mourn its victims. We also pledge that we shall do everything we can to protect the Armenian nation against further aggression; in the Republic of Armenia, in Nagorno-Karabagh, or anywhere else.

Unfortunately, there are some who still think it is acceptable to block the delivery of U.S. humanitarian assistance around the world. Despite overwhelming international condemnation, Azerbaijan continues its blockade of U.S. humanitarian assistance to Armenia.

It is tragic that Azerbaijan's tactics have denied food and medicine to innocent men, women, and children in Armenia, and created thousands of refugees. The U.S. must stand firm against any dealings with Azerbaijan until it ends this immoral blockade. We must make clear that warfare and blockades aimed at civilians are unacceptable as means for resolving disputes.

Mr. Speaker, after the Genocide, the Armenian people wiped away their tears and cried out, "Let us never forget. Let us always remember the atrocities that have taken the lives of our parents and our children and our neighbors."

As the Armenian-American author William Saroyan wrote, "Go ahead, destroy this race . . . Send them from their homes into the desert . . . Burn their homes and churches. Then see if they will not laugh again, see if they will not sing and pray again. For, when two of them meet anywhere in the world, see if they will not create a New Armenia."

I rise today to remember those cries and to make sure that they were not uttered in vain. The Armenian nation lives. We must do everything we can to ensure that it is never imperiled again.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time of year the descendants and relatives of those Armenians who died in the series of deportations and executions organized by the Turkish Ottoman Empire during the First World War gather at ceremonies across America to honor those victims' memory.

I am pleased to join in this special order today, organized to commemorate those who died in that series of brutal programs and attacks—the effects of which were tantamount to a campaign of genocide.

Although those who died in those tragic and violent days did not live to see it, the Armenian nation has now re-emerged, despite the terrible loss of life that has been suffered under the Ottoman Empire and the eight decades of communist dictatorship under the former Soviet Union.

Today, the independent state of Armenia stands as clear proof that indeed the Armenian people have survived the challenges of the past—and will survive the challenges of the present and future as well.

Mr. Speaker, as we today honor the memory of those who lost their lives long before the Armenian nation regained its independence, let us today look forward to that day when the new, independent Republic of Armenia and its people will live in peace with their neighbors—a peace that will never see Armenian men, women and children subjected to the horrors and atrocities their ancestors experienced eighty years ago.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 83rd anniversary of the Armenian genocide. As in years past, I am pleased to join my House colleagues on both sides of the aisle in ensuring that the terrible atrocities committed against the Armenian people are never repeated.

The event we come together to remember began on April 24, 1915, when over 200 religious, political, and intellectual leaders of the Armenian community were brutally executed by the Turkish government in Istanbul. By the time it ended in 1923, this war of ethnic genocide against the Armenian people by the Ottoman Empire claimed the lives of over half the world's Armenian population—an estimated 1.5 million men, women, and children.

Sadly, there are some people who still question the fact that the Armenian genocide even occurred. History is clear, however, that the Ottoman Empire engaged in a systematic attempt to destroy the Armenian people and their culture. The U.S. National Archives contain numerous reports detailing the process by which the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire was systematically decimated. That is one of the reasons we come together every year at this time: to remind the world that this event did indeed take place and that we must remain forever vigilant in our efforts to prevent all such future calamities.

I am pleased to report that a strong and vibrant Armenian-American community thrives in my district in Northwest Indiana. My predecessor in the House, the late Adam Benjamin, was of Armenian heritage, and Northwest Indiana's strong ties to Armenian continue to flourish. Over the years, members of the Armenian-American community throughout the United States have contributed millions of dollars and countless hours of their time to various Armenian causes. Of particular note are Mrs. Vicki Hovanessian and her husband, Dr. Raffi Hovanessian, residents of Indiana's First Congressional District, who have worked to improve the quality of life in Armenian, as well as in Northwest Indiana. Two other Armenian-American families in my congressional district, Heratch and Sonya Doumanian and Ara and Rosy Yeretsian, have also contributed greatly toward charitable works in the United States and Armenia. Their efforts, together with hundreds of other members of the Armenian-American community, have helped to finance several important projects in Armenia, including the construction of new schools, a mam-

mography clinic, and a crucial roadway connecting Armenia to Nagorno Karabagh.

The Armenian people have a long and proud history. In the fourth century, they became the first nation to embrace Christianity. During World War I, the Ottoman Empire was ruled by an organization, known as the Young Turk Committee, and became allied with Germany. Amid fighting in the Ottoman Empire's eastern Anatolian provinces, the historic heartland of the Christian Armenians, Ottoman authorities ordered the deportation and execution of all Armenians in the region. By the end of 1923, virtually the entire Armenian population of Anatolia and western Armenia had been either killed or deported.

While it is important to keep the lessons of history in mind, we must also remain eternally vigilant in order to protect Armenia from new and more hostile aggressors. Even now, as we rise to commemorate the accomplishments of the Armenian people and mourn the tragedies they have suffered, Turkey and other countries are attempting to break Armenia's spirit by engaging in a debilitating blockade against this free nation.

That is why two years ago, I led the fight in the House of Representatives to free Armenia from Turkey's vicious blockade by offering an amendment to the Fiscal Year 1997 Foreign Operations appropriations bill. Under current law, U.S. economic assistance may not be given to any country that blocks humanitarian assistance from reaching another country. Despite the fact that Turkey has been blocking humanitarian aid for Armenia for many years, the President has used his waiver authority to keep economic assistance for Turkey intact. My amendment, which passed in the House by a bipartisan vote of 301–118, would have prevented the President from using his waiver authority and would have cut off U.S. economic aid to Turkey unless it allowed humanitarian aid to reach Armenia. Unfortunately, my amendment was not included in the final version of the Foreign Operations appropriations bill and the Turkish blockade of Armenia continues unabated.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues, Representatives JOHN PORTER and FRANK PALLONE, for organizing this special order to commemorate the 83rd anniversary of the Armenian genocide. Their efforts will not only help to bring needed attention to this tragic period in world history, but also serve as a reminder to remain vigilant in the fight to protect basic human rights and freedoms around the world.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. April 24th, 1915, is solemnly recalled by the people of Armenia and Armenian-Americans as the beginning of a long-term, organized deprivation and relocation of a people from their homeland. Eighty-three years later, we mark this date to remember the beginning of this systematic elimination of Armenian civilians, which lasted for over seven years. By 1923, 1.5 million Armenians had been massacred and 500,000 more deported.

Thousands of Armenian-Americans reside in my congressional district, and each year they mark this date to commemorate this anniversary and remember those who were lost. April 24th, 1915, marked a day when thousands of Armenian intellectual, religious and political leaders were arrested in Constantinople and

deported or murdered. Today, we reflect on the massive destruction of property, freedom and dignity of those Armenians who were deported or killed under the Ottoman empire. We honor their memory and vow that such deprivation will never happen again.

Mr. Speaker, we also mark this date to celebrate the contributions of millions of Armenians and Armenian-Americans since that awful time. As we continue to strengthen our bonds with the Armenian people, we must be vigilant about remaining a strong friend of Armenian democracy through U.S. foreign policy. It is important for those of us in the Congress to continue to speak out in favor of Armenian human rights and free trade.

I urge my colleagues to join me in commemorating this solemn anniversary.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleagues here today in commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. I want to thank my colleagues, Mr. PORTER and Mr. PALLONE, for their work in organizing this tribute.

This observance takes place every year on April 24. It was on that date in 1915 that more than 200 Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were arrested in Constantinople and murdered. Over the next eight years, persecution of Armenians intensified, and by 1923, more than 1.5 million had died and another 500,000 had gone into exile. At the end of 1923, all of the Armenian residents of Anatolia and Western Armenia had been either killed or deported.

The genocide was criticized at the time by U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, who accused the Turkish authorities of "giving the death warrant to a whole race." The founder of the modern Turkish nation, Kemal Ataturk, condemned the crimes perpetrated by his predecessors. Yet this forthright and sober analysis has been spurned by Turkey and the United States during the last decade.

The Intransigence of this and prior administrations to recognizing and commemorating the Armenian genocide demonstrates our continued difficulty in reconciling the lessons of history with realpolitik policies; that is, those who fail to learn the lessons of history are condemned to repeat it. We have seen continually in this century the abject failure to learn and apply this basic principle. The Armenian genocide has been followed by the Holocaust against the Jews and mass killings in Kurdistan, Rwanda, Burundi, and Bosnia. Many of these situations are ongoing, and there seems little apparent sense of urgency or moral imperative to resolve them.

Commemoration of the Armenian genocide is important not only for its acknowledgement of the suffering of the Armenian people, but also for establishing the historical truth. It also demonstrates that events in Armenia, Nazi Europe, and elsewhere should be seen not as isolated incidents but as part of a historical continuum showing that the human community still suffers from its basic inability to resolve its problems peacefully and with mutual respect.

I hope that today's remarks by Members concerned about Armenia will help to renew our commitment, and that of all of the American people, to opposing any and all instances of genocide.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with respect to a tragic—and, unfortunately, still largely unknown—event in world history. Eighty-three years ago, the Armenians

of Ottoman Turkey became the victim of a comprehensive government-sponsored campaign of persecution which, after eight terrible years, left dead or deported some two million Armenian men, women, and children.

From 1915 to 1923, Turkish Armenians were executed. Tortured, and put into forced labor, solely because of their ethnic heritage. The human costs were terrible and enormous. Over one million Armenians died as a result of the genocide, and hundreds of thousands of others became refugees. One statistic is especially telling: Over 2.5 million Armenians lived in Ottoman Turkey before the genocide began; today, less than 80,000 remain.

Although the lives that were lost as a result of the genocide can never be returned, we must never forget what befell the Armenians of Ottoman Turkey solely because of their ethnicity. We must remember, not only in the honor of their memories, but so that future generations understand the terrible effects of bigotry and ethnic hatred.

When isolated incidents of persecution are tolerated, or when politicians gain from supporting ethnic persecution, the consequences can be terrible. We must therefore never tolerate discrimination in any form. We must also remember that such tragic events can happen again when the world community ignores the warning signs before it is too late.

I join Armenian-Americans and others in commemorating the terrible events of eighty-three years ago, and urge that we work to protect the human rights of all people around the world, so that we may prevent such a terrible tragedy from ever happening again.

Mr. DOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in commemorating the 83rd Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

This terrible human tragedy must not and will not be forgotten. Like the Holocaust, the Armenian Genocide stands as a historical example of the human suffering that results from hatred and intolerance.

One and one-half million Armenian people were massacred by the Ottoman Turkish Empire between 1915 and 1923. More than 500,000 Armenians were exiled from a homeland that their ancestors had occupied for more than 3,000 years. A race of people was nearly eliminated.

However, great the loss of human life and homeland that occurred during the genocide, a greater tragedy would be to forget that the Armenian Genocide ever happened. To not recognize the horror of such events almost assures their repetition in the future. Adolf Hitler, in preparing his genocide plans for the Jews, predicted that no one would remember the atrocities he was about to unleash. After all, he asked, "Who remembers the Armenians?"

Our statements today are intended to preserve the memory of the Armenian loss, and to remind the world that the Turkish government—to this day—refuses to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide. The truth of this tragedy can never and should never be denied.

This 83rd anniversary also brings to mind the current suffering of the Armenian people, who are still immersed in tragedy and violence. The unrest between Armenia and Azerbaijan continues in Nagorno-Karabakh. Thousands of innocent people have already perished in this dispute, and still many more have been displaced and are homeless.

In the face of this difficult situation comes an opportunity for reconciliation. Now is the

time for Armenia and its neighbors, including Turkey, to come together, to work toward building relationships that will assure lasting peace.

Meanwhile, in America, the Armenian-American community continues to thrive and to provide assistance and solidarity to its countrymen and women abroad. Now numbering nearly 1 million, the Armenian-American community is bound together by strong generational and family ties, an enduring work ethic and a proud sense of ethnic heritage. Today we recall the tragedy of their past, not to place blame, but to answer a fundamental question, "Who remembers the Armenians?"

Our commemoration of the Armenian Genocide speaks directly to that, and I answer. . . . We do.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 83rd anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide, a period of tragic oppression and terrible suffering. On April 24, 1915, the Turkish government began to arrest Armenian community and political leaders. Many were executed without ever being formally charged with crimes. The following month the government deported most Armenians from Turkish Armenia, ordering that they resettle in what is now Syria. Many deportees never reached that destination. From 1915 to 1918, more than a million Armenians died of starvation or disease on long marches, or were massacred outright by Turkish forces. From 1918 to 1923, Armenians continued to suffer at the hands of the Turkish military, which eventually removed all remaining Armenians from Turkey.

We mark this anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide in part because this tragedy for the Armenian people was a tragedy for all people. Genocide is not an ancient act, it is a horror which we must daily renew our commitment to prevent. If we do not remember, we will be condemned to witness such atrocities again and again.

We should not be alone in remembering these events. We will know that humanity has progressed when it is not just the survivors who honor the dead but also when those whose ancestors perpetrated the horrors acknowledge their terrible responsibility and honor as well the memory of genocide's victims.

Sadly, we cannot say that such atrocities are history. The death last week of Pol Pot reminds us of Cambodia's "killing fields" in the 1970s, and we have only to recall this decade's mass ethnic killings in Bosnia and Rwanda to see that the threat of genocide persists. As President Clinton noted during his visit to Rwanda in March, the world community needs to do more to prevent genocide. We have not done so. We have not yet learned the lessons of this day.

We also remember this day because it is a moment for us to celebrate the contribution of the Armenian community in America to the richness of our character and culture. The strength they have displayed in overcoming tragedy to flourish in this country is an example for all of us. Their powerful example is moving testimony to the truth that tyranny cannot extinguish the vitality of the human spirit. To all who wish to remember and to praise Armenian Americans I recommend the recently published memoir by one of America's most important contemporary poets, Peter Balakian, whose book *Black Dog of Fate* is a powerful reminder of Armenian history.

Surrounded by countries hostile to them, to this day the Armenian struggle continues. But now with an independent Armenian state, the United States has the opportunity to contribute to a true memorial to the past by strengthening Armenia's emerging democracy. We must do all we can through aid and trade to support Armenia's efforts to construct an open political and economic system.

I urge all my colleagues to ponder on the history of this moment and honor the memory and the accomplishments of the Armenian people and join with me in efforts to aid Armenia today.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate and remember the Genocide against the Armenian people. Between 1915 and 1923 the Ottoman Turkish Empire committed a horrible Genocide against the Armenian people. In a systematic and deliberate attempt to eliminate the Armenian people and erase Armenian culture and history, the Ottoman Turkish government committed this atrocity. As a result, over one and one-half million Armenians were massacred. The Armenian Genocide is a historical fact, and has been recognized by academicians and historians worldwide. The evidence is irrefutable and includes many eyewitness accounts, and statements from the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey at the time. Unfortunately, today's Turkish government is still persisting in their denial that the Armenian Genocide ever took place.

On April 24 each year Armenians around the world commemorate the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Commemoration activities will take place in Washington D.C., Los Angeles, New York, Armenia, and in my Congressional District in Fresno, California. Many commemoration activities are planned in Fresno and the San Joaquin Valley over the next several days. I have the honor of representing thousands of Armenian-Americans in California's Nineteenth Congressional District, and today I send them my most sincere condolences on this solemn occasion.

As a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian issues I have fought hard for aid to Armenia, aid to Nagorno-Karabagh, and other important issues. However, I am equally proud to be the author along with Rep. DAVID BONIOR, of H. Con. Res. 55 which would "honor the memories of the victims of the Armenian Genocide." As well as having this Congress honor the memories of the victims, H. Con. Res. 55 also encourages The Republic of Turkey to do the same. This legislation calls on the government of Turkey to turn away from its denials of the Armenian Genocide, and instead, to openly acknowledge this tragic chapter in its history. By doing so, the Turkish government can help to raise the level of trust and relations between Armenia and Turkey and allow Armenians to begin the healing progress. I encourage my colleagues to vote for the passage of H. Con. Res. 55.

Remembering this Genocide against the Armenians will help ensure this type of tragedy is never allowed to occur again.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues today in commemorating the 83rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. It has become a tradition for members to stand in the well of the House and pay tribute to the memory of the 1.5 million Armenians who were slaughtered by the Ottoman Turks from 1915 to 1923.

Mr. Speaker, April 24, 1915 represents a tragic day in the history of the Armenian people. It is a day that has left an indelible mark on the consciousness of mankind. Eighty-three years ago, the Ottoman Turks unleashed the forces of hatred upon Armenian men, women and children in a deliberate, calculated policy of extermination. On the night of April 24, 1915, the Ottoman Turks ruthlessly rounded up and targeted for elimination Armenian religious, political and intellectual leaders. So began one of the darkest chapters of the 20th century.

For eight bloody years a reign of terror ruled the daily lives of Armenians in the Ottoman empire. For eight long horrific years, Armenians were consumed by the fires of racial and religious intolerance. Tragically, by the end of 1923, the entire Armenian population of Anatolia and western Armenia had been either killed or deported.

On the eve of launching the Jewish holocaust, Adolph Hitler commented to his generals, "who, after all, speaks of the Annihilation of the Armenians?" Mr. Speaker, the members of the U.S. Congress speak of the Annihilation of the Armenians. We speak out today so that future generations of Americans will know the facts surrounding the first genocide of the 20th century. We observe this solemn anniversary, along with the Armenian-American community and the people of Armenia, so that no one will be able to deny the undeniable.

Many of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide established new lives in America, contributing their considerable talents and energy to the economic prosperity and cultural diversity of our great nation. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is with a sense of gratitude toward Americans or Armenian descent and a deep sense of moral obligation that I join my colleagues in honoring the memory of these fallen victims of genocide. They have not been forgotten.

EDUCATION IN AMERICA IS FACING CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, education in this country is facing a crisis. If we look at our schools carefully, we find out that there are a lot of drugs in our schools, actually murders occur in our schools, rape occurs in our schools, it is infested with teenage pregnancies. There is total disrespect for authority in many of our schools, and there is no good record to show that the academic progress is being made that is necessary.

The President happens to believe that if we have national testing, this will solve all our problems. And now he is addressing these very, very serious problems that we have in our schools with saying that if we can only get these kids not to smoke a cigarette, maybe we are going to solve these educational problems.

I would say that he is going in the wrong directions. These are serious

problems and we must do something, but pretending that we are going to crack down on kids testing a cigarette, as bad as it is, is not going to solve our problems.

I have a couple suggestions to make on what we can do to improve the educational system. I have a bill that I introduced recently. It is H.R. 3626. It is called the Agriculture Education Freedom Act. This is a bill I think everybody in this body could support.

What it does, it takes away taxation on any youngster who makes some money at one of these 4-H or Future Farmers of America fairs. When they sell their livestock, believe it or not, we go and tax them. Just think of this. The kids are out there trying to do something for themselves, earn some money, save some money and go to school; and what do we do as a Congress, we pick on the kids, we go and we tax these kids.

I talked to a youngster just this past weekend in the farm community in my district, and he told me he just sold an animal for \$1,200 and he has to give \$340 to the U.S. Government. Now, what are we doing, trying to destroy the incentive for these youngsters assuming some responsibility for themselves? Instead, what do we do? We say the only way a youngster could ever go to college is if we give them a grant, if we give them a scholarship, if we give them a student loan. And what is the record on payment on student loans? Not very good. A lot of them walk away.

There is also the principle of it. Why should the Federal Government be involved in this educational process? And besides, the other question is, if we give scholarships and low-interest loans to people who go to college, what we are doing is making the people who do not get to go to college pay for that education, which to me does not seem fair. It seems like that the advantage goes to the individual who gets to go to college, and the people who do not get to go to college should not have to subsidize them.

I think it is unfair I pick on these kids. I think it is time that we quit taxing any youngster who makes some money at a 4-H fair or Future Farmers of America fair where they are selling their livestock and trying to earn money to go to college.

□ 1815

I think it is proper to say that they should have no taxation without representation. They are not even old enough to vote, and here we are taxing them. I mean that is not fair.

So I am hoping that I get a lot of co-sponsors for this bill, because there sure are a lot of youngsters around the country trying to assume responsibility for themselves.

I do not believe for 1 minute the President's approach that we are going to assume that every kid is going to grow up to be a smoke fiend, and if we do not do something quickly, we are

going to have them developing all these bad habits; at the same time, we see the deterioration of the public educational system.

Also, I would like to mention very briefly another piece of legislation that would deal with this educational crisis. The Federal Government has been involved in our public schools for several decades. There is no evidence to show that, as we increase the funding and increase the bureaucracy, that there has been any improvement in education. Quite to the contrary, the exact opposite has happened.

So I would say there is a very good practical case. I know the constitutional argument does not mean much. But the practical case is there is no evidence that what we have done so far has been helpful.

I have another piece of legislation that would give \$3,000 tax credit to every family for every child that they want to educate by themselves. So if they would spend any money on their child, whether they are in school or out of school, in private school, at home schooling, they would get this \$3,000 credit. I hope my colleagues will take a look at these two pieces of legislation.

COMMEMORATING THE 83RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today is the sad and solemn day on which we remember one of the greatest tragedies that humankind has witnessed. Today marks the 83rd anniversary of the Armenian genocide, the first genocide of the 20th Century.

I have come to the floor of the House to acknowledge the atrocities suffered by the Armenian people at the hands of the Ottoman Turks. On April 23, 1915, over 200 Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were massacred in Turkey. Little did anyone know that April 23rd, 1915, would signify the beginning of a Turkish campaign to eliminate the Armenian people from the face of the earth.

Over the following 8 years, 1½ million Armenians perished. And more than 500,000 were exiled from their homes. Armenian civilization, one of the oldest civilizations, virtually ceased to exist. Of course, that was the Turkish plan.

Unfortunately, the Armenian genocide is not as well known in history today as it should be. Little attention was paid to this tragic episode in history by the victorious allied powers at the end of World War I or by historians since.

Thus, ignored by many, the valuable lessons which might have been learned from this Armenian genocide went largely unnoticed. If more attention had been centered on the slaughter of