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 it 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 cosponsors 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

these innocent men, women, and children, perhaps the events of World War II, the Holocaust, might never have taken place.

As George Santayana reminds us, those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it. Perhaps this, above all, is the valuable lesson each of us must learn from the Armenian genocide.

As a result of the failure of some nations to acknowledge this horrible tragedy, the Turkish crimes have remained unpunished. An international court yet to condemn the holocaust of an entire nation, and this impunity has permitted the Turks to repeat similar crimes against the Greek inhabitants of Asia Minor, the Syrian Orthodox people, and, recently, people living in Cyprus.

However, despite the unmerciful efforts of the Turks, Armenian civilization lives on today. It lives on in the independent Republic of Armenia. And it lives on in communities throughout America, particularly from my home State of California.

Today, we honor the innocent Armenians who tragically lost their lives. Today, we acknowledge that the Ottoman Turks committed genocide against the Armenian people. Today, we demand that this undeniable fact be accounted for by the current leaders in Istanbul.

I look forward to the day when the world says in one united voice we remember the Armenian genocide. Until that day comes, I will continue to stand up here before the House of Representatives and remind all of us of our responsibility to learn from the past and our responsibility to prevent any such atrocities in the future.

COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in commemorating the Armenian genocide. I hope other Members of the House will join us in commemorating this 83rd anniversary.

The Oxford Dictionary defines the word ''genocide'' as, and I quote, ''the deliberate extermination of a people or a nation.'' When most people hear this word, they immediately think of Adolf Hitler and his persecution of the Jews during World War II.

Most individuals that you meet on the street are unaware that the first genocide of the 20th Century occurred during World War I, and was perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against the Armenian people. The tactics utilized by the Ottoman Empire were every bit as brutal and deliberate as those used by Hitler.

Concerned that the Armenian people would move to establish their own government, the Ottoman Empire embarked on a reign of terror that resulted in the massacre of over a million and a half Armenians.

This atrocious crime began on April 15, 1915, when the Ottoman Empire arrested, exiled, and eventually killed hundreds of Armenians; the religious, the political, and the intellectual leaders.

Once they had eliminated the Armenian people's leadership, they turned their attention to the Armenians that were serving in the Ottoman army. These soldiers were disarmed. They were placed in labor camps where they were either starved or were executed.

The Armenian people, lacking any political leadership, then were deprived of all of the young able-bodied men who could fight against the onslaught, were then deported from every region of Turkish Armenia.

The images of atrocities endured by these men and women are as graphic and as haunting as the ones that are etched in our minds from the Holocaust. Why, then, are so many people unaware of the Armenian genocide? I believe the answer can be found in the international communities; response to this disturbing event. Simply put, the unspeakable crimes against the Armenian people were essentially ignored.

At the end of World War I, those responsible for ordering and implementing the Armenian genocide were never brought to justice, and the world casually forgot about the pain and suffering inflicted upon the Armenian people. This proved to be a grave mistake.

In 1939, in a speech before his invasion of Poland, Hitler justified his brutal tactics with the infamous statement, ''Who today remembers the Armenians.'' And 6 years after his speech, 6 million Jews have been exterminated by the Nazis. As has been repeated on the floor this evening already, never has the phrase, ''those who forget the past will be destined to repeat it,'' been more true and more applicable.

If the international community had spoken out against this merciless slaughtering of the Armenian people instead of ignoring it, the horrors of the Holocaust might never have taken place.

As we commemorate the 83rd anniversary of the Armenian genocide, I believe it is time to give this event its rightful place in history. That is why we gather tonight to honor the memories of the victims of the genocide that occurred 83 years ago.

So let us pay homage to those who fell victim to their Ottoman oppressors and tell the story of the forgotten genocide, the forgotten genocide. For the sake of the Armenian heritage, it is a story that must be heard, and it must be remembered.

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

(Mr. SCARBOROUGH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE COMMEMORATION

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, as we have heard from some of our colleagues, we come again this year to the House floor to commemorate and pay tribute to the 1.5 million victims of the Armenian genocide. Some ask why 83 years later we continue this exercise. The answer in my mind is rather simple. By telling the history and evoking the names of the victims, we protect them and others who would willfully erase from history their lives and the tragic events which occurred between 1915 and 1923.

As with the Nazi Holocaust, the Irish Famine, and other atrocities, we have a responsibility to society to recount of the history of the Armenian genocide so that we do not forget its victims and so that we remember man's capacity to destroy others who differ in their opinions, their race, religion, or ethnicity.

Genocide is the most egregious of crimes. It is not a crime of passion or revenge, but of hate.

Since 1923, Turkey has denied the Armenian genocide, and there has been no justice, and no Nuremberg trials for the victims and the families of the Armenian genocide.

To those who continue to resist the truth, I can only believe that they had chosen to ignore the hard evidence or to indulge, to their shame, by ignoring the facts. Like the Holocaust, denying the Armenian genocide cannot erase the tragedy, the lives that were lost, or compensate for driving people from their homeland.

For the people of Armenia, the fight continues, particularly for those residing in Karabagh. I am hopeful that we will see the day when peace, stability, and prosperity are realized for the people of Karabagh, and for all Armenians.

For my part, I am hopeful that, through our continued efforts in the Congress, we can improve the lives of the Armenian people, continue to speak out for the human rights observers that, in fact, we hope for that part of the world, and continue to speak out against the atrocities that are continued to be committed by the Turkish Government. Certainly, we will continue to remember those who lost their lives and continue to commemorate this somber occasion.

Ralph Waldo Emerson tells us:

> The history of persecution is a history of endeavors to cheat nature, to make water run uphill, to twist a rope of sand. The martyr cannot be dishonored. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame; every prison a more illustrious abode; every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side. Hours of sanity and consideration are always arriving to communities as to individuals when truth is seen and martyrs are justified.