The last time President Kennedy saw Billy was at the Boston Armory in October 1963. It was “The New England Salute to the President” Dinner, and President Kennedy came over to spend time with Billy and Marsha and talk about old times.

One of the things Billy and Marsha treasured most was the telegram that President Kennedy sent to their daughter Barbara on her third birthday—May 29, 1963. They had the same birthday, and President Kennedy told her “Congratulations on your birthdays.” And ever after, Barbara could show the telegram and say, “My father knew President John F. Kennedy, right from the beginning.”

The secret of Billy’s success was no secret at all to all of us who knew him. He was Irish to the core. The light in his Irish eyes and his Irish heart and soul was always on. It sparkled in everything he ever did, every story he ever told, every friend he ever made, everything he ever did. When the Kennedys and countless others hear the great Irish anthem, we think of Billy:

When Irish eyes are smiling,
Sure it’s like a morn in spring.
In the lil of Irish laughter,
You can hear the angels sing.
When Irish hearts are happy,
All the world seems bright and gay.
And when Irish eyes are smiling,
Sure they’ll steal your heart away.

To Marsha and Barbara and A.J. and all the rest of Billy’s wonderful family, on behalf of all the Kennedys, I say today, as others in our family have said so often over the years, “You stole all our hearts away, Billy. We love you, Billy. We miss you, Billy. And we’ll always remember you.”

TRIBUTE TO VICTIMS OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. STEVE R. ROTHMAN
OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, April 23, 1998

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to join my colleagues in commemorating the Armenian Genocide and the solemn memory of the 1.5 million Armenians who lost their lives earlier this century. This is an important day to reflect on the lessons of history and work to avoid the horrors faced by the Armenian people in 1915.

For the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, I would very much like to submit a letter concerning the Armenian Genocide that I sent to President Bill Clinton. It is my earnest hope that the United States Congress, with President Clinton’s determining leadership, will swiftly move to adopt a resolution acknowledging the Armenian Genocide.

As a nation, we pay a great price for our government’s participation in the Turkish government’s denial of the Armenian Genocide. As you would surely agree, complicity in the denial of genocide, at any time—is simply unacceptable conduct for the world’s leading defender of human rights.

The United States’ long-standing acquiescence of Turkey’s denial was accurately characterized in 1995 by Stanley Cohen, a professor of criminology at Jerusalem’s Hebrew University, writing in “Law and Social Inquiry,” published by the American Bar Foundation: “The nearest successful example of a collective denial in the modern era is the 80 years of official denial by successive Turkish governments of the 1915-17 genocide against the Armenians in which some 1.5 million people lost their lives. This denial has been sustained by deliberate propaganda, lying and cover-ups, forging documents, suppression of archives, and bribing scholars.”

The denial, especially the United States, has colluded by not referring to the massacres in the United Nations, ignoring memorial ceremonies, and surrendering to Turkish pressures in NATO and other strategic arenas of cooperation.

As I noted, withholding the proper recognition of the Armenian Genocide—this greatest of human rights violations—endangers our nation’s ability to help resolve the ongoing conflict over Nagorno-Karabagh. The Administration’s assurance of security guarantees to Turkey, people of Nagorno-Karabagh are greatly weakened by our government’s unwillingness, after 83 years, to acknowledge that a crime of genocide was committed against the Armenian nation. This unwillingness seriously undermines the faith that the people of Karabagh have that the United States will stand up for their rights in the event of renewed Azerbaijani aggression.

Mr. President, very appropriately, you have always stressed that the United States must lead on the question of fundamental freedoms around the world. Your statement on March 29th of this year in the Rwandan conference was a testament of our nation’s commitment to human rights. At the Kigali airport, you stated that, “Genocide can occur anywhere. It is not an African phenomenon. We must have global vigilance. And never again must we be shy in the face of evidence.”

Mr. President, the evidence of the Armenian Genocide is clear. Now is the time to stand up for justice and help bring an end to Turkey’s denial of the Armenian Genocide. Sincerely,

STEVEN R. ROTHMAN,
Member of Congress.

COMMENDING SHELBY CORBITT VICK

HON. BOB SCHAFFER
OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, April 23, 1998

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about the value of an excellent education. I would like to tell you about Shelby Corbett Vick, a student from my hometown of Fort Collins, Colorado. Shelby Corbett Vick was born November 15, 1986 and is the eldest child and only daughter of Joseph James Vick and Patricia Burns Vick. She was born in Fort Collins. She attends St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School as a 5th grader. Shelby has one younger brother, Emmett James Andrew Vick. Emmett is nine years old and was also born in Fort Collins.