

have lost their beloved children, to the wounded children and their families, and to the people of the community of Littleton, Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, I can empathize with what the people of Littleton are going through. There was an incident of senseless school violence in my own south Texas congressional district a little over 1 year ago. On January 13, 1998, two masked gunmen, armed with automatic assault rifles, stormed into a building at South Texas Community College and opened fire where students were registering for class. Two students were seriously wounded and one security guard died in that shooting.

In McAllen, Texas, this was certainly not something that we ever imagined possible on a community college campus. Shock and grief swept across our community in the immediate aftermath of the violent incident. To this day, it remains a shock and a horror.

In the days ahead, it is important that we do all we can to hammer home to our children and to young adults that violence is wrong. As a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, school safety is an issue that I take very seriously. In fact, it is the number one educational concern of hundreds of my constituents I surveyed earlier this year.

Today, Mr. Speaker, as we struggle to understand this tragedy, our hearts go out to the people of Littleton, Colorado. On behalf of every man, woman and child of Texas's 15th Congressional District, please accept our deep condolences and sympathy.

COMMEMORATING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in remembrance of the victims of the Armenian Genocide. I would like to thank the co-chairs of the Armenian Caucus, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRANK PALLONE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JOHN PORTER) for arranging this important special order in observance of this tragic event.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, between the years 1915 and 1923, the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire became a target of heightened persecution by the Ottoman Turks. These persecutions culminated in a 3-decade period during which more than 1.5 million Armenians were systematically uprooted from their homelands of 3,000 years and eliminated through massacres and deportation.

Mr. Speaker, this historic event can no longer be denied. Vast amounts of documentation exist in the United States archives, as well as in the public domain, which lend proof that the horrific event surrounding this period did in fact take place. It is important that

we, as Members of Congress, continue to officially recognize the genocide because it is an important part of our world history, just as historically important as World War II, and a prelude to the Holocaust that followed. It is a shame and an outrage that the Genocide is still not recognized by many, many nations.

Mr. Speaker, it is also important that we continue to mark this event on an annual basis. Although most of the survivors of the Genocide are unfortunately no longer with us, their relatives continue to remember and to mourn them to this day. I am proud that the State of New York is one of the few States which has offered a human right/genocide curricula for teachers and students to use at their discretion, which includes the Armenian Genocide. I was a sponsor of that curricula, and I believe educational programs such as this allow our children to learn more about the tragic events such as the Armenian Genocide, hopefully ensuring a peaceful existence for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot forget that the persecution and mistreatment of the Armenian people continues today in Nagorno-Karabagh. Since 1988, fighting there has left more than 1,500 Armenians dead and uprooted hundreds more, forcing them to flee to other parts of this unstable region. As a member of the Congressional Armenian Caucus, I will work to end the repression of the Armenian people in Nagorno-Karabagh and will continue to support their efforts to ensure a stable future for their people.

COLUMBINE HIGH SCHOOL SHOOTING

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

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, as a Coloradoan and as an American, I am profoundly shocked and saddened by the shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, yesterday. My thoughts and prayers go out to the families who have been victims of this terrible crime.

I can hardly imagine the horror and pain experienced by the families who lost loved ones in this tragedy, and as the father of two school aged children, I am deeply distressed by the prospect that our schools have become places where this kind of violence can take place.

Today, however, is not a time to rush to judgment about the causes or cures for this tragedy. I do believe, however, that parents, community leaders and policymakers at all levels, including school boards, State legislators and our national government need to come together in coming weeks and reflect upon this tragedy. We need a fuller discussion of the values we share as Americans, and we need to work more actively than ever before to make our

schools safe and to ensure that our Nation's classrooms are places for learning and for nurturing the full potential of our young people.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that as a Nation we will respond to this incident by looking beyond our prejudices and political leanings. My concern is that the violence that took place in Colorado has deeper implications for our future than we can fully fathom at this moment. I fear it goes deeper than observations about a decline in our values or moral decay as a society.

Ultimately, this tragedy will challenge us to carefully explore our understanding of rights and freedoms, whether it is access to the Internet or access to guns. Moreover, it will challenge us to place an even greater priority on the quality of our lives and the lives of our children.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. ESHOO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ESHOO addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY of New York) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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 remembrance 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, 1999 marks the 84th 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 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, and I quote, "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