

If there is one lesson of the 20th century, it is that these heinous acts against humanity will continue if we allow ourselves to forget history. We must all commit ourselves to never forget. That is why I am proud to join my colleagues, the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), on their bill to officially observe the Armenian Genocide, to have the United States officially recognize this period of history as the Armenian Genocide, and to have the United States press the Turkish government to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide.

Yet, in the shadow of Kosovo, our Nation and other nations still resist acknowledging the Armenian Genocide. Last May, the French National Assembly passed a bill to publicly recognize the Armenian Genocide of 1915. This spring the French Senate and the government of France, under pressure from Turkey, are in a turmoil over whether to approve this legislation. In the United States, we find the government of Turkey attempting to influence our universities, to pretend these acts of genocide against the Armenian people did not happen, and we find U.S. strategic interests in arms sales to Turkey are more influential in setting our foreign policy priorities than acknowledging the truth about acts that took place 84 years ago.

That is because in 84 years, the truth of the Armenian genocide is still powerful and still resonates in current events, and that is why it must be officially acknowledged, why it must be taught in our schools, remembered in our houses of worship and honored in our communities. Now, more than ever, we must recognize, acknowledge, commemorate, mourn and remember the Armenian Genocide. To do less is to doom future generations to repeat and relive these horrors.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) in particular for their leadership on this issue, and I hope that this government will do the right thing.

NATIONAL DISCUSSION CALLED
FOR CONCERNING CAUSES AND
SOLUTIONS FOR VIOLENCE
AMONG NATION'S YOUTH

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, everyone was horrified by these terrible shootings in Littleton, Colorado yesterday. This is one of the worst tragedies that has ever occurred in this Nation. There is nothing worse that can happen to parents than to outlive one of their children, and certainly, the sympathies of all of us go out to the families who lost loved ones in Colorado yesterday.

Many years ago I taught American government and journalism at T.C. Williams High School here in Alexandria, Virginia. I go to 75 or 80 schools each year and have 15 or 20 school groups visit me here in Washington, as well as speaking to many, many youth groups through the year. I am around thousands of teenagers each year. So this tragedy has really been on my mind last night and today.

I remember several months ago, after one of these other school shootings, I was driving to the airport here in Washington to go home to Tennessee. The national head of the YMCA was on the CBS national radio news. He said something that I have never forgotten. He said that our children are being neglected today in this country as never before in our history.

I am a father too. In our quest to get ahead, almost all of us in our quest to get ahead and to make more money and really to feel better about ourselves, we are not spending nearly enough time with our children.

No one can ever fully explain these shootings that occurred yesterday. I am sure there are many reasons for these horrible events. There is far too much violence on television and in the movies. There is too much warped, weird stuff on the Internet. I know we are supposed to worship the computer today, but much of what is on the Internet is harmful, especially to children, and parents should realize that.

But probably the thing that concerns me the most is the trend toward mega schools, bigger and bigger schools. I read not long ago that the largest high school in New York City had 3,500 students, and then they broke it up or divided it up into 5 different high schools and most of the drug and discipline problems became much, much better. When students have to go to huge high schools such as the one in Littleton yesterday, most young people are not able to make a sports team or be a cheerleader or be president of a group. Most students are just numbers and feel anonymous. Most can handle this okay, but some unfortunately resort to weird, warped or at times even criminal behavior to get noticed or a desperate cry for attention. Young people who feel good about themselves would never do anything even remotely close to the horrible events that occurred in Littleton yesterday.

I think another thing that has caused many serious problems is the breakup of the family. Before coming to Congress, I spent 7½ years as a criminal court judge in Tennessee, trying felony criminal cases. I have always remembered that the first day I was judge they told me that 98 percent of the defendants in felony cases came from broken homes. I know that many, many wonderful people, many successful people have come from broken homes. But I read thousands of reports

over those years which said, the defendant's father left home when defendant was two and never returned; defendant's father left home to get pack of cigarettes and never came back.

Then, after I came to Congress, I remember reading in one of the Washington papers a few years ago that two leading criminologists have studied 11,000 felony cases from across the country and they found that the biggest single factor in serious crime, bar none, nothing else was even close, was father-absent households.

So I rise today to make a plea for fathers to stay with their children. This is so very important, and there are so many young people growing up in this country today without the love or the discipline or the encouragement or the support or the combination of all of those things that they really need. If the families keep breaking up at such a tremendous rate in this country, we are going to see problems continue to grow and grow and horrible events such as we saw in Littleton yesterday.

Yet, there is a government role, because in 1950 the government at all levels, the Federal Government took about 4 percent of the income of the average family, the State and local governments took another 4 percent, and many mothers had the privilege of staying home with their children. And now, government at all levels takes about 40 percent of the income of the average family and regulatory costs take another 10 percent, and so many, as FRED THOMPSON said one time, Senator FRED THOMPSON said, one spouse works to support the family while the other spouse works to support the government. Many mothers who would like to stay home with their children do not have that choice or that option. So if we could decrease the cost and size of our government, it would help more families stay together because most families break up in arguments over finances.

When we put all of this together, it is hard to explain, but we need to have a national discussion, Mr. Speaker, about the causes of events such as what happened in Littleton yesterday, and we need to do everything we possibly can to see that nothing like that ever happens again in this country.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 84TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARME-
NIAN GENOCIDE

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as I have for the past 6 years, to acknowledge the atrocities suffered by the Armenian people at the hands of the Ottoman Turks over 84 years ago. This Saturday, April 24, will mark the 84th anniversary of the Armenian

Genocide, the very first genocide of the 20th century. On that date, more than 200 Armenian religious, political and intellectual leaders were massacred in Turkey. It is important that we take this time to remember one of the greatest tragedies that humankind has ever witnessed.

Little did anyone know that April 24, 1915, would signify the beginning of a Turkish campaign to eliminate the Armenian people, eliminate them from the face of the Earth. Over the following 8 years, 1.5 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 as it deserves to 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. So much of it had faded into our painful memories, and many people are beginning to forget what occurred in those terrible times. Even worse, as time passes by and people are distracted and distanced from the atrocities, naysayers and revisionists may prevail.

In fact, some might say it is a waste of time to continue fighting to get recognition for this, the first genocide of the 20th century. Mr. Speaker, I strongly disagree. This fight is not a waste of time. I believe it is a battle worth fighting, one where we have already made great strides. We are making great leaps forward in educating people as to what really occurred to the Armenians at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, and also what is really happening with the widespread network of denials since the genocide.

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

Fortunately, despite this unspeakable tragedy committed 84 years ago, Armenians today remain a proud, dignified and compassionate people. Despite the unmerciful efforts of the Turks, Armenian civilization lives on and thrives today.

It lives on in the Independent Republic of Armenia, and it lives on in communities throughout America, particularly in my home State of California. In fact, every proud Armenian is the product of generations of perseverance, courage and hope, hope always for a better tomorrow.

So today, we honor the innocent Armenians who tragically lost their lives.

Today we acknowledge that the Ottoman Turks committed genocide against the Armenian people.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when the world says in one united voice, we remember Armenian genocide, and it will never be repeated. Until that day comes, I will continue to remind the House of Representatives that it is our responsibility to learn from the past, and it is our responsibility to prevent any such atrocity in the future.

PROTECTING THE MEMORY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) for their work to introduce the resolution this week which will ensure that the United States of America continues to play an active role in protecting the memory of the Armenian Genocide that began 85 years ago.

As we so unfortunately see in Kosovo today, documenting the horrors of genocide, or ethnic cleansing as they call it, as it is called and it is supposed to be an euphemism I am sure for the murderers, it is vital to get these records if we are ever to stop such actions from occurring again on this Earth.

The resolution that is being introduced calls upon the President of the United States to collect and house all relevant U.S. records relating to the Armenian Genocide and provide them to Congress, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Armenian Genocide Museum in Yerevan, Armenia.

It is necessary to do this because there are many who live in denial. Sadly, among those who live in denial are those in the government of Turkey, 85 years later, that somehow continue to deny what we know from repeated testimony of thousands of immigrants, and we knew at the time from reporters and others.

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The Turkish government continues to deny what occurred at the beginning of this century, just as there are some misguided people who still deny the Jewish Holocaust, where 6 million people were murdered by the Nazi Germans, and probably some are still denying the murderous efforts of Pol Pot in Cambodia, where he and his gang of ideologues murdered 2 million Cambodians.

The innocent civilians in the Balkans, the innocent civilians in South Asia, the innocent civilians in the Middle East and in Germany, all of those are why we should talk about their

problems and their genocide on the appropriate occasions.

No one can take for granted the ability of some people to clearly look at the facts and still deny that the facts do not exist. Each year we join the world commemoration of the Armenian genocide because it must not be forgotten. Time, distance, current events frequently cloud the past and reduce horrible events to little more than a footnote in history.

The Armenian genocide is not a footnote. Neither is the Jewish Holocaust. Neither are the 2 million Cambodians murdered by Pol Pot. The 1.5 million Armenians killed by the Turkish government and others, and the deep scars left upon those who survived, deserve our vigil, because too many want us to forget.

Even in our country, on the situation in civil rights, where black citizens were beaten in the South and other parts of the United States, and we passed laws to overcome that, even this generation of young high school people does not know what this Nation went through and does not know what other nations have gone through.

Documenting the horrors of the genocide cannot stop those who would deny it, any more than the extensive documentation of the Holocaust has stopped individuals from denying that abominable period. However, we cannot begin the fight against ignorance if we do not preserve the records of those crimes as they were committed.

The Armenian genocide marked the beginning of a barbaric practice in the 20th century, and is it not ironic that we are ending the 20th century and those practices still exist in the Balkans, as vis-a-vis Serbia and its neighbors? By remembering, if we can help prevent future actions and punish the guilty in the future, this will be a noble cause.

I recall the Armenians in my own county when I grew up in San Benito County and in Long Beach, and some of the men and women who were maybe small children, and their parents got them through the Turkish lines and they escaped death. As with other immigrants, including my father, the Armenians, the Jews, the Cambodians, and we have 50,000 in Long Beach, California, from Cambodia, they know what freedom means. They know what the United States means.

I will never forget a dinner when Governor George Deukmejian, a child of Armenian parents who had escaped, had many of his Armenian friends and supporters at that dinner. Tears streamed down all of our eyes. These people were in their seventies and their eighties, and they knew those horrors. They knew the haven that America was, a haven of freedom. Some have called it the city on the Hill. What it means is this is a place where we would not tolerate that.