

THE WHITE HOUSE, May 6, 1999.

□ 2000

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIAN STUDIES PROGRAM AT HEBREW UNIVERSITY IN JERUSALEM

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, on Tuesday, May 4, at the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia here in Washington, D.C., an important milestone was celebrated, the 30th anniversary of the Armenian Studies Program at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

I believe this event is important not only because of the celebration of three decades of one of the world's finest programs for the study of Armenian language, literature, art and history, although this is of course extremely important in its own right. What distinguishes this week's celebration and the entire mission of the Armenian Studies Program at Hebrew University is the cooperation it represents between the Armenian and the Jewish peoples. This cooperation was in evidence as distinguished representatives from both the Armenian-American and Jewish-American communities were present at the Embassy.

Mr. Speaker, the Armenian and Jewish peoples have much in common. They are two of the most ancient and enduring nations, with histories and traditions that are measured not in centuries but in millennia. Sadly, these two peoples of great cultural achievement have also been singled out for unthinkable suffering, particularly in this century.

Last month, Members of this House paid tribute to the victims and survivors of the Armenian genocide in which 1.5 million Armenians died at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish Empire during the years 1915 to 1923. At that time there did not exist a word to properly convey the enormous horror of an entire people being singled out for mass murder, for racial or ethnic elimination.

It was not until the Nazi Holocaust, in which six million Jews were killed for no other reason than for who they were, that a term was devised to describe this mass atrocity: Genocide. In fact, when Hitler was planning his so-called "final solution" against the Jewish people, he said to his associates, "Who today remembers the extermination of the Armenians?"

Yet today, Mr. Speaker, the Armenian and Jewish people have overcome the horrors of the past, not forgotten, of course, but overcome. The Republic of Armenia is an emerging democracy that has worked to establish the institutions of a civil society at home while maintaining its national security despite being surrounded by hostile neighbors. The State of Israel has succeeded at these same daunting tasks, fostering a thriving democracy while remaining secure against hostile neighbors for half a century.

In Israel's capital of Jerusalem, in the southwestern part of the Old City, surrounding the Citadel of King David, is the Armenian Quarter. The staunchly Christian Armenian people, the first to embrace Christianity as their national religion, have maintained their presence in that area since early times. The Armenian St. James Cathedral is one of the most impressive churches in the Old City. The Armenian Museum is a graceful cloister housing a fascinating collection of manuscripts and artifacts.

Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate Road and Ararat Street, named for the mountain in full view from Armenia's capital of Yerevan, where Noah's Ark is believed to have come to rest, are two of the area's main thoroughfares. Jerusalem's approximately 2,000 Armenians live in a tightly-knit community known for their sophistication, dedication to their faith and their nation, and hospitality to visitors.

During the Armenian genocide, hundreds of thousands of Armenians were forced by the Ottoman Turks into the deserts of the Middle East. In the midst of their suffering, some Armenians were taken in and given protection by many people in the Middle East, and Armenian communities still exist in that part of the world.

Israel and Armenia continue to work on expanding and improving their bilateral relations. While there have admittedly been some differences, Armenian Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian visited Israel late last year, at which time the governments of both countries emphasized their commitment to increased cooperation.

But, Mr. Speaker, while government-to-government initiatives continue, some of the most important advances come from the person-to-person relationships. Tuesday night's event at the Armenian Embassy is a testimony to that effort.

I want to pay particular tribute to two individuals who have done so much to further these important contacts, Annie Totah and Aris Mardirossian, the co-chairs of the 30th Anniversary Celebration. I also salute all of the Armenian and American Friends of the Hebrew University and all of the leaders in the Armenian and Jewish communities who have worked so hard for this very worthy cause.

Tuesday's reception will be followed by several noteworthy events in Jerusalem, including the International Conference on the Armenians in Jerusalem on May 24 through 26, a symposium for the Israeli public on June 6, and a symposium on the Armenian Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with guest of honor His Beatitude Mesrop II, Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, and an alumnus of the Armenian Studies Program.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to express my appreciation to one of the leading figures in the media, ABC news anchor Peter Jennings. On last Friday's broadcast, Mr. Jennings presented as part of his series on the century a poignant and powerful report on the Armenian genocide. In a century in which genocide has been a recurring horror, from the Nazis to Cambodia to Rwanda to the Balkans, it is important that all of us, in politics, in the media, in the field of education, and in other walks of life, be aware of what happened to the Armenian people 84 years ago.

#### THE FAA, DOT IG, NTSB AND AVIATION SAFETY

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, on March 10, 1999, the House Appropriations subcommittee on Transportation held a hearing on the topic of aviation safety. At that hearing, Jane Garvey, administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) testified, as did Ken Mead, Department of Transportation inspector general (IG), and Jim Hall, chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

Last year, domestic air carriers had an excellent safety record: no passengers died on U.S. commercial flights. Many worked diligently to make safety a priority, and in the transportation appropriations subcommittee we have focused our efforts on aviation safety as well as all transportation modes.

In listening to the testimony prepared by each agency, it appeared that there was a difference of opinion in some areas with regard to the progress being made in aviation safety. Therefore, I requested that the IG and NTSB review the FAA's testimony and the FAA review the testimony of the IG and NTSB. In addition, I asked each to respond to the comments made by the others. I have provided this information for the FEDERAL REGISTER.

In general, the oversight agencies (NTSB and IG) believe that the FAA could be moving more aggressively in the referenced areas of aviation safety. For example, the NTSB noted that the FAA should be moving more quickly to ensure that aircraft registered in the United States have new flight data recorders. Similarly, the IG points out that draft regulations seeking to reduce the number of runway incursions have not yet been published while the number of runway incursions continues to rise.

Both oversight agencies suggest that the FAA should use more realistic measures of aviation safety. For example, the IG notes that