

It is our hope that this center will serve as the nexus to broaden awareness of the Armenian Genocide throughout the academic and educational communities whose focus is human rights, the responsibility of majorities towards minorities, and the horrified consequences for peoples and groups at risk in the absence of safeguards.

But it is also our hope that this place will provide public officials with a greater degree of moral conviction, courage and vision so that they summarily reject the incessant threats that emanate from Turkish officials to sever diplomatic and economic relations when any government dares to affirm the Armenian Genocide. The public officials with you today have demonstrated by their presence and other official actions that they reject Turkey's denials and threats.

Ladies and gentlemen . . .

Through this facility, we will remind the world of Hitler's chilling cynicism on humankind's predilection to forget.

Through this facility, we will enthusiastically support collaborative work between turks and Armenians. We have seen in this great country the redemptive value of facing history squarely, and we will promote a dialogue to secure the same benefits for our two peoples.

Through this facility we will promote international condemnation of and action against any government of people that attempts to do what was done to our people at the beginning of the last century.

We must succeed in this unprecedented effort in the name of our martyred millions, in tribute to those who survived and established new Armenian communities throughout the world, and in honor of countless non-Armenians who protested this crime against humanity and who saved tens of thousands from oblivion.

Finally ladies and gentlemen, we will succeed not only to remember the past but also to enhance the security of the people of Armenian and Karabagh—and to help insure that the world never forgets the cataclysmic price of indifference and inaction.

We look forward to this historic challenge and we welcome all who wish to join us. Thank you in advance for your generous support.

Mr. Speaker, the Armenian genocide is a painful subject to discuss for me and others. We must never forget, though, what happened, and never cease speaking out. We must overcome the denials and the indifference, and keep alive the memory and truth of what happened to the Armenian people in the past, as we work to see in this tragic history that it never be repeated.

#### RECOGNIZING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I also rise here this evening to speak of one of the great horrors of our century, and that is the Armenian genocide. As a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, I once again join a large number of colleagues in recognizing the great tragedy of the Armenian people.

As we all know and has been stated here several times tonight, this genocide occurred in 1915 when the Ottoman Empire began to force Armenians from their homeland, and it lasted until 1923. These 8 years saw the deaths of 1.5 million innocent victims and 500,000 exiled survivors.

Despite the tremendous magnitude of the genocide, the world stood by as families were torn asunder and millions of lives were taken. Therefore, today, as we stand in recognition of the victims of this Armenian genocide, we also stand in recognition of the guilt of complicity of all nations that turned away when faced with this great tragedy.

There is no doubt that calling events by their rightful name, genocide, is an important element of this recognition of responsibility.

Had we heeded the lessons that emerged from the massacre, perhaps we could have avoided other great tragedies in this century. In quietly letting the sorrow of the Armenian people go unresolved, however, we allow their tragedy to repeat itself over and over again in Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, in Rwanda in the 1990s, and elsewhere throughout the world.

Today, as we once again honor the victims of the Armenian genocide, on behalf of the Sixth District of Massachusetts, I also honor the commitment and perseverance of Armenian-Americans who have tirelessly struggled to ensure that the great sorrow of their people becomes known to all people.

As we in Congress continue to confront issues of international peace and security, we would do well to remember this message: never forget.

#### HONORING THE MEMORY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the Armenia caucus for bringing us together to honor the memory of the greatest tragedy of Armenian history. This tragedy holds a valuable historical lesson for all of us.

I myself in California growing up got to know several Armenian families. One man, one elderly man in one of the families that I knew, he was the sole survivor of the Armenian genocide. So the lessons are not just for those that were directly involved; it is for all of us. It is for all of us to know it is important that we as Americans acknowledge this genocide. That is what we are talking about today.

Some 56 years ago, my father entered Dachau concentration camp in Germany with the Seventh Army. He took photographs there that day of those surviving that genocide, those starving

people that the American troops fed and liberated.

He remembers the quote from Adolph Hitler when Hitler was cautioned by the German chiefs of staff about his genocidal plans. Of course, as we have heard tonight, Hitler's retort was, "Who remembers the Armenians?"

Well, 86 years ago today, the Ottoman Empire set out on a well-orchestrated campaign to exterminate a race of people. On that day, they began the campaign by focusing on the Armenian religious and political and intellectual leaders that they arrested in Constantinople, and they murdered them.

In the years that followed, Armenians living under Ottoman rule were systematically deprived of their property, their individual rights, and ultimately, of their lives. As we have heard, between 1915 and 1923, the number of deaths was horrific. Some 1.5 million Armenians were murdered and 500,000 were deported from their homeland; and at the end of these 8 years, the Armenian population of Anatolia and western Armenia was virtually eliminated.

Henry Morgenthau, the U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire at the time, characterized this as a death warrant to a whole race. Morgenthau recognized that this campaign was ethnic cleansing. It is unfortunate that the Turkish Government to this day does not recognize this. Willful ignorance of the lessons of history all but ensures that those mistakes can be made again.

In the last Congress, I joined 143 of my colleagues to cosponsor a congressional resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide. The resolution expressly differentiated between the Ottoman Empire and the modern day Republic of Turkey. We understand these are not the same governments.

Unfortunately, despite hard-fought efforts, the resolution was never able to come to the House floor last Congress because of concerns, in my mind concerns without merit, with Turkey's reaction. I believed then, as I do now, that it remains important for the Congress to go on the record.

Beyond affirming the U.S. record on the Armenian genocide, the resolution encouraged awareness and understanding of what genocide is, and this crime against humanity has been compounded to this day by those who refuse to recognize it. The victims and their families, many of whom live in the United States, are owed this recognition. That is why we must have this resolution pass this floor.

In my home State of California, the State Board of Education has incorporated the story of Armenian genocide in the social studies curriculum. California is doing the right thing.

As of last September, California law now permits victims of the Armenian