

Turks and more than 500,000 others were deported.

□ 1945

Unfortunately, there were others included in this massacre, including Assyrians and Pontic Greeks, bringing the number to well over 3.5 million lost lives.

Today, April 24, marks the 86th anniversary of the beginning of the genocide. It was on this day in 1915 that more than 200 Armenian religious, political and intellectual leaders were gathered together and murdered in Constantinople. This was the beginning of an organized, brutal campaign to eliminate the Armenian presence from the Ottoman Empire. This campaign lasted for over 8 years. During this time, Armenians were systematically uprooted from their homeland of over 3,000 years and eliminated through massacres or deportation. But Armenians are strong people, and their dream of freedom did not die. More than 70 years after the genocide, the new Republic of Armenia was born as the Soviet Union crumbled.

Today, we pay tribute to the courage and strength of people who would not know defeat. I was privileged to meet with many of these people this past weekend on Sunday in my district where Sam Azadian along with Archbishop Barsamian and many others held a meeting where we remembered the massacres. One of the survivors, Sano Halo, was there. Her daughter has written a book about her life entitled "Not Even My Name." It tells the story of Ms. Halo who, at the age of 10, was uprooted with her family with thousands of Pontic Greeks and forced by the Turks on a brutal death march. Ms. Halo saw her entire family die of starvation and disease in front of her eyes, or assault and murder by the Turks. Through circumstances, she was able to survive and has come to the United States and now lives in my district.

Unfortunately, even with the truthful, thoughtful accounts from people who experienced the genocide such as Ms. Halo, there are those who question the reality of the Armenian slaughter. That is why it is so important that in this Congress we must finally pass the resolution documenting the Armenian genocide. We must follow the moral leadership of France and Italy whose national assemblies unanimously passed a bill that officially recognizes the genocide of 1.5 million Armenians in Turkey during and after World War II. And we must follow the leadership of many of our State legislatures. Over 27 legislatures have passed proclamations, resolutions, bills recognizing the genocide.

For the people of Armenia, the fight still continues today, particularly for the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, who are impacted by modern day Tur-

key and Azerbaijan's aggression toward Armenia in the continued blockade. I am hopeful that the recent talks in Key West between the Armenian and Azerbaijan presidents will move them one step closer toward peace. A peaceful solution is important to United States interests.

We have supported Armenia with direct assistance and with confidence-building allocations. I strongly support the efforts of the Armenian community to dedicate a museum and memorial commemorating the victims of the Armenian genocide. This year, their dream became a reality with the purchase of a building near the White House. Nothing we can say will bring back those who perished, but we can honor their memories with everlasting meaning by teaching the lessons of the Armenian genocide to the next generation.

As the great philosopher George Santayana once said, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Let us learn our lesson and never forget the Armenians.

#### EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

#### ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few minutes to add my voice and join my colleagues in remembering and paying tribute to those Armenians who lost their lives and national identity during one of the 20th century's tragic examples of persecution and intolerance, the Armenian genocide of 1915–1923.

Many Armenians in America, particularly Indiana, are the children and grandchildren of survivors. In fact, tonight I may represent the fewest number here. I think I have either two or six Armenians in my district. But some 20 years ago my friend, Zohrab Tazian, did a presentation to a Rotary Club as I watched the historical film in the background of how the Armenians were destroyed and chased, and listened to his personal story of how his family fled down to Lebanon; and eventually he made his way to the United States. It touched me, as do other human rights tragedies such as this.

We commemorate this tragedy because it marks the beginning of the persecution, ethnic cleansing of the Ar-

menian people by the Ottoman Turks on April 24, 1915. Armenian political, intellectual and religious leaders were arrested, forcibly moved from their homeland and killed. The brutality continued against the Armenian people as families were uprooted from their homes and marched to concentration camps in the desert where many would eventually starve to death.

In 1919 when recalling the event, the U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, Sr. said, "I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this. The great massacres and persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared to the sufferings of the Armenian race in 1915." As we heard Hitler say when he moved into the Holocaust period, "Who remembers the Armenians?"

By 1923, the religious and ideological persecution by the Ottoman Turks resulted in the murder of 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children and the displacement of an additional 500,000 Armenians.

The 20th century has borne witness to many acts of brutality and savagery by despotic regimes who sought to deny people human rights and religious freedoms. Examples abound, such as Stalin against the Russians, Hitler against the Jews, Mao Tse-tung against the Chinese, Pol Pot against the Cambodians, and currently Bashir against the Sudanese.

Genocide has devastating consequences for society as a whole because of the problems created by uprooting entire populations. It is bad enough to see the persecutions that we see in Tiananmen Square, where governments do not acknowledge the shooting of civilians; but when you uproot entire subgroups based on their background, as has happened in Bosnia, as Serbia was trying to do, and clearly on a massive scale in Turkey vis-a-vis the Armenians, it is tragic. The survivors become the ones who carry the memory of the suffering and the realization that their loved ones are gone. They are the ones who no longer have a home and may feel ideological and spiritual abandonment.

Part of the healing process for any victims of genocide, including Armenian survivors and families of survivors, involves acknowledgment of the atrocity and the admission of wrongdoing by those who perpetrated the persecution. It is only through acknowledgment and forgiveness that it is possible to move beyond the past.

Unfortunately, those responsible for ordering the systematic removal of the Armenians were never brought to justice, and the Armenian Genocide has become a dark moment in history, even an unacknowledged moment.

It is important that we remember this tragic event and show strong leadership by denouncing the persecution

of people due to their differences in political and religious ideology. Who can visit the Holocaust Museum and not be personally touched? By establishing and continuing a discourse, we are acknowledging the tragedies of the past and remembering those awful moments in history so they will not be repeated.

As my friend the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG) says, history may not repeat itself but often it rhymes. Acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide by Turkey will help to remove this decades-old barrier and allow greater cooperation and understanding between these two people.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all those Members who have come down here tonight to recognize and make sure that regardless of what Turkey does and regardless of what this Congress does, that the American people still hear a voice on behalf of the Armenians in this country and remember the Armenian Genocide of 1915 to 1923, as well as our thanking all the Armenian organizations who have worked so hard to keep this issue at the forefront of our minds to serve as an example of the brutality of man against man.

#### EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISLOSKY).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

#### REMEMBER THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, each year I am deeply humbled when we gather in the United States House of Representatives to honor the memory of the 1.5 million Armenians who perished and the 500,000 survivors who were forcibly exiled from their ancestral homes in Ottoman Turkey during the years 1915 to 1923. Some of those survivors, Mr. Speaker, are part of my own community in Worcester, Massachusetts. I had the opportunity to meet with several of them on Sunday during a special program in the historic Armenian Church of Our Savior.

It is difficult to fathom a greater evil than the massacre and willful destruction of a people. Those who deny that a holocaust took place when there are recorded accounts of the barbarity are complicit and often perpetuate a cycle of violence. This is the injustice much of the world has committed against the Armenian people.

Elie Wiesel, Nobel laureate and Holocaust survivor, has called denial of

genocide a double killing: The denial of genocide seeks to reshape history in order to demonize the victims and rehabilitate the perpetrators and is, in effect, the final stage of genocide. Nobel laureate and South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu in the Preface to the Encyclopedia of Genocide, which was published in 1999 by the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Jerusalem, writes, "It is possible that if the world had been conscious of the genocide that was committed by the Ottoman Turks against the Armenians, the first genocide of the 20th century, then perhaps humanity might have been more alert to the warning signs that were being given before Hitler's madness was unleashed on an unbelieving world."

And last year, Mr. Speaker, Israeli Minister of Education Yossi Sarid said publicly, "I will do everything in order that Israeli children learn and know more about the Armenian Genocide. Something happened that cannot be defined except as genocide; 1.5 million people disappeared. It was not negligence. It was deliberate."

And so scholars and eyewitnesses, Nobel laureates and Armenian survivors have spoken for 86 long years. And now we have entered the 21st century. After a long silence, governments are beginning to respond. They are beginning to acknowledge formally the Armenian Genocide. The European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the United Nations now recognize and reaffirm the Armenian Genocide as historical fact. In the last 5 years alone the parliaments of Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Russia and Sweden have passed resolutions officially recognizing the Armenian Genocide.

Last November, Pope John Paul II issued a communique condemning the Armenian Genocide as a "prologue to horrors" that would follow in the 20th century. Earlier this year, French President Jacques Chirac signed into law a bill stating that France publicly recognizes the Armenian Genocide of 1915. And authorities in Paris have voted to erect a memorial to the genocide of the Armenian people.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, France has achieved the moral leadership that the United States Congress and the White House have failed to fulfill. Last year, for the first time, the Congress moved forward on a resolution officially recognizing the Armenian Genocide, a resolution I proudly cosponsored. Unfortunately, the politics of denial and political expediency combined to thwart that effort. Bowing to pressure from the current Turkish Government, the measure was kept from coming to the House floor.

So, we begin again this year. In the House, I am an original cosponsor of a new resolution to have the United

States officially recognize the Armenian Genocide. Thirty of our States, including Massachusetts, have passed resolutions officially recognizing the Armenian Genocide. We have a new President, who pledged during his campaign that he would officially recognize the Armenian Genocide. I have joined with over 100 of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats alike, in sending a letter to President Bush asking that he honor his pledge. I believe in my heart that we can build on the progress made last year and perhaps this year, 2001, will be seen as the year when Congress finally debated and approved this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I am blessed to represent a district that includes a vibrant Armenian American community. They have educated the broader Worcester community and indeed all of Massachusetts about the history and heritage of Armenian Americans, for out of one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century came this community, made up of survivors of the genocide and the families and children of survivors. They have created houses of worship, community centers, neighborhood activists and dedicated workers in every profession. They are the living legacy. The Armenian nation survives in Europe, and the heritage of Armenia thrives in America.

I will work with my colleagues to make sure that the United States will officially recognize the Armenian Genocide and that all of our children will learn this history and understand why it is part of America's history and culture.

#### ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mrs. MORELLA. Madam Speaker, I rise this evening as a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, as have many of my colleagues, to commemorate and affirm the Armenian Genocide, one of the darkest chapters of the 20th century.

□ 2000

We have heard this repeated, and I think it is worth repeating because it is important that it is indelibly implanted in our minds. April 24, 1915, is remembered and solemnly commemorated each year by the Armenian community and people of conscience throughout the world. On that day, a group of Armenian religious, political and intellectual leaders were arrested in Constantinople, taken to the interior of Turkey and murdered. In the 8 years that followed, 1.5 million Armenians were murdered and 500,000 were deported because of the Ottoman Empire's decision to attempt to eliminate the Armenian people living under their rule.