

I would like to present a couple of those ideas. I recently traveled to Vietnam with the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) and some of my Democrat colleagues. We were there at the request of Pete Peterson, a fellow member that used to reside in this House, is now the ambassador to Vietnam. I was asked to help raise the flag over North Vietnam for the first time in 25 years. It was very difficult; but while we were there, we stopped in Hanoi, and we had a chat with the Communist minister, the head of Vietnam.

I asked a question. I said, Mr. Minister, why will you not engage in trade with Vietnam? And his answer was pretty forthcoming. He said, Congressman, trade to a Communist means that people will start privatizing and having their own things; and if trade is followed through in Vietnam, then we as Communists will no longer have power.

At that moment I said, trade is good.

What do we want China to be 20 years from now or even 50 years from now, Mr. Speaker? I was in China some 20 years ago, and I want to say they have come a long way in 20 years, and it is not the same China as it was before. One sees democracy sprouting up. One sees things like Tianenmen Square and people fighting for democracy. Democracy and freedom are viruses to the Communist Chinese. The more that we can inject that into China, the more that their leaders go along with a better economy.

China is riding a tiger. There are still those that want, by totalitarian rule, to control with national defense and hold people under the state command; but also the dictatorship there today understands that the economy is important to China. Taiwan supports trade in PNTR. Why? Taiwan knows that it will bring China more toward the United States and more toward a democracy instead of more toward Communism. It is in their best interest, and Taiwan supports it.

We just attended a brief, many of us, by Brent Scowcroft. He said there are no downsides to PNTR; that this is about U.S. products going to China. China's products already come to the United States, and there is a trade deficit.

What do we want 20 years from now if we do not trade with China? It will be a negative, and we foster Communism instead of a good economy for both.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the special order time of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

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

There was no objection.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) 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, some of whom lost their loved ones in the genocide, I rise today to join my colleagues in the sad commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

I would like to thank my colleagues and cochairs of the Armenian Caucus, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER), for their dedication and their hard work on this issue and other issues of human rights.

Today, we pause to remember the tragedy of the Armenian Genocide. More than 1.5 million Armenians were systematically murdered at the hands of the young Turks and more than 500,000 more were deported from their homes. Monday, April 24, will mark the 85th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian genocide. It was on that day in 1915 that more than 200 Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were arrested in Constantinople, now Istanbul, and killed. This was the beginning of a brutal, organized campaign to eliminate the Armenian presence from the Ottoman Empire that lasted for more than 8 years, but Armenians are strong people, and their dreams 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 a people who would not know defeat; yet independence has not meant an end to their struggle. There are still those who question the reality of the Armenian slaughter. There are those who have failed to recognize its very existence; and my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) spoke earlier about efforts at UCLA to buy a chair that would really focus its time and attention to erasing the existence of this horrible occurrence.

1745

I join him in applauding UCLA and other institutions that have turned down this request to put forward a lie.

As a strong supporter of human rights, I am dismayed that the Turkish government continues to deny the systemic killing of 1.5 million Armenians in their country.

We must not allow the horror of the Armenian genocide to be either diminished or denied, and we must continue to speak out and preserve the memory of the Armenian loss.

We can never let the truth of this tragedy be denied. Nothing we can do or say will bring back those who perished. But we can hold high the memories with everlasting meaning by

teaching the lessons of the Armenian genocide to future generations. We will not forget. We will continue to bring this to the floor every single year. We will not forget.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOSSELLA). 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 thank the leaders of the Armenian Caucus for bringing us together to honor the memory of a tragedy, not just in Armenian history, but a tragedy in world history, a tragedy that holds for us an important historical lesson and one that should be acknowledged.

As discussed, it was 85 years ago that the Ottoman Empire set out on a deliberate campaign to exterminate the Armenian people. Over a period of years, between 1915 and 1923, as they went house to house, village to village, they massacred men, women, and children, a total of 1.5 million, and a half million deported from their homelands to escape their terror.

At the end of these 8 years, the Armenian population in certain areas in Turkey, in Anatolia, in Western Armenia, that population was virtually eliminated.

At the time, as we have heard from our colleagues, Henry Morgenthau, the U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, depicted the Turkish order for deportations as a death warrant to a whole race.

Our ambassador recognized that this was ethnic cleansing. It is unfortunate that the Turkish government to this day does not recognize that this was ethnic cleansing. Let me just say that willful ignorance of the lessons of history doom people to repeat those same actions again and again.

We have also heard from our colleagues tonight how Adolph Hitler learned that same lesson, as he said, who remembers the Armenian genocide? Well, it is important for us to remember these genocides. It is important that we learn the lesson from this 85-year-old tragedy.

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

I am a cosponsor of House Resolution 398, which calls upon the President of the United States to provide for appropriate training and materials on the Armenian genocide to all foreign service officers and all State Department officials.

Why is this important? Because we want them to better understand genocide wherever it threatens to erupt. We want them to understand the nature and origins of genocide. We want them to help raise the world's public opinion

against genocide, wherever it starts to foment.

By recognizing and learning about the crime against humanity, specifically about the Armenian genocide, we can begin to honor the courage of its victims and commemorate the strides made by its survivors and hope that others will not have to go down the track following the experiences that were suffered by the people of Armenia, only to be followed by the Jewish genocide and other genocides that we have seen, such as the one going on in Southern Sudan today.

So, again, let me commemorate and let me thank the Armenian Caucus for bringing this issue to us on this anniversary of that genocide.

COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues today to remember one of the worst atrocities of the twentieth century—the Armenian Genocide. April 24 will be the eighty-fifth anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. Since that date falls during the April recess and the House will be out of session, I have chosen to make my remarks today.

From 1915 to 1923, one-and-a-half million Armenians died and countless others suffered as a result of the systematic and deliberate campaign of genocide by the rulers of the Ottoman Turkish Empire. Half a million Armenians who escaped death were deported from their homelands, in modern-day Turkey, to the harsh deserts of the Middle East.

We cannot let succeeding generations forget these horrible atrocities, nor deny that they ever happened. Therefore it is important for the U.S. Government to recognize the Armenian Genocide and do what it can to ensure that the genocide's historical records are preserved, just as the artifacts of the Nazi holocaust are preserved. By keeping memories alive through preserving history, we and our children can learn about the chilling consequences of mass hatred, bigotry and intolerance. And hopefully, by teaching and reminding ourselves of past atrocities, humanity will not be doomed to repeat them.

The Armenian-American communities throughout the United States, as well as all people of goodwill, stand firm in our resolve not to let the world forget the Armenian Genocide. In solidarity with the victims of the Jewish Holocaust, the Cambodian massacres, the Tutsi Genocide in Rwanda, and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, we must continually recognize these crimes against humanity and steadfastly oppose the use of genocide anywhere in the world.

In closing, I hope that every American will stand in solidarity with our Armenian sisters and brothers to commemorate the eighty-fifth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Let us honor all victims of torture and genocide by paying tribute to their memory, showing them compassion, and never forgetting the suffering they have endured.

REMEMBERING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening with all of my colleagues that have come to the floor, members of the Armenian Caucus here in the House of Representatives, on the occasion of the anniversary of the 1915 Armenian genocide to remember the 1½ million human beings, the women, the children, the men who were killed, and the 500,000 Armenians forcibly deported by the Ottoman Empire during an 8-year reign of brutal repression.

Armenians were deprived of their homes, their humanity, and ultimately their lives. Yet, America, as the greatest democracy and the land of freedom, has not yet made an official statement regarding the Armenian genocide.

Today, there are some in Congress, some in our country that ignore the lessons of the past by refusing to comment on the events surrounding the genocide. They are encouraging new hardships for Armenia by moving to lift sanctions against Azerbaijan caused by their continuing blockade of Armenia.

I am very proud, Mr. Speaker, of my heritage. I am part Armenian and part Assyrian. I believe the only Member of Congress both in the House and the Senate to claim these heritages. I came to this understanding, not just when I arrived in the Congress, as so many of us at the knees of our grandparents and the elders in our family, we were told firsthand the stories of the hardship and the suffering.

That is how I come to this understanding and this knowledge and why I bring this story and this understanding to the floor of the House and, indeed, to the House of Representatives.

I am very proud of this heritage and the contributions which my people have made to this great Nation. They have distinguished themselves in the arts, in law, in academics, in every walk of life in our great Nation, and they keep making important contributions to the life of this Nation.

It is inconceivable to me that this Nation would choose in some quarters to keep its head in the sand by not stating in the strongest terms our recognition of the genocide and our objection to what took place.

Why do I say this? Because I think it is very important to express very publicly, not only acknowledge what happened, but also understand that when we acknowledge that we are then teaching present and future generations of the events of yesteryear. As we move to educate today's generation about these lessons, we also express to them what we have learned.

To deny that a genocide occurred places a black mark on the values that our great Nation stands and fights for. I am proud to be a cosponsor, of course, of responsible legislation that brings

the tragedies in Armenia's history out of the shadows and into the light.

House Resolution 155, the U.S. Record on the Armenian Genocide Resolution, directs the President to provide a complete collection of all United States records related to the Armenian genocide to document and affirm the United States record of protest in recognition of this crime against humanity.

House Resolution 398, the U.S. Training on and Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide Resolution would affirm the U.S. record on the genocide and would very importantly educate others about the atrocities committed and the lessons we can learn from this tragedy against the people of Armenia. These are but two important steps we in the Congress can immediately take today.

I urge my colleagues to support these efforts to pass these bills.

In closing, I want to pay tribute to all of my colleagues that come to the floor every year on this. For those of my colleagues that are tuned into C-SPAN, Republicans, Democrats of all backgrounds from different States, communities across our Nation who recognize what took place, and come to the floor in humble tribute to those that gave their lives.

But it is up to us that really are entrusted with the life and the well-being of our Nation. Yes, to acknowledge and to pay tribute and to say how important this is. But as we do, understand that we do it for the enlightenment of our young people and to remind ourselves that wherever anything like this raises its head around the globe that we, as Members of the United States Congress, and as citizens of this great Nation, that we will give voice to that.

So I pay tribute to all of my colleagues. Those people who are resting in peace, perhaps where they are looking from are smiling and saying thank you to Members of the Congress for recognizing this. It is a sad time, but the recognition is well deserved.

PROJECT EXILE

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to speak about a piece of legislation passed on the floor of this House yesterday, Project Exile. Project Exile will send \$100 million to qualifying States who require a minimum 5-year sentence for criminals who use guns. This will send a clear message to criminals that, if they use a gun, they will go to jail, and they will go to jail for 5 years.

Project Exile will reverse the current situation and put criminals behind the bars of justice rather than law-abiding citizens of America being behind bars on the windows of their own homes.

Today, the average gun felon is locked up for about 18 months then