

leadership, vision and inspiration not seen since World War II, we cannot afford to dissemble about crimes against humanity.

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Euphemisms, vague terminology or calls for discussions to get at the truth are just some of the dodges used to avoid Turkish discomfort with its Ottoman past. What is there to discuss about the Armenian Genocide? What facts are there left to discover? What is to be gained by referring to the systematic slaughter of an entire people without using the word most appropriate for those grotesque circumstances?

The short answer is that there is nothing to discuss, nothing to discover, nothing to be gained by denial—and much to be lost. The United States is fighting an unconventional enemy in the war on terrorism, and one against whom our overwhelming military might provides only one necessary weapon. Winning the war on terrorism will also require a level of moral clarity that can provide a vision for struggling people and nations everywhere. Only military force accompanied by an equally strong moral force will provide the essential combination to route out terrorism and prevent its reemergence.

So let us call genocide, genocide. Let us not minimize the deliberate murder of 1.5 million people. Let us have a moral victory that can shine as a light to all nations. These people lived. They dreamed of their futures, as we dream about ours. They loved their family and life. Their voices were silenced in the desert, but we can respect their memory. And we must.

Sarkis Dadaian, Varuhi Minassian, Miriam Derderian, Yeghsa Derderian.

COMMEMORATING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow on the remarks of my distinguished colleague from California.

The Armenian genocide has been called the most “colossal crime of all ages.” It has been called a “campaign of race extermination,” similar to the Holocaust.

Every year on the 24th of April, the citizens of Armenia gather, as they did just this past day in Yerevan on top of a hill, to remember all of the people that perished, the 1.5 million. And although we are halfway around the world away, we remember with them today. Today we pause and we say, “never again.” We do so in order to prevent history from repeating itself as it has often done in our lifetime.

It happened in Armenia between 1915 and 1923. Ambassador Morgenthau told our government what was happening, and not a very good response was received. It happened during the Holocaust, and not a very good response in reaction to what was happening was received. It happened in Bosnia and

Rwanda and Cambodia. The world did not learn the harsh lessons of the past.

Today we stand up and we speak because silence betrays our principle as a freedom-loving people. One and a half million Armenian men, women, and children were victims of a brutal genocide at the hands of the Turkish Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923. The intent of the genocide was to destroy all traces of a thriving and cultured civilization over 3,000 years old.

On the 24th of April 1915, 300 Armenian leaders and intellectuals and professionals were rounded up, deported, and killed. Also on that day 5,000 of the poorest Armenians were slaughtered in the street. And the names that were read by my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF), they were real people with families. We must never forget.

Some think of the genocide in abstract terms, but it is not. We are here today speaking out on the House floor, Democrats and Republicans, because we know that 1.5 million men, women, and children killed in the genocide were husbands and wives and mothers and fathers and sons and daughters and friends. Those who survive them know this: They were innocent individuals. They were robbed of their dignity, of their humanity, and ultimately their lives.

A professor once observed that the denial of genocide strives to reshape history in order to demonize the victims and rehabilitate the perpetrators. Because of the work of historians, advocates, the Armenian American community, lawmakers and other people of conscience, this is not possible in the case of the Armenian genocide. It will never be possible because we will always be here, every April 24 and the week preceding it, speaking to the country, speaking to the world community about what happened. And make no mistake about it, those who are responsible, those who fight against recognizing this for what it was, a genocide, hear our voices.

While the attempts of denial continue to strengthen our resolve to remember and speak out, we recognize the anniversary of this massacre and condemn these crimes against an entire people in order to ensure that similar atrocities are not committed against any people or any civilization again. We must never forget. We recognize the anniversary in order to show our support for all Armenian Americans and the horrific suffering they or their families endured.

We recognize the anniversary in order to stand up for freedom and condemn injustice across the world. I have recently joined with 161 of my colleagues in asking President Bush to recognize the Armenian genocide for what it is: a genocide. And we will continue our collective efforts to achieve proper commemoration of the Armenian genocide because we must never forget.

ARMENIANS STILL SEEK JUSTICE FOR 1915 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, today Members of this House have come to the floor to remember and commemorate the 87th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

On April 24, 1915, hundreds of Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were rounded up, exiled, and eventually murdered by Turkish order in remote areas of Anatolia. Over the next 8 years, hundreds of thousands of Armenian men, women, and children perished at the hands of the Ottomans.

By recognizing and commemorating the Armenian genocide each year, this House helps ensure that the lessons of this terrible crime against humanity are not forgotten, cannot be denied and hopefully might help prevent future genocides of other peoples.

The single greatest obstacle to the official recognition of the Armenian genocide is the Republic of Turkey. In spite of overwhelming evidence documenting the genocide, most of it housed at the United States Archives, modern-day Turkey continues to pursue a campaign to deny and to ultimately erase from world history the 1.5 million victims of Ottoman Turkey's deliberate massacres and deportations of the Armenian people between 1915 and 1923.

Successive Turkish governments have also deliberately destroyed the immense cultural heritage of Armenians in Turkey, carrying out a systematic campaign to erase evidence of the historic Armenian presence in Eastern Anatolia.

Since 1982, successive U.S. administrations, reluctant to offend Turkey, have in effect supported the Turkish Government's revisionist campaign and opposed passage of the Congressional Armenian Genocide Resolution. These administrations have objected to the use of the word “genocide” to describe the systematic destruction of the Armenian people.

Rather than supporting Turkey's denials, Mr. Speaker, I hope that President Bush will officially recognize the Armenian genocide and encourage Turkey to come to terms with its past.

Rather than creating tension in the region, I believe such actions would decrease the tension and suspicions that have long inhibited cooperation in that region.

Thirty-one of our States, including my own State of Massachusetts, have recognized the Armenian genocide. And I want to thank the cochairs of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) for their outstanding work to ensure that we never forget those who perished and those who survived the Armenian genocide. In their names and in their memory, we must demand recognition.

Mr. Speaker, I enter into the RECORD an article by Jason Sohigian that appeared in my hometown newspaper, The Worcester Telegram and Gazette, describing why Armenians still seek justice for the 1915 genocide by the Ottomans.

Mr. Speaker, it is past time for the United States to recognize officially the Armenian genocide. There can be no justice without the truth. In the name of all humanity, let it happen now.

The article previously referred to is as follows:

[From the Worcester Telegram and Gazette, Apr. 23, 2002]

ARMENIANS STILL SEEK JUSTICE FOR 1915
GENOCIDE BY OTTOMANS
(By Jason Sohigian)

The Armenian genocide is still subject to a massive campaign of denial by modern Turkey and distortion by some of its allies, including Israel—much to the embarrassment of Jewish historians. While the rest of the world recognizes the systematic, premeditated nature of the Armenian genocide, Turkey continues to devote massive amounts of resources toward its policy of denial.

Often people wonder why the genocide, which happened so long ago, is still important to so many people so far away from the scene of the crime.

Why? Because Ottoman Turkey succeeded in annihilating more than half of the Armenian population of historic Armenia. Entire villages, towns and cities were wiped out. Families were killed and their property illegally confiscated. A 3,000-year-old indigenous culture was utterly disrupted and uprooted.

Not one Armenian family in the world remains untouched by this catastrophic event. Nearly every Armenian community leader, intellectual, and priest in the Ottoman Turkish capital, Istanbul, was rounded up on April 24, 1915, and massacred. That initiated the campaign of terror, and from that day forward nearly every Armenian family suffered losses throughout Ottoman Turkey.

My own grandfather witnesses the death of family members and lived as an orphan for many years until finally being reunited with the remnants of her family in the United States. My mother attempted to reconstruct my grandmother's story for the historical record while my grandmother was still able to remember what happened during those years.

Knowing that these few orphans managed to survive and regenerate into the Armenian community of today is truly an inspiration. I could not help but feel, both as an Armenian and as an heir to the tragedy, the tremendous sense of obligation to achieve justice for the Armenian people.

That is the meaning behind the efforts to achieve recognition for the Armenian genocide, 87 years after the fact. Armenians living in the diaspora ask their governments to recognize this event, and urge Turkey to do the same. Recognition of the genocide is a pan-Armenian concern, and following the independence of Armenia after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, even the Armenian government of today has made recognition a major part of its foreign policy agenda.

The issue of recognition has several aspects, among them a moral obligation, a political dimension and a legal component.

Because so much effort has been expended combating denial over the years, many related issues still have not been explored. Armenians worldwide are now raising the issue of reparations for land and other stolen Armenian property. Just recently, class-action

lawsuits were initiated against the New York Life and French Axa insurance companies, which sold policies in Ottoman Turkey to families and failed to pay the benefits to the heirs of those who were later massacred in the Armenian genocide.

Modern Turkey is the beneficiary of its Ottoman past, and it vigorously celebrates this fact—except when it comes to the Armenian genocide. Many of the Ottoman leaders who participated in the Armenian genocide went on to become officials of the modern Turkish state, and Turkey continues to profit from the confiscated land and property of the Armenian people.

Armenians will never forget. Nor will they forgive—until justice is served.

But governments and leaders, too, must speak out. Individuals, too, must raise their voices. Conscience must prevail.

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

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REMEMBERING THE ARMENIAN
GENOCIDE

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleagues from the Armenia Issues Caucus to recognize the obvious and uncontested fact that during World War I and its aftermath, as many as 1.5 million Armenians died in the first genocide of the 20th century.

The question is not whether we should recognize this genocide, but why we have not done so already. The evidence is overwhelming. It has been set forth today by the previous speakers, as it has been set forth every April 24th, year after year, on the floor of this House.

Why do we not recognize that which is uncontested? We are told that there are geopolitical reasons why the truth must be shrouded. Well, Turkey would be a much better ally of America if Turkey recognized the truth. What kind of ally would Germany be if it had a government that denied the Holocaust? What kind of ally would America be if we denied that slavery occurred or claimed that we had not created great injustices to the Native American population, including, frankly, the genocide of certain Native American Tribes?

Turkey is an ally of America, but America has no greater ally than the truth. Nothing is more important than that America be recognized as being guided by the truth, and eternal truth, and not the geopolitics of the hour.

□ 1615

History will record that there are very few occasions in which the world consents or even a region of the world consents to the existence of a single superpower, and the world will not consent to our leadership unless that lead-

ership is guided by principle. We must put the truth first.

What if, for example, a new regime should arise in Germany and disclaim the Holocaust and demand that we here in Washington marched down to the Holocaust Museum and rip it apart brick by brick? The response should not be, oh, Germany, is an important and powerful country. The response should be that there is nothing more important to America than the truth. We must recognize the genocide, and we must recognize the needs of those who survived the genocide.

Last year when the President asked us for \$70 million in aid to Armenia, this Congress responded with \$90 million of aid, additional aid to help meet Armenia's security needs. Since its independence, this Congress has provided \$1.3 billion of aid to that new democracy, and this year again we must respond by providing the aid that Armenia needs, more than the President provides in his budget. We must make sure that we do not aid Azerbaijan as long as that country continues to blockade Armenia.

Finally, with regard to the proposed pipeline, the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, we must make sure that is a pipeline of peace that unites Azerbaijan and Armenia as it flows through both of those countries into the Mediterranean Sea; and we must make sure that the Export-Import Bank does not risk our capital in creating a pipeline of war, a pipeline that deliberately circumvents Armenia and tries to create a new geopolitical situation in the Caucasus. We must recognize the truth. We must build toward peace, prosperity, and progress for Armenia and for the entire Caucasus region.

REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF
THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, once again, I join my colleagues and the world in remembering those who suffered the horrifying events of the Armenian genocide. The tragedy of lost lives through ethnic cleansing must never be forgotten.

The Armenian genocide marked the beginning of a barbaric practice beginning in the 20th century. More than a million and a half Armenians were killed and forcibly departed. The Ottoman Turks brutally uprooted and systematically eliminated Armenians from their homeland. To this day, the Turkish Government continues to deny that millions of Armenians were killed simply because they were Armenian.

As an educator, I believe we must emphasize the role of education throughout the world. We must continue to forbid actions of racial intolerance and religious persecution which have led to so many cases of ethnic cleansing. The tragedies of the past 2