

Ambassador Evans has given exemplary service to his country, and was a well-respected ambassador in a region of strategic importance to the United States. However, as it turns out, Evans was forced to vacate his post for publicly affirming the Armenian genocide.

Reports highly suggest that because Evans declared that “the Armenian genocide was the first genocide of the 20th Century,” he is being unjustly penalized for speaking the truth.

However, by employing the proper term last year, the Ambassador was only building on previous statements by our leaders in Government, as well as the repeated declarations of numerous world-renowned scholars. Ambassador Evans did nothing more than succinctly repeat the conclusions enunciated by many before him.

Mr. Speaker, it is my fear that the Government of Turkey may have played a role in this unfortunate event. I strongly believe that they have expressed concern to the White House over Evans' remarks last year. In fact, immediately following his remarks, Evans issued a correction, all too seemingly at the behest of the administration.

And we must not allow a third party to interfere in U.S. diplomacy and refrain from declaring the truth in order to promote relations with Turkey. To this day, the Republic of Turkey refuses to acknowledge the fact that this massive crime against humanity took place under its control in the name of Turkish nationalism.

Unfortunately some 90 years later, the U.S. State Department continues to support Turkey's denials despite all evidence to the contrary. It is simply unacceptable for this administration to penalize Evans for his comments.

What he did was courageous and should be viewed as such, not punished. Ambassador Evans simply articulated the same message as that of the administration. However the only difference was his assigning a word to define the actions taken against Armenians.

Ambassador Evans is in fact an expert on the subject. He has studied the history of Armenia and based on his substantial studies he was willing to go on the record and define the systematic extermination of 1½ million Armenian men, women and children as genocide.

Mr. Speaker, in early March I wrote a letter to the State Department because I was outraged to see that Ambassador Evans was withdrawn from Armenia. Based on news reports the State Department recalled the Ambassador as retaliation for his statements.

Over 2 months have passed since I expressed my disappointment and I have yet to receive a response from the State Department. I specifically asked Secretary Rice for an explanation as to why Ambassador Evans was removed from his post. Not only was my inquiry ignored, but other Member's inquiries have also gone unanswered.

Now the White House has made an official announcement, but still has not

given an explanation. Mr. Speaker, I hope that the newly-appointed U.S. Ambassador to Armenia, Richard Hoagland, will not play the word games of the White House and comply with Turkey's campaign of genocide denial.

Mr. Speaker, the New York Times did an editorial on May 16 this year detailing the dangers to Turkey and to the world of that country's continued denial of the Armenian genocide. I just want to read the last paragraph of that insignificant editorial. It says, “the preponderance of serious scholarship outside Turkey accepts that more than a million Armenians perished between 1914 and 1915 in a regime-sponsored campaign. Turkey's continued refusal to countenance even a discussion of the issue stands as a major obstacle to restoring relations with neighboring Armenia and to claiming Turkey's rightful place in Europe and the west. It is time for the Turks to realize that the greater danger to them is denying history.”

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. EMANUEL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

GAS PRICES AND ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Illinois.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, as the Memorial Day Weekend approaches, with the unofficial kickoff of the summer driving season, I rise this

evening to say a few words about the energy crisis in this country.

Specifically, I urge this Congress to take immediate action to crack down on price gouging of gasoline and develop alternative fuels to free Americans from the grip of foreign oil. Over the past several weeks and months, gas prices have skyrocketed across the country.

Middle class families who were already feeling economic pressure of the rising cost of health care and college expenses are getting squeezed tighter still due to the higher price of gasoline.

According to the AAA fuel gauge report, my North Carolina neighbors are paying nearly \$3 a gallon for gas. I know I paid that much when I stopped and got gas on Monday and filled my car up. Now, as a former full-time small businessman for almost 20 years, I take no back seat to anyone in support of free enterprise market capitalism.

But the gasoline price gouging of American citizens must stop. Unfortunately, the administration has chosen to turn a blind eye to this urgent problem. Just yesterday, the head of the Federal Trade Commission argued against a new Federal law against price gouging by the oil companies and suggested that they be allowed to continue to reap the profits of American consumer's pain at the pump.

I am proud that my colleagues and I have introduced the Federal Response to Energy Emergency or FREE Act. I am pleased this House has passed this important legislation. I hope the administration will end its opposition and the Senate will put this into law shortly.

Over the long term, Mr. Speaker, Congress must exercise visionary leadership to pass policies that are innovative to secure America's energy independence.

Last month I hosted a summit on biofuels in my Congressional district to explore policy options to grow our way out of this energy dependence we have. This event featured local, State and national experts on energy, biofuel producers and State government officials.

We examined the current state of the biofuel development and explored how North Carolina as the third largest agricultural producing state can become a leader in biofuel production.

What we found is that we have the technology to make our own fuel from the products we grow in our fields today. For example, soybeans are the largest crop in my State of North Carolina, making up about 25 percent of the total acreage in our State.

We have the answers to our fuel crisis growing in our fields across America. In addition to the biofuels summit, I recently discussed this topic with the Second District Youth Advisory Committee, a group of young people. And let me tell you that these young people get it. They inherently understand that the U.S. reliance on imported fossil fuels is unsustainable and leaves us