

study for the Southwest Washington community. The continuing Education Department provides community classes and business training classes, helping people learn new skills at any age. The workforce training and worker retraining courses teach essential job skills. These skills help the unemployed find new work and they help those facing the possibility of layoffs enhance their existing skills. Centralia also offers farm study and ranch and record keeping study to help our agricultural leaders of today and tomorrow.

One of Centralia's most innovative programs targets gifted high school students. Participation in their "Running Start" program allows 11th and 12th grade students to get the opportunity to take college level classes for both high school and college credit. Not only does this program provide challenges to students to achieve, but it allows them to do so free of charge. Through school district and State payment plans, Centralia ensures that all students get an equal chance to participate.

In addition to providing financial support, Centralia offers other areas to expand access to higher education. Their comprehensive distance learning campaign offers students all of the benefits of attending college, even if they cannot physically attend. From correspondence courses to videotape lectures or telecourses, to on-line classes, to interactive video programs, Centralia will find a way to teach eager students, regardless of their location.

For the 3,000 students enrolled, Centralia's serious educational commitment translates into results. Recently, for example, 9 of the 11 Centralia graduates who interviewed at the Intel company earned positions on the staff. Recruiters of such technology firms regularly visit Centralia, saying they always look forward to seeing the high quality of candidates who come from that college. They go on to say that the students' capability is a reflection of both a high quality college and a high quality electronics department. As we move into the 21st Century, the superiority of Centralia's technology education can only serve to benefit both students and employers.

Another benefit to students emphasized by the Centralia administration, faculty, and staff is diversity. Recognizing the need for students to interact with people of different cultures and backgrounds, Centralia strives to incorporate diversity into its student body and programs wherever possible. The college knows that exposing its students to diverse ideas and people will enhance their educational experience. In today's increasingly close-knit and diverse world, bringing together people from different backgrounds is a necessity, not a luxury.

Mr. Speaker, education is a necessity for all Americans. It prepares young people to face the challenge of the future, and makes the lives of older

Americans more fulfilling. For the past 75 years, Centralia College has prepared its students to be the leaders of tomorrow, and, for that, we all owe Centralia College our gratitude and our congratulations.

I urge my colleagues in the 106th Congress to join me today in paying special tribute to this outstanding college, and may its next 75 years of service be every bit as successful as the first.

REMEMBERING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE OF 1915-1923

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 join with those who are taking a few minutes today to remember and pay tribute to those Armenians who lost their lives and national identity during one of history's most tragic examples of persecution and intolerance, the Armenian genocide of 1915 to 1923.

Many Armenians in America, particularly in Indiana, are the children or grandchildren of survivors. In Fort Wayne, we do not have very many Armenians, to be precise, one, sometimes two. But my friend Zohrab Taizan is a classic example of many of the Armenians in America whose family was chased out of Turkey and down into Lebanon, who moved around, having, as a child, to live in a tent, because he saw his family members slaughtered and chased from their homeland; coming over to America where they had a chance to succeed with an American dream, as Armenians actually throughout world history who have been persecuted because of their successes as merchants, and often their very success has led to persecution in many lands that they have been over time. He came to America to the Indiana Institute of Technology, like many other foreign students who came in, learned engineering, and became a very successful engineer in our hometown.

I first saw a slide presentation on the facts of this terrible genocide about 20 years ago when I was a young businessman in Fort Wayne belonging to the Rotary Club. Mr. Zohrab Taizan made a presentation that will forever be burned into my mind about the terrible persecution; not just discrimination and not just random persecution, but the attempt to exterminate an entire people.

The facts, as we have heard a number of times, but I think it is important that we have these burned into our head, on April 24, that is the particular day we commemorate the tragedy, because it marks the beginning of the persecution and ethnic cleansing by the Ottoman Turks.

On April 24, 1915, Armenian political, intellectual, and religious 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 they would eventually starve to death.

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. In our lifetime, we have witnessed the brutality and savagery of genocide by despotic regimes seeking to deny people of human rights and religious freedoms. That is Stalin against the Russians, Hitler against the Jews, Mao Tse-tung against the Chinese, Pol Pot against the Cambodians, and Mobutu against the Rwandans.

But genocide has devastating consequences on society as a whole because of the problems created by uprooting entire populations. The survivors become the ones who carry the memory of 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 Armenian survivors and families of survivors involves the acknowledgment of the atrocity and the admission of wrongdoing by those doing the persecution. It is only through acknowledgment and forgiveness that it is possible to move past the history of the genocide and other sins.

Unfortunately, those responsible for ordering the systematic removal of the Armenians were never brought to justice and the Armenian genocide became a dark moment in history, as we heard earlier, quoted by Hitler and others, who then proceeded to use it as an example to commit genocide on others, to be slowly forgotten by those in America and the international community.

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. By establishing a continuing discourse, we are acknowledging the tragedies of the past and remembering those awful moments in history so they will not be repeated.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all of my colleagues, those Members who have supported this resolution, as well as all the Armenian organizations in this country and throughout the world who have worked so hard to establish an understanding for their remembrance.

REMEMBERING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I join my other colleagues today to discuss one of the greatest unrecognized tragedies

of the 20th Century, you have heard it by the previous speakers, that is the Armenian genocide.

April 24th marks the 85th anniversary of the start of the first genocide of the 1900's. Before the Holocaust there was the Armenian genocide. It took place between 1915 and 1923 in the Ottoman Empire.

In April of 1915, a weak Ottoman Empire ordered mass deportations of Armenians. This was carried out swiftly and systematically on official orders from the government of the Ottoman Empire. Forced marches resulted in the deaths of over 1 million Armenians. Armenian men of military age were rounded up, marched for several miles and shot dead throughout eastern Anatolia. Women, children, and the elderly, many subjected to rape, were forced to leave their homeland and move to relocation centers in the Syrian desert. During these long marches, no food, water, or shelter was provided. Many died of disease or exhaustion, and survivors were subjected to forcible conversion to Islam.

The annihilation of such a large portion of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire led to the loss of many lives and the dream of an Armenian homeland. Surviving Armenians fled to the then Soviet Union, the United States, and other parts of the world in pursuit of their basic freedoms. Many Armenians live and work in my congressional district in San Diego. Their history and story need to be shared and embraced.

Today, our NATO ally, Turkey, has repeatedly denied the execution of over 1 million Armenians. The denial of this atrocity has proved beneficial for Turkey's foreign policy. The murder of Armenians, a massacre based on cultural and religious beliefs, goes on officially unnoticed, and the United States maintains a favorable relationship and strategic partnership with Turkey.

Mr. Speaker, because of these reasons, I have joined my colleagues in co-sponsoring House Resolution 398, the United States Training on and Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide Resolution. This resolution provides training and educational materials to all Foreign Service and State Department officials concerning the Armenian genocide.

It is time for our country to stand up and recognize this tragic event. When Hitler conceived of the idea to exterminate the Jewish population, he noted the lack of consequences by saying, "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"

Mr. Speaker, today I and my colleagues speak of the annihilation of the Armenians, and we ask our other colleagues to join in this cause. The story of the Armenian genocide, the forgotten genocide, deserves to be told and understood. We owe it to the Armenians. We owe it to mankind.

COMMEMORATING THE 85TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 85th anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide, one of the most horrific episodes of human history.

In early 1915, Britain and Russia launched major offensives intended to knock the Ottoman Empire out of the first World War. In the east, Russian forces inflicted massive losses on the Ottomans, who reacted by lashing out at the Armenians, whom they accused of undermining the Empire.

On April 24, 1915, the Turkish government began to arrest Armenian community and political leaders suspected of harboring nationalist sentiments. Most of those arrested were executed without ever being charged with crimes.

The government then moved to deport most Armenians from eastern Anatolia, ordering that they resettle in what is now Syria. Many deportees never reached that destination. The U.S. Ambassador in Constantinople at the time, Henry Morgenthau, wrote "When the Turkish authorities gave the orders for these deportations, they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race."

From 1915 to 1918, more than a million Armenians died of starvation or disease on long marches, or were massacred outright by Turkish forces. From 1918 to 1923, Armenians continued to suffer at the hands of the Turkish military, which eventually removed all remaining Armenians from Turkey.

We mark this anniversary each year because this horrible tragedy for the Armenian people was a tragedy for all humanity. We must remember, speak out and teach future generations about the horrors of genocide and the oppression and terrible suffering endured by the Armenian people.

Sadly, genocide is not yet a vestige of the past. In recent years we have witnessed the "killing fields" of Cambodia, mass ethnic killings in Bosnia and Rwanda, and "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo. We must renew our commitment to remain vigilant and prevent such assaults on humanity from occurring ever again.

Even as we remember the tragedy and honor the dead, we also honor the living. Out of the ashes of their history, Armenians all over the world have clung to their identity and prospered in new communities. Hundreds of thousands of Armenians live in California, where they form a strong and vibrant community. The strength they have displayed in overcoming tragedy to flourish in this country is an example for all of us.

Surrounded by countries hostile to them, to this day the Armenian struggle continues. But now with an independent Armenian state, the United States has the opportunity to contribute to a true memorial to the past by strengthening Armenia's emerging democracy. We must do all we can through aid and trade to support Armenia's efforts to construct an open political and economic system.

Adolf Hitler, the architect of the Nazi Holocaust, once remarked "Who remembers the Armenians?" The answer is, we do. And we will continue to remember the victims of the

1915-23 genocide because, in the words of the philosopher George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

SAY NO TO COMMERCIAL WHALING

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

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, 2 days ago a mighty 35-foot long gray whale washed up on the beach in front of my home on Whidbey Island in Washington State. As a vociferous opponent of killing whales or the expansion of whaling worldwide, and as a lifelong advocate for the environmental health of Puget Sound, this recent event has been the cause of some amount of discussion and publicity in the region surrounding my district. Out of the 1,000 miles of coastline in Washington State, it was certainly an interesting coincidence that the body lodged right on the beach in front of my house.

The death of this gray whale should call our attention to those who would like to reverse the will expressed in Congress and by an overwhelming majority of the American people who oppose allowing the hunting of whales, particularly for commercial purposes.

As I have been predicting from the well of this House and across America for several years, the push for resumption of worldwide commercial whaling is on in earnest. And it is not about heritage, it is all about money. We have heard that a gray whale can be sold in Japan for \$1 million.

Those who want to end the ban on commercial whaling have been using the pretext of restoring whaling rights to indigenous people to expand the scope of whaling worldwide. But if we allow people to use the excuse of historic whale hunting for resumption of whale hunting worldwide, you have got to remember many nations, most nations with coastlines, hunted whales. Japan and Norway definitely would have, as good as anybody, an historic whale hunting opportunity. Japan and Norway are the most notorious now for going ahead and hunting whales.

Newsweek Magazine reported, April 17, information I have already given this body that Japan has been quietly packing the International Whaling Commission with small nations willing to do their bidding, willing to vote for the resumption of commercial whaling.

Mr. Speaker, we are dangerously close to a renewal of the barbaric practice of commercial whaling. To millions of Americans, including myself, this is totally unacceptable. When the Clinton-Gore administration last year financed the Makah tribal whale hunt and colluded with the pro-whaling nations of the International Whaling Commission, our Nation's government lost its moral authority to lead the fight against killing whales for profit.