

this economy is growing so well in Illinois. And, that is, they say that government has actually stayed out of the way of the new economy. The new economy has been tax free, it has been regulation free, it is trade barrier free. That is why it has been so successful, creating opportunity for so many. That is why I am pleased that House Republicans continue to lead the way in technology. Our e-contract continues to work for a tax-free, regulation-free, trade-barrier-free new economy. And, of course, one of the areas we want to focus on is the area of providing digital opportunity for all Americans.

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You know, it is unfortunate that it seems the higher the income, the more likely you are on-line. Families that have incomes of \$75,000 or more are nine times more likely to have a home computer, and more than 20 times more likely to have Internet access than a low or moderate income family.

When asked why lower income families and more moderate income families do not have Internet access or a home computer, those families, those working families, cite that cost, the cost of the computer, the cost of subscribing to the Internet access, is a chief barrier.

That is why I am so pleased that this week House Republicans once again are going to lead the way on technology. We are going to be moving legislation passed out of the Committee on Ways and Means, which I serve on, legislation to repeal a 3 percent excise tax on telephone calls, a tax that has been in place since the Spanish American War, over a century. It was a temporary tax at that time. Well, that 3 percent tax is a tax today on Internet access, because 96 percent of those who access the Internet use their telephone to go on-line. Let us pass that legislation. I hope it has strong bipartisan support.

I also want to call attention to my colleagues in the House to two important initiatives, legislation designed to increase digital opportunities so that every American family has the opportunity to be part of today's new economy.

I am so proud that private employers have stepped forward to help solve the so-called digital divide. I have many educators that tell me that they find that children who have a computer at home compared to those who do not tend to do better in school. They notice the difference. They believe it is in the best interests of families when it comes to doing homework as well as research where you can access the Library of Congress via the Internet for children to have a computer at home.

I am pleased that Ford Motor Company, Intel, American Airlines and Delta Airlines have stepped forward on their own initiative to provide home computers as well as Internet access as an employee benefit. Thanks to those four companies, 600,000 American working families will now have access to

computers and Internet access. That means everybody from the janitor to the laborer to the guy working on the shop floor, up through middle management, up to the CEO, will all have access, universal access to the Internet, meaning their children will have a computer at home to do school work and research for school papers and school projects. That is good news.

Unfortunately, many other companies that would like to do this, like to provide computers and Internet access to their employees, have been advised by their tax lawyers, wait a second; if you do, you are going to cause a tax increase for your employees because the IRS and Treasury Department will call this a taxable benefit.

That is why the Data Act is so important. Let us treat that computer and Internet access as tax free, the same as an employer-provided contribution to your pension, the same as an employer contribution to your health care.

Mr. Speaker, that type of initiative deserves bipartisan support.

#### TURKISH REGION RECALLS MASSACRE OF ARMENIANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TANCREDI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, May 10, the New York Times published an extremely important article on a subject that receives far too little attention, in my opinion, and that is the Armenian genocide. What was particularly interesting about this article was that it addressed the issue of the Armenian genocide from the Turkish perspective, from the point of view of ordinary people living in what were the killing fields.

Many in the Armenian community and their friends and supporters frequently discuss the painful memories of the genocide from the perspective of the victims. The article in last week's New York Times presents the history of the genocide from the descendants of the perpetrators, the people who live on land in what is now the eastern part of the Republic of Turkey but which once was the center of Armenian life.

I include this article for the RECORD from the New York Times, Wednesday May 10. It is entitled "Turkish Region Recalls Massacre of Armenians," by Steven Kinzer.

Every year in late April Members of this House come to this floor to commemorate the Armenian genocide. April 24th of this year marked the 85th anniversary of the unleashing of the Armenian genocide. Over the years, from 1915 to 1923, millions of men, women and children were deported, forced into slave labor and tortured by the government of the "Young Turk Committee." 1.5 million of them were killed.

To this day, the Republic of Turkey refuses to acknowledge the fact that

this massive crime against humanity took place on soil under its control and in the name of Turkish nationalism. That is why this newspaper article was so interesting and important.

Let me quote from one woman, Yasemin Orhan, a recent university graduate and a native of the town of Elazig, Turkey. She says, "They don't teach it in school, but if you are interested, there are plenty of ways you can find out. Many Armenians were killed. That is for sure." Ms. Orhan told the New York Times reporter that she had learned about the killings from her grandmother.

Another woman, Tahire Cakirbay, 66 years old, standing at the site of a long-gone Armenian Orthodox church, pointed to a nearby hill and said, "They took the Armenians up there and killed them. They dug a hole for the bodies. My parents told me."

Mr. Speaker, it is hard to erase from memory such a monumental crime as the Armenian genocide, but the Turkish government is trying. The Times article notes that in the rest of Turkey little is known of and remembered of the Armenian genocide or of the former thriving Armenian community in what is now eastern Turkey. As Ms. Orhan says, "They don't teach it in school." In fact, what they do teach Turkish young people in schools is a skewed version of their own history.

Not content with merely propagating this false version of history for internal consumption, Turkey is using its resources to endow Turkish Studies Chairs at prestigious American universities, staffed by scholars sympathetic to the Turkish official version of history. They are also using their lobbying resources, including former Members of this House, to lobby against bipartisan legislation in this Congress affirming U.S. recognition of the Armenian genocide.

Mr. Speaker, the United States must go on record acknowledging the genocide, and rather than appease Turkey on this issue, we should use our significant influence with that country to get them to do the right thing, to admit what happened in the past, and to work for improved relations with their neighbor, the Republic of Armenia.

The Republic of Armenia is working to build a strong democracy, despite the hostility from Turkey and their ally Azerbaijan, both of whom still maintain blockades preventing vitally needed goods from reaching the Armenian people.

Last week, seven leading Members of the Armenian Parliament came up to Capitol Hill to meet with a bipartisan group of Members of Congress. This week, officials from Armenia and the Republic of Nagorno Karabagh, as well as from Azerbaijan, will be in Washington for a conference on how to resolve the Nagorno Karabagh conflict.

The Armenian people look forward to a bright future of freedom, independence, prosperity and cooperation with their neighbors, but they cannot forget

the bitter history of the early 20th century, and they cannot accept Turkey's efforts to deny that it happened.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from another of the Turkish citizens quoted in the New York Times article, a factory worker named Selhattin Cinar: "This used to be an Armenian area, but now they are gone. Dead, killed, chased away. Our government doesn't want to admit it. Why would you want to say, 'my yogurt is sour'?"

[From the New York Times, May 10, 2000]

TURKISH REGION RECALLS MASSACRE OF ARMENIANS—BUT MANY DENY VIOLENCE OF 1915

(By Stephen Kinzer)

ELAZIG, Turkey, May 7—Groves of mulberry trees at lakeside resorts are about all that remains from the days when this region was a center of Armenian life.

One of the gnarled trees used to stand beside a long-gone Armenian Orthodox church. Now it shades Tahire Cakirbay, 66, as she looks out over her fields and shimmering Lake Hazar below.

"They took the Armenians up there and killed them," Ms. Cakirbay said, pointing to a hill above her. "They dug a hole for the bodies. My parents told me."

More than one million Armenians lived in what is now eastern Turkey until their community was shattered in an orgy of ethnic violence that exploded 85 years ago this spring. Many aspects of what happened then are still hotly debated, but here where the killings took place, few people doubt that they occurred.

"They don't teach it in school, but if you're interested there are plenty of ways you can find out," said Yasemin Orhan, a native of Elazig who graduated from the local university last year. "Many Armenians were killed. It's for sure."

Ms. Orhan said she had learned about the killings from her grandmother. Here in eastern Turkey, the passage of several generations has not been enough to wipe the killings from memory.

In the rest of the country, however, most people know little about the killings of 1915. Turkish textbooks refer to them only indirectly. They stress that Armenian militants were rebelling against the crumbling Ottoman Empire, and discount or ignore the killing of hundreds of thousands of civilians after the abortive revolt.

Conflicts over how to deal with the episode have provoked a worldwide propaganda war between Armenia and Turkey.

Armenian lobbyists want foreign governments to declare that what happened in 1915 was genocide. Some Armenian nationalists say that if Turkey can be forced to concede that, their next step might be to claim reparations or demand the return of land once owned by Armenians.

Turkish diplomats resolutely resist those efforts. They assert that Muslims as well as Christians were killed here in 1915, and that it is unfair to blame only one side.

To most Turks the events of 1915 seem distant, but in the Armenian consciousness they are a vivid and constant presence. Awareness of what is simply called "the genocide" is acute in Armenian communities around the world.

Often it is accompanied by fierce anger at Turkey's recalcitrance.

That anger boiled over into violence during the 1970's and 80's, when a group calling itself Commandos of the Armenian Genocide mounted a campaign against representatives of the Turkish government. It killed Turkish

diplomats in the United States and elsewhere, and bombed targets including the Turkish Airlines counter at Orly Airport in Paris.

Since then the battle has shifted back to the diplomatic arena. Each spring, foreign leaders issue carefully worded commemorations of the killings. Last month, President Clinton issued a proclamation recalling "a great tragedy of the twentieth century: the deportations and massacres of roughly one and a half million Armenians in the final years of the Ottoman Empire." He did not use the word "genocide."

In the last year, Turkey has greatly improved its relations with Greece, but there has been little progress with Armenia. The two countries feud over a variety of political issues, but the wound that 1915 has cut into the Armenian psyche also plays an emotional role in keeping them apart.

In recent months, some of the first efforts toward reconciliation between Turks and Armenians have begun. One was a conference of Turkish, Armenian and American scholars who met at the University of Chicago to begin a joint inquiry into the events of 1915.

"This was the most difficult paper I have ever written in my life," said Selim Deringil, a historian at Bosphorus University in Istanbul, as he presented his analysis of Turkish-Armenian relations. "Venturing into the Armenian crisis is like wandering into a minefield."

The scholars who gathered in Chicago plan to meet again. Another group plans to open a series of conferences later this spring in Austria.

In a different kind of gesture, seven Turkish and Armenian women, all in their 20's, have joined in a campaign aimed at improving relations between their peoples. The group's first project will be raising money to restore an Armenian church near Van, a city in eastern Turkey that was one an Armenian capital. "This kind of thing has never been tried before," said one of the organizers, Safak Pavey, a Turkish journalist. "We want to give an example of unity between two peoples who lived together for a long time but became alienated from each other. It's about restoring a church as a way of restoring souls."

Elazig is just one place where Armenians were killed by Ottoman soldiers and Kurdish tribesmen in the spring and summer of 1915. But because several foreigners were living in the area and recorded what they saw, the killings here were unusually well documented.

One of the foreigners was an American consul, Leslie Davis, who took a trip around Lake Hazar, then known as Lake Golcuk, after the massacres. "Thousands and thousands of Armenians, mostly helpless women and children, were butchered on its shores and barbarously mutilated," he later wrote.

Armenian houses, churches and schools in this area have long since been destroyed or allowed to collapse. New villages have sprung up along the lake. Residents picnic under the mulberry tress that Armenians planted around their summer homes a century ago.

It is still possible to find artifacts of Armenian life here. At one antique shop near Elazig, \$250 will buy a heavy copper serving tray inscribed with the name of its former owner in distinctive Armenian script.

Just last month, a couple of men were discovered digging at what they believed to be a former Armenian cemetery. They were apparently looking for gold that, according to local lore, was often interred with wealthy Armenians.

Nezvat Gonultas, manager of a telephone substation on the lakeshore, is considered a local historian because his father spent

many hours telling him stories from the past. Like most people around here—although unlike their brethren in other parts of Turkey—he knows what happened in 1915.

"Other people don't know because they don't live here," Mr. Gonultas said as he sipped tea on a recent evening. "My father told me that Turkey was weak at that time and the Armenians decided to stage an uprising. Then the order came to kill them. Almost all were killed. It wasn't a war; it was a massacre."

The Turkish authorities do not accept that version, and many Turks never hear it. A historical atlas issued by a leading Turkish newspaper does not show that much of this region was under Armenian rule for centuries.

At historical sites in this region, signs and brochures often discount or omit facts about the earlier Armenian presence. According to one new travel book, "guards are under instruction to eavesdrop on tourist guides who might be tempted to tell another story."

Anyone who seeks to learn about the events in 1915, however, need only come here.

"This used to be an Armenian area, but now they're gone," said a factory worker named Selhattin Cinar. "Dead, killed, chased away. Our government doesn't want to admit it. Why would you want to say, 'My yogurt is sour'?"

#### THE BIRTH OF A MOVEMENT TO STOP VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentlewoman from The District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, there have been lots of marches in Washington, but some marches do not fade away. Indeed, they do not go away at all.

A movement was born yesterday, Mr. Speaker. In this city there occurred the largest anti-violence march in the Nation's history. It is estimated that there were 750,000 people. There might be some controversy, there always is, about numbers, half a million, 750,000. What we do know is they covered the Mall, and they had thousands upon thousands in five dozen cities as well. So, if you consider all those who marched throughout the United States and those who marched here, the moms easily made their million.

What this House ought to consider is whether or not 750,000 people could morph into 7 million voters geared to vote to do something about guns and their kids in the next election.

More impressive than their numbers, Mr. Speaker, was who they were. These were not pros. These were amateurs organized essentially from the suburbs of America. These were the proverbial soccer moms. These folks were from the voter-rich suburbs, and their call spread like spontaneous combustion.

But, I come to the floor this afternoon to say that if we thought yesterday's demonstration took this city by storm, watch out for the afterquake. Some of these moms are here today; some of them will be here every day. Mr. Speaker, the NRA has met its