

Out of the crumbling Soviet Union, the Republic of Armenia was born, and independence was gained. But, independence has not ended the struggle.

To this day, the Turkish government denies that genocide of the Armenian people occurred and denies its own responsibility for the deaths of 1.5 million people.

In response to this revisionist history, the Republic of France passed legislation that set the moral standard for the international community. The French National Assembly unanimously passed a bill that officially recognizes the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians in Turkey during and after WWI as genocide.

Several nations have since joined in the belief that history should be set straight.

Canada, Argentina, Belgium, Lebanon, The Vatican, Uruguay, the European parliament, Russia, Greece, Sweden and France, have authored declarations or decisions confirming that the genocide occurred. As a country, we must join these nations in recognition of this atrocity.

Two years ago I joined numerous Members in support of the International Relations Committee's Armenian Genocide Resolution. As may of you remember, the resolution passed and was sent to the full House for a vote. Though the resolution was withdrawn, the Congress had taken its stand. We must demand that the United States officially acknowledge the forced exile and annihilation of 1.5 million people as genocide.

Denying the horrors of those years merely condones the behavior in other places as was evidenced in Rwanda, Indonesia, Burundi, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Iraq. Silence may have been the signal to perpetrators of these atrocities that they could commit genocide, deny it, and get away with it.

As Americans, the reminder of targeted violence and mass slaughter is still raw. We lost nearly 3,000 people on September 11th. I cannot imagine the world trying to say that this did not occur. The loss of 1.5 million people is a global tragedy.

A peaceful and stable South Caucasus region is clearly in the U.S. national interest. Recognizing the genocide must be a strategy for this goal in an increasingly uncertain region. One of the most important ways in which we honor the memory of the Armenian victims of the past is to help modern Armenia build a secure and prosperous future.

The United States has a unique history of aid to Armenia, being among the first to recognize that need, and the first to help. I am pleased with the U.S. involvement in the emphasis of private sector development, regionally focused programs, people-to-people linkages and the development of a civil society.

Other reform has included the 1998 five part Comprehensive Market Reform Program, tax and fiscal reform, modernization of tax offices, land registration, capital markets development, and democratic and legal reforms.

Armenia has made impressive progress in rebuilding a society and a nation in the face of dramatic obstacles.

I will continue to take a strong stand in support of Armenia's commitment to democracy, the rule of law, and a market economy—I am proud to stand with Armenia in doing so. But there is more to be done. Conflict persists in the Nagorno-Karabagh region.

Congress has provided funding for confidence building in that region, and I will con-

tinue in my support of that funding and the move towards a brighter future for Armenia. But in building our future, we must not forget our past. That is why I strongly support the efforts of the Armenian community in the construction of the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Museum. Because so many Armenians have spoken of the destruction they have made certain that we remember.

Last Sunday, I met with Vickie Smith Foston, the author of *Victoria's Secret: A Conspiracy of Silence*. Through this story, we learn about the historical journey of a lifetime that preceded her grandmother's leap to her death on March 9, 1950 and the danger of silence though her family tried desperately to hide and conceal their identity. Vickie discovers a past that was to be buried with Victoria—her family's Armenian heritage and the horrors of the Armenian Genocide.

This book forces the reader to remember. Now we must make certain that the world remembers.

87TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 87th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

On April 24, 1915, the government of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire rounded up approximately 600 leaders and intellectuals of the Armenian community and executed them. This was the beginning of the first genocide of the 20th Century.

Shortly after that, the Ottoman-Turkish government disarmed all of the Armenian soldiers in the Turkish army, separated them from their units and executed them, too.

From 1915 to 1923 the Ottoman-Turkish government, on a systematic campaign to wipe out the Armenians, killed more than 1.5 million men, women, and children.

Despite the eyewitness accounts from then U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, detailing the events in 1915, the U.S. government did nothing. And if that isn't bad enough, since 1915 the U.S. has refused to recognize that the Armenian Genocide even occurred.

Elie Wiesel has called the denial of the genocide a "double killing": "denial of genocide," he wrote, "seeks to reshape history in order to demonize the victims and rehabilitate the perpetrators and is, in effect, the final stage of genocide."

And Elie Wiesel was right. But what is most horrific, is that today, 87 years after the Armenian Genocide began, the United States still has yet to officially recognize this tragedy.

We came close in the 106th Congress when a vote was scheduled on House Resolution 398. This resolution would have acknowledged the Armenian Genocide and provided training for our Foreign Service officers so they would be able to recognize and react to ethnic cleansing and genocide. But a vote never occurred. We chose not to act.

Last year, in April 2001, the President called the events of 1915 a "forced exile and annihilation" but he would not call this a genocide.

Some listening to this debate may wonder why it is so important that we bring this mes-

sage to the House floor year, after year, after year. Simple. It is important for two reasons. The first is that we must honor those who lost their lives during the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The second reason is that while the Armenian Genocide was the first Genocide of the 20th Century, it was not the last. In Germany in the 1930s, Cambodia in the 1970's, Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and Rwanda in 1994 we saw history repeat itself again, and again and again and again.

Until the United States is willing to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide and take concrete steps to acknowledge this tragedy, we cannot say that we are any closer to preventing this from happening again.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey and the gentleman from Michigan for arranging this very important special order today and yield back the balance of my time.

REMEMBERING THE 87TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in commemorating one of the most appalling violations of human rights in all of modern history—the eighty-seventh anniversary of the Armenian genocide. I want to commend my colleagues Representatives JOE KNOLLENBERG and FRANK PALLONE, the co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, for once again sponsoring this special order.

Each year, we join the world in the commemoration of the Armenian genocide because the tragedy of lost lives through ethnic cleansing must not be forgotten. By remembering the bloodshed and atrocities committed against the Armenian people, we hope to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

On April 24, 1915, 200 Armenian leaders, scholars, and professionals were gathered, deported, and killed in Constantinople. Later that day, 5,000 more Armenians were butchered in their homes and on the streets of the city. By 1923, two million men, women, and children had been murdered and another 500,000 Armenian survivors were homeless and exiled. The Armenian genocide was the first of the twentieth century, but unfortunately as we all know, it was not the last.

Talat Pasha, one of the Ottoman rulers, stated that the regime's goal was to "thoroughly liquidate its internal foes, the indigenous Christian." The regime called the mass murder a mass relocation, masking its horrendous acts from the rest of the world. The Ottoman Empire was fully aware that the possibility of foreign intervention was minimal considering the world was preoccupied with World War I at the time.

However, the massacre was immediately denounced by representatives from Britain, France, Russia, and the United States. Even Germany and Austria, allies of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, condemned the Empire's heinous acts.

Henry Morgenthau, U.S. Ambassador to Constantinople at the time, vividly documented the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians with the statement, "I am confident that the whole

history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this. The great massacres and persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared to the sufferings of the Armenian race in 1915."

Winston Churchill used the word "holocaust" to describe the Armenian massacres when he said that, "in 1915 the Turkish government began and ruthlessly carried out the infamous general massacre and deportation of Armenians in Asia Minor . . . [the Turks were] massacring uncounted thousands of helpless Armenians—men, women, and children together; whole districts blotted out in one administrative holocaust—these were beyond human redress."

We must recognize the enormity of this act as one of the darkest chapters in world history. Only at that point can we truly take account of the severity of loss and honor the memory of the two million Armenians and others that were murdered during the genocide.

The orchestrated extermination of people is contrary to the values the United States espouses. We are a nation which strictly adheres to the affirmation of human rights everywhere. No one can erase a horrendous historical fact by ignoring what so many witnessed and survived.

Recognition and acceptance of misdeeds are necessary steps toward its extinction. Without acceptance, there is no remorse, and without remorse, there is no catharsis and pardon. We all want to forget these horrific tragedies in our history and bury them in the past. However, it is only through the painful process of acknowledging and remembering that we can prevent similar iniquity in the future.

As recently as the year 2000, the United States, together with many European nations, took an active part in halting the genocidal events occurring in Kosovo. We cannot turn our heads from similar events that happened to the Armenian people. By remaining silent, we set a dangerous precedent, and in essence, we condone the horrific act.

The survivors of the Armenian genocide and their descendants have made great contributions to every country in which they have settled, including the United States where they have made their mark in business, the professions and our cultural life.

In closing, I would like to ask that we all take a moment to reflect upon the hardships endured by the Armenians, and acknowledge that in the face of adversity, the Armenian people have persevered. Today, we commemorate the memories of those who lost their lives in the genocide, as well as the resilience of those who survived.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, this April marks the 87th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, when the Ottoman Empire killed 1.5 million Armenians and exiled over 500,000 more during an eight-year-long reign of terror. By recognizing these events, we can hopefully prevent similar horrors from occurring again. To recognize the Armenian Genocide, however, the United States must affirm that a genocide indeed occurred. To date, President Bush has refused to acknowledge that the events of 1915 to 1923 comprised acts of genocide.

I have joined 101 other members of Congress in signing a letter to President Bush urging him to recognize the Armenian Genocide. Doing so will place the United States in the company of the European Union, Canada,

Russia, and other members of the international community.

History has a way of rewarding those who have suffered. Today, after centuries of Turkish domination and eighty years of Soviet domination, an independent Republic of Armenia is an upstanding, sovereign member of the family of nations. The United States must continue to help the government in Yerevan guarantee its security, develop its economy, and institutionalize its democracy.

As a member of International Relations Committee and Congressional Caucus on Armenia, I will continue to argue strongly for policies benefiting Armenia. My district includes many Armenians, especially in Woodside, and I have listened to the concerns of the Armenian-American Community there many times. I have worked tirelessly to promote the interests of Armenia and the Armenian-American community, including:

Augmenting the Administration's 2003 budget request for Armenia. The Bush Administration's 2003 budget requests only \$70 million in bilateral assistance funds for Armenia, \$20 million less than Congress appropriated in 2002. Similarly, The Administration requested only \$3 million, a \$1 million decrease from the 2002 appropriation, in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to help the Armenian armed forces guarantee the security of the nation. The higher figures must be restored.

Insisting that any regional oil pipeline pass through Armenia.

Maintaining Section 907 in the 2002 Freedom Support Act, which prohibits certain types of direct U.S. assistance to Azerbaijan until it has ended its aggression and lifted its blockades against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh.

Supporting legislation to require the State Department to train all Foreign Service Officers dealing with human rights in the U.S. record on the Armenian genocide.

Hosting a town hall meeting with the State Department negotiator for Nagorno-Karabakh to ensure the Armenian-American community is fully informed about the Administration's policies.

As we commemorate the horrific events experienced by the Armenian people in the past, let us also celebrate the extraordinary accomplishments of the Armenian community in the United States and work to enhance the tremendous future potential of the sovereign Armenian nation.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in remembrance to mark one of the most horrific tragedies of the 20th century, the Armenian Genocide. On this date in 1915, leaders of the Ottoman Empire began murdering thousands of Armenian people. By 1923, the number of Armenians murdered was over 1.5 million. In spite of irrefutable evidence, the United States of America and the Republic of Turkey have consistently refused to officially acknowledge that the Armenians were victims of genocide.

The Armenian Genocide is a historical event that cannot be denied or forgotten. It is vital for Turkey to accept recognition of this tragedy taking place on its soil. Turkey must follow the example of Germany in its swift commendation and acknowledgement of the Holocaust.

In 2000 the European Parliament officially recognized the Armenian Genocide. The following year the French Parliament recognized it as well. Many attempts have also been made by the U.S. Congress to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide. These attempts,

however, have been scuttled by successive administrations for fear of disrupting our strategic relationship with Turkey. While I certainly value Turkey's friendship, as a world leader, the U.S. must officially acknowledge the Armenian Genocide. Not doing so sets an extremely poor example for the rest of the world and denies the victims of this horrific tragedy the proper reverence they deserve.

Armenia was quick to respond to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers and the Pentagon and to offer their condolences and support. With Armenia offering its support and sharing in our grievances, it is unimaginable that we would deny them the same sympathies. The Armenian people deserve official recognition by the United States for the tragic genocide that was inflicted on their people during Ottoman rule, as well as, U.S. efforts to encourage Turkey to also officially recognize the Armenian Genocide.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my colleagues today in commemorating the 87th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. By rising together to remember the atrocities that occurred in Armenia from 1915–1923, we force people to acknowledge that what occurred was genocide and should be called genocide.

Today, as we reflect on the events of the early 20th Century, we honor the 1.5 million people that lost their lives defending themselves against the Ottoman Empire. We also honor the survivors of the Armenian Genocide for their bravery and courage in the face of evil. The survivors provide an example of courage and determination to future generations of Armenians and non-Armenians alike, and on this anniversary, we recognize them as heroes.

This anniversary of the Armenian Genocide also provides us with an opportunity to reflect on and examine what occurred in 1915 to ensure that such slaughter never occurs again. The events of the 20th Century, from the Holocaust to ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and Rwanda, demonstrate the clear need for retrospection on the causes of these past systematic and deliberate attempts at elimination of specific racial or cultural groups. And, just as importantly, we must continue to fight to ensure that these crimes against humanity are recognized as genocides.

As a Jewish-American who is ever mindful of the Holocaust, I stand with you in recognizing the Armenian Genocide so that the world will never forget the first crime against humanity in the 20th Century.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, today marks the eighty-seventh anniversary of an event none of us would wish we have to remember—the genocide of the Armenian people. On April 24, 1915, hundreds of Armenian political, religious and intellectual leaders were forcibly rounded up, exiled and eventually murdered. Over the course of the next eight years, over a million Armenian men, women, and children lost their lives. Untold numbers of Armenian villages were destroyed.

Peace-loving people the world over pause today to reflect on these most tragic events. I urge my fellow Members of Congress and Americans throughout the country to join me in commemorating the Armenian people and to honor the memory of so many who fell to the horrible injustices inflicted upon them.

The plight of the Armenian people can be overshadowed by more recent and more visible acts of genocide, such as that suffered by

Jews in World War II. But all acts of inhumanity can have no place in civilized societies. We must not forget the death of even a single child, whether in Auschwitz or Anatolia.

I hope that remembering the events of April 24, 1915 is more than mere ceremony. These memories are a signpost pointing the way to a future where no people should have to live in fear of their lives, especially because of racial or ethnic circumstances none of us can control. All of us must redouble efforts to ensure that the anniversaries celebrated by future generations will be joyous occasions to celebrate the freedom and prosperity of Armenians everywhere.

Mr. OLIVER. Mr. Speaker, each year, on April 24th, we solemnly observe the Armenian Genocide in order to recognize its occurrence, honor the memory of those who perished, and educate the public. We remember so that those who still choose to deny the genocide will one day begin the atonement process.

More than one million Armenians were systematically abused, deported and killed from 1915 to 1923, between the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of modern Turkey.

April 24, 1915 marked the rise of the atrocities. On this night, the Turkish government arrested over 200 Armenian community leaders in Constantinople. Hundreds of similar arrests followed. These leaders were all imprisoned and summarily executed. Thousands of Armenian soldiers in the Ottoman army were disarmed and eventually murdered. After Armenian intellectuals and soldiers were killed, the terror visited every city, town and village in Asia Minor and Turkish Armenia. By 1923, 1,500,000 Armenians were killed and 500,000 were exiled from the Ottoman Empire. There is no doubt that the government was intent upon the destruction of the Armenian people.

Despite long-standing international recognition and condemnation, the present-day Republic of Turkey denies the genocide. As the first genocidal event of the 20th century, the Armenian Genocide was a precursor to the Nazi Holocaust and the more recent eruptions of "ethnic cleansing" in the Balkans.

Raphael Lemkin, the Polish-Jewish lawyer once said: "The practices of genocide anywhere affect the vital interests of all civilized people." As citizens in a democracy, it is incumbent upon all Americans to remember the Armenian Genocide. It is my hope that today we reflect upon the moral and ethical questions that this genocide invokes and respond with this refrain: Never again.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, on April 24, 2002, the City of Glendale will sponsor an Armenian Genocide Commemoration ceremony and will honor the remarkable achievements in filmmaking and teaching of Dr. J. Michael Hagopian, who has dedicated his life's work to documenting the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1922. I rise today to join in recognizing the work, commitment and dedication of Dr. Hagopian, who has sought to shine the light of truth on the first genocide of the 20th century and honor the memory of the 1.5 million men, women and children who perished in it.

Dr. Hagopian, the founder and chairman of the Armenian Film Foundation and president of Atlantis Productions, has a doctorate in International Relations from Harvard University. He graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, and has completed graduate work in cinema at the University of

Southern California. He has taught political science and economics at the University of California at Los Angeles, American University of Beirut, Lebanon, Benares Hindu University, India, and Oregon State University, Corvallis.

Since 1954, Dr. Hagopian has been engaged in making educational and documentary films for the classroom and on television. He has written, directed and produced more than 70 films that have won more than 150 national and international awards. His film, "The Forgotten Genocide," was nominated for two Emmys in production and writing. Several of these films were produced under grants from the U.S. Office of Education and Ethnic Heritage Program, California Endowment for the Humanities, and California State Department of Education. In 1979, Dr. Hagopian established the Armenian Film Foundation, which has produced 13 videos and films, and gathered a film archive of more than 350 survivors of the 1915 Armenian Genocide.

Most recently, he has produced "Voices from the Lake—the Secret Genocide," a tragic tale told by the eyewitness survivors of Kharper-Mezreh, one among 4,000 towns and villages of the former Ottoman Empire to have been decimated under the genocide. I was proud when serving in the California State Senate to have secured state funding for the production of this film, and, after being elected to Congress, to have arranged a screening of this remarkable documentary at the Library of Congress.

"Voices from the Lake" is the first film in "The Witnesses" project of the Armenian Film Foundation. The second film in the series will examine the impact of the Great Powers on the Armenian Genocide and the third film will depict the deportation of the Armenians from their ancestral homes to the Great Syrian desert and the killing fields along the legendary Euphrates and the wilderness of Der Zor.

Mr. Speaker, acknowledging and honoring the memory of those who lost their lives in the Armenian Genocide is a moral obligation for all humankind. I ask all Members of Congress to join me in recognizing the remarkable work of one man, Dr. J. Michael Hagopian, who has dedicated his life to ensuring that we do not forget the victims of this genocide so that the world may never again tolerate such crimes against humanity.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, April 14th is the day on which we remember the victims of the gruesome events of the Armenian Genocide. From 1915 to 1923 during the times of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish government implemented a ruthless extermination of innocent Armenians through which an astonishing and sickening 1.5 million Armenians were killed and over 500,000 additional individuals were exiled from the lands in which they had lived for hundreds and of years.

It is imperative that we properly recognize this massacre as a genocide—a concerted effort to annihilate a people. We must show respect and remembrance to the victims of this terrible period in history. By doing so, we are honoring those victims and condemning the government-sanctioned crime of mass murder and doing our part to prevent similarly horrific events from occurring again. The archives of history must be honest and accurate and tell the real story of the Armenian Genocide.

On a personal level, I have joined the Armenian congressional caucus to assist in the ef-

fort to promote international awareness of Armenia's history. With my caucus colleagues, I have encouraged successive Presidents to publicly decry the Ottoman policy of Armenian genocide. In my judgment, the Armenian Genocide is a fact of history and should be recognized as a fact of history. The Armenian Caucus seeks to educate policymakers and the public on the facts of history so that none will ever forget or repeat these atrocities.

Mr. Speaker, just as I rise today in commemoration of the Armenian Genocide and in support of the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian-American community, so should we all stand to show our support and solidarity with these courageous and proud people. They have faced a truly cruel and evil event in history and, through perseverance and hope, have survived with dignity and strength.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with Armenians throughout the United States, Armenia, and the world in commemorating the 87th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, one of the darkest episodes in Europe's recent past. This week, members and friends of the Armenian community gather to remember April 24, 1915, when the arrest and murder of 200 Armenian politicians, academics, and community leaders in Constantinople marked the beginning of an eight-year campaign of extermination against the Armenian people by the Ottoman Empire.

Between 1915 and 1923, approximately 1.5 million Armenians were killed and more than 500,000 were exiled to the desert to die of thirst or starvation. The Armenian genocide was the first mass murder of the 20th century, a century that was sadly to be marked by many similar attempts at racial or ethnic extermination, from the Holocaust to the Rwandan genocide to the recent ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia.

In the 87 years since the beginning of this genocide, we have learned the importance of commemorating these tragic events. In 1939, after invading Poland and relocating most Jews to labor or death camps, Hitler cynically defended his own actions by asking, "Who remembers the Armenians?" Just a few years later, six million Jews were dead. Now is the time when we must answer Hitler's question with a clear voice: We remember the Armenians, and we stand resolved that genocide is a crime against all humanity. We must remember the legacy of the Armenian genocide and we must speak out against such tragedies to ensure that no similar evil occurs again.

While today is the day in which we solemnly remember the victims of the Armenian genocide, I believe it is also a day in which we can celebrate the extraordinary vitality and strength of the Armenian people, who have fought successfully to preserve their culture and identity for over a thousand years. The Armenian people withstood the horrors of genocide, two world wars, and several decades of Soviet dominance in order to establish modern Armenia. Armenia has defiantly rebuilt itself as a nation and a society—a triumph of human spirit in the face of overwhelming adversity.

It is my firm belief that it is only by learning from and commemorating the past can we work toward a future free from racial, ethnic, and religious hate. By acknowledging the Armenian genocide and speaking out against the principles by which it was conducted, we can send a clear message: never again.

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.

This terrible human tragedy must not be forgotten. Like the Holocaust, the Armenian Genocide stands as a tragic example of the human suffering that results from hatred and intolerance.

The Ottoman Turkish Empire between 1915 and 1923 massacred one and a half million Armenian people. More than 500,000 Armenians were exiled from a homeland that their ancestors had occupied for more than 3,000 years. A race of people was nearly eliminated.

It would be an even greater tragedy to forget that the Armenian Genocide ever happened. To not recognize the horror of such events almost assures their repetition in the future. Adolf Hitler, in preparing his genocide plans for the Jews, predicted that no one would remember the atrocities he was about to unleash. After all, he asked, 'Who remembers the Armenians?'

Our statement today are intended to preserve the memory of the Armenian loss, and to remind the world that the Turkish government—to this day—refuses to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide. The truth of this tragedy can never and should never be denied.

And we must also be mindful of the current suffering of the Armenian, where the Armenian people are still immersed in tragedy and violence. The unrest between Armenia and Azerbaijan continues in Nagorno-Karabakh. Thousands of innocent people have already perished in this dispute, and many more have been displaced and are homeless.

In the face of this difficult situation we have an opportunity for reconciliation. Now is the time for Armenia and its neighbors to come together and work toward building relationships that will assure lasting peace.

Meanwhile, in America, the Armenian-American community continues to thrive and to provide assistance and solidarity to its countrymen and women abroad. The Armenian-American community is bound together by strong generational and family ties, an enduring work ethic and a proud sense of ethnic heritage. Today we recall the tragedy of their past, not to replace blame, but to answer a fundamental question, 'Who remembers the Armenians?'

Our commemoration of the Armenian Genocide speaks directly to that, and I answer, we do.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the victims of one of history's most terrible tragedies, the Armenian Genocide.

April 24, 1915 is remembered and earnestly commemorated each year by the Armenian community as the day in which 300 Armenian leaders, intellectuals, and professionals were rounded up in Constantinople, deported, and killed. From 1915 through 1923, Armenians that lived under Ottoman rule were systematically deprived of their property, freedom, and dignity. In addition, one and a half million Armenians had been massacred and 500,000 more had been deported. The Armenian community saw its culture devastated and its people dispersed.

In my district, there is a significant population of Armenian survivors and their families that showed heroic courage and will to survive in the face of horrendous obstacles and adversities. These survivors are an important window into the past and an invaluable part of our

society. It is through their unforgettable tragedy that we are able to share in their history and strong heritage.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to fathom a greater evil than the massacre and willful destruction of a people. Denying the genocide that took place when there are recorded accounts of barbarity and ethnic violence is an injustice. This was a tragic event in human history, but by paying tribute to the Armenian community we ensure the lessons of the Armenian genocide are properly understood and acknowledged. I am pleased my colleagues and I have this opportunity in order to ensure this legacy is remembered.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I join today with many of my colleagues in remembering the victims of the Armenian Genocide on this, its 87th anniversary.

From 1915 to 1923, the world witnessed the first genocide of the 20th Century. This was clearly one of the world's greatest tragedies—the deliberate and systematic Ottoman annihilation of 1.5 million Armenian men, women, and children.

Furthermore, another 500,000 refugees fled and escaped to various points around the world—effectively eliminating the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire.

From these ashes arose hope and promise in 1991—and I was blessed to see it. I was one of the four international observers from the United States Congress to monitor Armenia's independence referendum. I went to the communities in the northern part of Armenia, and I watched in awe as 95 percent of the people over the age of 18 went out and voted.

The Armenian people had been denied freedom for so many years and, clearly, they were very excited about this new opportunity. Almost no one stayed home. They were all out in the streets going to the polling places. I watched in amazement as people stood in line for hours to get into these small polling places and vote.

Then, after they voted, the other interesting thing was that they did not go home. They had brought covered dishes with them, and all of these polling places had little banquets afterward to celebrate what had just happened.

What a great thrill it was to join them the next day in the streets of Yerevan when they were celebrating their great victory. Ninety-eight percent of the people cast their ballots in favor of independence. It was a wonderful experience to be there with them when they danced and sang and shouted, 'Ketse azat ankakh Hayastan'—long live free and independent Armenia! That should be the cry of freedom-loving people everywhere.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the fact that today is the 87th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian genocide that began under the direction of the Ottoman Empire. From 1915 until 1923, 1.5 million Armenians were murdered and another 500,000 were forced into exile in Russia, ending a period of 2,500 years of an Armenian presence in their historic homeland. In addition, Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders from Istanbul were arrested and exiled—silencing the leading representatives of the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire.

Today, we pause to remember and honor the victims of this terrible period in human history. Like the Jewish and Cambodian holocausts, and more recently, the Serbian ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, the Armenian genocide

was terrible and morally reprehensible. Thus, today I honor those Armenians who were killed, arrested, exiled, and otherwise mistreated, and I remind my colleagues and the world that we must never forget what happened during that terrible period in history. Furthermore, we must reaffirm our resolve to ensure that no people will ever again be the victims of such a mass genocide.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my colleagues in Congress to commemorate the 87th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Between 1915 and 1923, approximately two million Armenians were massacred, persecuted, and exiled by the Young Turk government of the Ottoman Empire. This campaign of murder and oppression was an attempt to systematically wipe out the Armenian population of Anatolia.

Even though there were numerous witnesses to the atrocities committed, including U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, Sr., and even though the Turk government itself held war crime trials and condemned to death the chief perpetrators of this heinous crime against humanity, the Turk government continues to deny the Armenian Genocide ever took place.

This denial cannot be allowed to stand. The failure of the Turkish government to acknowledge the sinful acts of its predecessors sent the wrong message to the leaders of Germany, Rwanda, and Bosnia. As Nobel Peace Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu wrote:

"It is sadly true what a cynic has said, that we learn from the history that we do not learn from history. And yet it is possible that if the world had been conscious of the genocide that was committed by the Ottoman Turks against the Armenians, the first genocide of the twentieth century, then perhaps humanity might have been more alert to the warning signs that were being given before Hitler's madness was unleashed on an unbelieving world."

It is imperative that each of us works to ensure that our generation and future generations never again witness such inhuman behavior and suffering. Only through remembrance and recognition can we stop such acts of senseless cruelty and violence against humankind from happening again.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a Member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues to recognize the horrific Armenian Genocide.

Today we mark the 87th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, where, in 1915, 1.5 million men, women and children died at the hands of the Ottoman Empire.

Another 500,000 Armenians were forcibly deported, deprived of their homes, their possessions and their homeland.

Many of these refugees made their way to the United States, and it is with pride that we recognize today the more than 1 million people of Armenian descent who live in our great nation.

However, it is with regret that we admit today that our nation, which has seen firsthand the effects of that brutal genocide, still refuses to acknowledge this crime against humanity.

This injustice must be corrected.

Today our children learn about other plights in our world's history, such as slavery and the Holocaust.

But our voices remain mute when it comes to the genocide of innocent Armenian men, women and children.

But our children need to learn that on April 24, 1915, hundreds of Armenian leaders were murdered in Istanbul after being summoned and gathered.

Soon, the rampage spread to the Armenian people who were led to slaughter across the Ottoman Empire.

It is imperative that these events be recognized as a genocide, and this recognition can only be realized if our government has the courage to stand up and proclaim the truth.

Unless this crime against humanity is acknowledged and compensated for, we run the risk of somehow repeating it.

I urge my colleagues and President Bush to do the right thing and join me this evening in affirming the existence of the Armenian Genocide.

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak of one of the great horrors of our century: the Armenian genocide. As a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, I once again join my colleagues in recognizing the great tragedy of the Armenian people.

As we all know, the genocide of the Armenian people occurred in 1915, when the Ottoman Empire began to force Armenians from their homeland, and lasted until 1923. These eight years saw the deaths of 1.5 million innocent victims and 500,000 exiled survivors. Despite the tremendous magnitude of the genocide, the world stood by as families were torn asunder and millions of lives were taken.

There is no doubt that calling the events by their rightful name—genocide—is an important element of this recognition of responsibility, and I was pleased to sign a letter to the President urging him to do exactly that next week when we commemorate this tragic event. I would hope that all leaders would join me in denouncing this act of genocide.

Today, as I once again honor the victims of the Armenian genocide on behalf of the 6th district of Massachusetts, I also honor the commitment and perseverance of the Armenian-Americans who have tirelessly struggled to ensure that the great sorrow of their people becomes known to all people. It is the very least that this Congress can do to stand up and commemorate the Armenian Genocide, and I am pleased to join my colleagues in doing so.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, as I have every year since I was elected to this institution, I come before this chamber to honor my Armenian friends on the eve of the 87th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

As we all know, the 20th century was one of historic progress and horrible brutality. Unfortunately, as we enter into the 21st Century we have seen this brutality continue. America is often the first nation to combat brutality around the world. Our reaction was no different when we responded to the extermination of 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Empire between 1915–1923. This horrific event that took place during those years has become to be known as the Armenian Genocide.

As members of this body, and as Americans, we have an obligation to educate and familiarize the world on the Armenian Genocide. In fact, we must ensure that the legacy of the Genocide is remembered, so that this human tragedy will not be repeated. As we have seen in recent years, genocide and ethnic cleansing continue to plague nations

around the world—and as a great nation—we must always be firm in standing against such atrocities. Part of standing against such brutal repression is making sure it is never forgotten or repeated. Therefore, it is critical that we educate people about the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1.5 million Armenians.

As such, we make it clear that Americans do not and will not accept such atrocities or their denial. Silences, either out of indifference or as the result of political pressure, only serves to encourage others who would again use ethnic cleansing as a tool of government. By recognizing and learning from the past, we work toward a future free of genocide.

When I began the process of seeking affirmation of the voluminous record on the Armenian Genocide years ago, I did not on behalf of a united Armenian-American community who appropriately sought from this body recognition and affirmation of the truth regarding a horrible catastrophe that is so often forgotten. Having paid close attention to the views of those opposed to my efforts, I am now more committed to this effort—not for Armenian-Americans, but for all Americans.

If we are serious about learning the lessons from history—as painful as they sometimes are—then we must be willing to speak openly and honestly about this more serious violation of human rights. To shy away from recognizing genocide, or, even worse, to be complicit in any way in its denial would represent a retreat from our nation's historic commitment to human rights.

I say that we must affirm history—not bury it. We must learn from history—not reshape it according to the geo-strategic needs of the moment. And we must refuse to be intimidated. Otherwise, nations with troubled pasts will ask that the American record on their dark chapters be expunged.

During President Bush's campaign he pledged to properly commemorate the Armenian Genocide. Today, I have every reason to believe that he will honor that pledge and do what is right for both the Armenian people and for historical record. While President Bush used the textbook definition of genocide in his annual statement last year, I encourage him to take the final step and use the "G" word this year—"Genocide."

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solemn memorial to the estimated 1.5 million men, women, and children who lost their lives during the Armenian Genocide. As in the past, I am pleased to join so many distinguished House colleagues on both sides of the aisle in ensuring that the horrors wrought upon the Armenian people are never repeated.

On April 24, 1915, over 200 religious, political, and intellectual leaders of the Armenian community were brutally executed by the Turkish government in Istanbul. Over the course of the next 8 years, this war of ethnic genocide against the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire took the lives of over half the world's Armenian population.

Sadly, there are some people who still deny the very existence of this period which saw the institutionalized slaughter of the Armenian people and dismantling of Armenian culture. To those who would question these events, I point to the numerous reports contained in the U.S. National Archives detailing the process that systematically decimated the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire. However,

old records are too easily forgotten—and dismissed. That is why we come together every year at this time: to remember in words what some may wish to file away in archives. This genocide did take place, and these lives were taken. That memory must keep us forever vigilant in our efforts to prevent these atrocities from ever happening again.

I am proud to note that Armenian immigrants found, in the United States, a country where their culture could take root and thrive. Most Armenians in America are children or grandchildren of the survivors, although there are still survivors amongst us. In my district in Northwest Indiana, a vibrant Armenian-American community has developed and strong ties to Armenia continue to flourish. My predecessor in the House, the late Adam Benjamin, was of Armenian heritage, and his distinguished service in the House serves as an example to the entire Northwest Indian community. Over the years, members of the Armenian-American community throughout the United States have contributed millions of dollars and countless hours of their time to various Armenian causes. Of particular note are Mrs. Vicki Hovanessian and her husband, Dr. Raffi Hovanessian, residents of Indiana's First Congressional District, who have continually worked to improve the quality of life in Armenia, as well as in Northwest Indiana. Three other Armenian-American families in my congressional district, Dr. Aram and Seta Semerdjian, Heratch and Sonya Doumanian, and Ara and Rosy Yeretsian, have also contributed greatly toward charitable works in the United States and Armenia. Their efforts, together with hundreds of other members of the Armenian-American community, have helped to finance several important projects in Armenia, including the construction of new schools, a mammography clinic, and a crucial roadway connecting Armenia to Nagorno Karabagh.

In the House, I have tried to assist the efforts of my Armenian-American constituency by continually supporting foreign aid to Armenia. This past year, with my support, Armenia received \$94.3 million in U.S. aid to assist economic and military development. In addition, on April 12, 2002, I joined several of my colleagues in signing the letter to President Bush urging him to honor his pledge to recognize the Armenian Genocide.

The Armenian people have a long and proud history. In the fourth century, they became the first nation to embrace Christianity. During World War I, the Ottoman Empire was ruled by an organization known as the Young Turk Committee, which allied with Germany. Amid fighting in the Ottoman Empire's eastern Anatolian provinces, the historic heartland of the Christian Armenians, Ottoman authorities ordered the deportation and execution of all Armenians in the region. By the end of 1923, virtually the entire Armenian population of Anatolia and western Armenian had either been killed or deported.

While it is important to keep the lessons of history in mind, we must also remain committed to protecting Armenia from new and more hostile aggressors. In the last decade, thousands of lives have been lost and more than a million people displaced in the struggle between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabagh. Even now, as we rise to commemorate the accomplishments of the Armenian people and mourn the tragedies they have suffered, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and other

countries continue to engage in a debilitating blockade of this free nation.

Consistently, I have testified before Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee on the important issue of bringing peace to a troubled area of the world. I continued my support for maintaining of level funding for the Southern Caucasus region of the Independent States (IS), and of Armenia in particular. I also stressed the critical importance of revisiting Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act that restricts U.S. aid for Azerbaijan as a result of their blockade. However, I commend my colleagues on the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee for striking the appropriate balance last year regarding Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which will now allow Azerbaijan to do their part in the war against international terrorism. Unfortunately, Armenia is now entering its thirteenth year of a blockade and I must request that the Congress review the waiver to Section 907 on a yearly basis. The flow of food, fuel, and medicine continues to be hindered by the blockade, creating a humanitarian crisis in Armenia.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues, Representatives JOE KNOLLENBERG and FRANK PALLONE, for organizing this special order to commemorate the 87th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Their efforts will not only help bring needed attention to this tragic period in world history, but also serve to remind us of our duty to protect basic human rights and freedoms around the world.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, we recognize today, one of the most tragic atrocities that the twenty-first century has witnessed, occurring eighty-seven years ago. The Armenian Genocide, which began on April 24th, 1915 began with the systematic killings of 200 intellectual and spiritual Armenian leaders, and ended with a count of over 1.5 million dead and another half million deported. It was an attempt on ethnic cleansing that has marred the pasts of native Armenians, now living in their native country or residing in America.

As members of the international community, it is important for our nation to acknowledge this terrible act on the Armenian people. We must make sure that the voices of the Armenian people do not go unheard. Although the Republic of Turkey has continued to deny that the Genocide took place on its soil, those of us here today are aware of the truth.

We cannot allow the truth of the Armenian Genocide to linger in the shadows of this world's history. With information and education our world will be better equipped to tackle equally disturbing human rights atrocities that occur around the globe. Through education, commemoration and remembrance, we send a signal out that the United States does not condone human rights atrocities and we will not forget those that have occurred in the past. We must continue to recognize that the events of 1915–1923 in Armenia were indeed a genocide and in this recognition process, we may prevent incidents like this from occurring ever again. The special orders today on the House floor are testaments to that message and I hope that this annual effort will continue.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, for the fourth consecutive year, to commemorate a people who despite murder, hardship, and betrayal have persevered. April 24, 2002, marks the 8th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide; unbelievably, an event that many still fail to recognize.

Throughout three decades in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, millions of Armenians were systematically uprooted from their homeland of three thousands years and deported or massacred. From 1894 through 1896, three hundred thousand Armenians were ruthlessly murdered. Again in 1909, thirty thousand Armenians were massacred in Cilicia, and their villages were destroyed.

On April 24, 1915, two hundred Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were arbitrarily arrested, taken to Turkey and murdered. This incident marks a dark and solemn period in the history of the Armenian people. From 1915 to 1923, the Ottoman Empire launched a systematic campaign to exterminate Armenians. In eight short years, more than 1.5 million Armenians suffered through atrocities such as deportation, forced slavery and torture. Most were ultimately murdered.

I have had the privilege of joining my colleagues in a letter to the President asking that he acknowledge the Genocide in his April 24th commemoration statement. It is my hope that the President will stand by this pledge he made in 2000. It is my hope that this will be one more step toward official recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the United States.

Many of our companions in the international community have already taken this final step. The European Parliament and the United Nations have recognized and reaffirmed the Armenian Genocide as historical fact, as have the Russian and Greek parliaments, the Canadian House of Commons, the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies and the French National Assembly. It is time for America to join the chorus and acknowledge the Armenians who suffered at the hands of the Ottoman Empire. And let me stress that I am not speaking of the government of modern day Turkey, but rather its predecessor, overthrown and repudiated by the modern Turkish Republic.

As I have in the past, as a member of the Congressional Armenian Caucus, I will continue to work with my colleagues and with the Armenian-Americans in my district to promote investment and prosperity in Armenia. And, I sincerely hope that this year the U.S. will have the opportunity and courage to speak in support of the millions of Armenians who suffered because of their heritage.

Mr. FELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate once again in the annual remembrance of the Armenian genocide today, eighty seven years after this terrible tragedy which claimed the lives of over 1.5 million Armenians between 1915 and 1923.

The Armenian Genocide began in 1915 with the rounding up and killing of Armenian soldiers by the Turkish government. After that, the government turned its attention to slaughtering Armenian intellectuals. They were killed because of their ethnicity, the first group in the 20th Century killed not for their actions, but for who they were.

By the time the bloodshed of the genocide ended, the victims included the aged, women and children who had been forced from their homes and marched to relocation camps, beaten and brutalized along the way. In addition to the 1.5 million dead, over 500,000 Armenians were driven from their homeland.

It is important that we make the time, every year, to remember the victims of the Armenian genocide. We hope that, by remembering the bloodshed and atrocities committed against

the Armenians, we can prevent this kind of tragedy from repeating itself. Unfortunately, history continues to prove us wrong. That is why we must be so vigilant in remembering the past.

It is important to continue to talk about the Armenian genocide. We must keep alive the memory of those who lost their lives during the eight years of bloodshed in Armenia. We must educate other nations who have not recognized that the Armenian genocide occurred. And we must call this tragedy what it is: a genocide. That is why I joined my colleagues in sending a letter to President Bush earlier this year asking him to recognize the Armenians Genocide as that—genocide—in his annual statement.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Armenian-Americans—the survivors and their descendants—who continue to educate the world about the tragedy of the Armenian Genocide and make valuable contributions to our shared American culture. Because of their efforts, the world will not be allowed to forget the memory of the victims of the first 20th Century holocaust.

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand with my colleagues today to remember a terrible chapter in human history, the Armenian genocide. April 24 holds as a reminder of the Armenian intellectuals and professionals in Constantinople who were first rounded up and deported or killed so many years ago. This action was a precursor to the attempted genocide of an entire people.

From 1915 to 1923, a million and a half Armenians were killed and countless others suffered as a result of the system and deliberate campaign of genocide by the rules of the Ottoman Empire.

Half a million Armenians who escaped death were deported to the Middle East. Some were fortunate enough to escape to the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I am thankful that more than a million Armenians managed to escape the genocide and establish a new life here in the United States. In the Seventh District of New Jersey, I am proud to represent a number of Armenian-Americans. They make incredible contributions to the area and enrich every aspect of New Jersey life, from science to commerce to the arts.

Our statements today are intended to preserve the memory of the Armenian loss and to honor those descendants who have overcome the atrocities that took their grandparents, their parents, their children, and their friends. We mark this anniversary each year to remind our Nation and to teach future generations about the horrors of genocide and oppression endured by the Armenian people.

Let us stand today, united in our remembrance of those who died and committed to ensuring that future horror as, like those faced by the Armenian people, never happen in our world again.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, one of the ugliest periods in world history, which took the lives of 1.5 million Armenians and exiled the Armenian nation from its homeland.

My colleagues and I join with the Armenian-American community, and with Armenians throughout the world, in remembering one of humanity's darkest times, when senseless hatred and prejudice attempted to erase an historic people from the face of our earth.

We cannot turn our backs on history. We cannot ignore the atrocities perpetrated in the past, lest we repeat them. Now, more than ever, we must remain vigilant and steadfast in our defense of right and good. We have seen great horror in just the last year, and we know from history—from the Armenian Genocide and from other massacres—that letting fundamentalist aggression go unchecked and forgotten will come back to haunt us all.

We know this because the world has experienced it. The lessons of what results when hatred is left unchecked have been too slowly learned. Adolf Hitler looked to the Armenian Genocide before perpetrating the Holocaust, calculating that his plans to annihilate the Jewish people would encounter little opposition, just as the Armenian Genocide spurred no global outcry. In a year in which the seemingly unthinkable has happened time and again, we acknowledge that good people will be forever engaged in a battle against the evil in our world. In memory of those who perished in the Armenian Genocide, and in similar acts around the world and throughout the ages, we will never give up this fight.

As we remember the past, we must also pledge our support for ensuring the future of the Armenian nation. Our country must be vigilant in bringing about an end to the blockade of Armenia, helping the people of that nation to live secure and prosperous lives. Our yearly package of assistance to Armenia—economic and now military as well—is a signal of the United States' commitment to this goal. It must be maintained.

Mr. Speaker, the Armenian people have shown true resilience in confronting the obstacles they have faced in the last century. From the ashes of the Genocide, the Armenian nation has become strong, making invaluable contributions to our country, to Armenia, and to the world. I join my colleagues in remembering the atrocities of the past, but also in celebrating the hope of a better future.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 87th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and pay my solemn respects to those who lost their lives because of their ethnicity. The Armenian Genocide was a terrible tragedy that must never be forgotten.

On April 24, 1915, hundreds of Armenian leaders were murdered in Istanbul by order of the Young Turk regime of the Ottoman empire. The Young Turks were a dictatorial regime that orchestrated the systematic destruction of the Armenian people in the Ottoman empire. This genocide occurred through forced labor, concentration camps and death marches. By 1923, the Ottoman empire had killed 1.5 million Armenians and deported 500,000.

However, the present day Turkish government has not yet admitted its involvement in the Armenian Genocide. This denial disrespects the memories of the victims of the Armenian Genocide and compels its survivors and all of us to remind the world of this terrible tragedy every April 24th. Only by raising our voices together will these crimes be known, condemned forever, and—hopefully—never repeated.

Today, I beseech the Turkish government to finally acknowledge its role in the Armenian Genocide. In attempting the systematic annihilation of the Jews of Europe half a century ago, Adolph Hitler asked "Who today remembers the annihilation of the Armenians?" We

answer: we remember. And it is long past time for the Turkish government to join us in remembering.

I proudly represent a large and active Armenian community in my Congressional District in Massachusetts. Every year, survivors and their descendants make public and vivid the hidden details of the Armenian Genocide as they participate in commemoration ceremonies in Boston, Lowell, and other parts of Massachusetts's Merrimack Valley. The commemoration offers participants an opportunity to remind the world of the tragedy that befell Armenians of the Ottoman empire.

To conclude, I am honored to add my voice to those of my colleagues today in commemorating the Armenian Genocide. We will never forget the truth.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 87th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. I rise today to commemorate this terrible chapter in human history, and to help ensure that it will never be forgotten.

On April 24, 1915, the Turkish government began to arrest Armenian community and political leaders. Many were executed without ever being charged with crimes. Then the government deported most Armenians from Turkish Armenia, ordering that they resettle in what is now Syria. Many deportees never reached that destination.

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 of the start of the Armenian Genocide because this tragedy for the Armenian people was a tragedy for all humanity. It is our duty to remember, to speak out and to teach future generations about the horrors of genocide and the oppression and terrible suffering endured by the Armenian people.

We hope the day will soon come when it is not just the survivors who honor the dead but also when those whose ancestors perpetrated the horrors acknowledge their terrible responsibility and commemorate as well the memory of genocide's victims.

Sadly, we cannot say humanity has progressed to the point where genocide has become unthinkable. We have only to recall the "killing fields" of Cambodia, mass ethnic killings in Bosnia and Rwanda, and "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo to see that the threat of genocide persists. We must renew our commitment never to remain indifferent in the face of such assaults on innocent human beings.

We also remember this day because it is a time for us to celebrate the contribution of the Armenian community in America—including hundreds of thousands in California—to the richness of our character and culture. The strength they have displayed in overcoming tragedy to flourish in this country is an example for all of us. Their success is moving testimony to the truth that tyranny and evil cannot extinguish the vitality of the human spirit.

The United States has an ongoing 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. I am very pleased that this year's foreign aid

bill earmarks \$94.3 million in aid for Armenia, including, for the first time, \$4.3 million in military assistance. This signifies a new stage in the U.S.-Armenia relationship.

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."

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as I have every year at this time, in a proud but solemn tradition to remember and pay tribute to the victims of one of history's worst crimes against humanity, the Armenian genocide of 1915 to 1923.

In 1915, 1.5 million women, children, and men were killed, and 500,000 Armenians were forcibly deported by the Ottoman Empire during an eight year reign of brutal repression. Armenians were deprived of their homes, their dignity, and ultimately their lives.

Yet, America, the greatest democracy in the world, has not made an official statement regarding the Armenian genocide and it is my hope that the Congress will have the courage to finally recognize the genocide.

It's fundamental that we learn from our past and never let this kind of tragedy happen again.

Opponents have argued that recognizing the genocide would severely jeopardize U.S.-Turkish relations.

Recognizing the genocide is not an indictment of the current Turkish government nor is it a condemnation of any former leader of Turkey.

The U.S. and Turkey can and will be able to continue its partnership should the Congress recognize the genocide.

Mr. Speaker, as one of two Members of Congress of Armenian descent, I'm very proud of my heritage.

Like many Armenians, I learned from my grandparents of the hardship and suffering endured by so many at the hands of the Ottoman Empire.

That is how I came to this understanding and this knowledge and why I bring this story to the House of Representatives.

I am very proud of the contributions which the Armenian people have made to our great nation.

They've distinguished themselves in the arts, in law, in academics, in every walk of life and they continue today to make significant contributions in communities across our country today.

It's essential to not only publicly acknowledge what happened, but also understand that we are teaching present and future generations about the Armenian Genocide.

We need to recognize the genocide to enlighten our young people and to remind ourselves that wherever anything like this occurs around the globe that we, as Members of the United States Congress, and as citizens of this great Nation, raise our voices.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and remember the 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide, who were systematically slaughtered solely because of their race. While there is never a justification for genocide, in this case there also regrettably has never been an apology, and the criminals were never brought to justice. Such

an unconscionable act, however, can never be forgotten.

Accordingly, it is our duty as elected officials to state in no uncertain terms that the Armenian Genocide is clearly and unambiguously defined as genocide. Repeatedly, many leaders, including the President, have called the Armenian Genocide everything but a genocide. Only when this term is understood will the tragic events that began on April 24, 1915, be placed in the correct historical context. The Armenian Genocide cannot be denied.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise in tribute to the Armenian people who have fully recovered from this atrocity by maintaining their proud traditions and culture, becoming an integral part of America, and nine years ago, forming the Republic of Armenia.

The Ottoman Empire's last, desperate act was one of profound cruelty, tragic and gruesome beyond description. During World War I—a tumultuous, revolutionary time of great societal transformations and uncertain futures on the battlefields and at home—desperate Ottoman leaders fell back on the one weapon that could offer hope of personal survival. It is a weapon that is still used today, fed by fear, desperation, and hatred. It transforms the average citizen into a zealot, no longer willing to listen to reason. This weapon is, of course, nationalism. Wrongly directed, nationalism can easily result in ethnic strife and senseless genocide, committed in the name of false beliefs preached by immoral, irresponsible, tyrannical leaders.

Today I rise not to speak of the present, but in memory of the victims of the past, who suffered needlessly in the flames of vicious, destructive nationalism. Exactly 87 years ago today, the leaders of the Ottoman government tragically chose to systematically exterminate an entire race of people. In this case, as in the case of Nazi Germany, nationalism became a weapon of cruelty and evil. Let us never forget the 1.5 million Armenians who died at the whim of wicked men and their misguided followers.

The story of the Armenian Genocide is in itself appalling. It is against everything our government—and indeed all governments who strive for justice—stands for; it represents the most wicked side of humanity. What makes the Armenian story even more unfortunate is history has repeated itself in all corners of the world, and lessons that should have been learned long ago have been ignored. We must not forget the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, Cambodia, Rwanda, or Bosnia. It is our duty that by remembering the millions who have been victims of genocide, we pledge ourselves to preventing such acts from repeating themselves.

It is an honor and privilege to represent a large and active Armenian population, many who have family members who were persecuted by their Ottoman Turkish rulers. Michigan's Armenian-American community has done much to further our state's commercial, political, and intellectual growth, just as it has done in communities across the country. And so I also rise today to honor to the triumph of the Armenian people, who have endured adversity and bettered our country.

The Armenian people have faced great trials and tests throughout their history. They have proved their resilience in the face of tragedy before, and I have no doubt that they will endure today's tragic occurrence, recognize that

a madman's bullet can never put an end to a people's dreams, and keep moving forward on the path of peace and freedom.

Mr. Speaker, let no one, friend or foe, ever deny that the Armenian Genocide occurred. Let us not forget the heinous nature of the crimes committed against the Armenian people. Let us promise to the world as American citizens and citizens of the world, that we will never again allow such a crime to be perpetrated, and will not tolerate the forces of misguided nationalism and hate.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor those who died in the Armenian Genocide.

In the first part of the 20th century, a tremendous evil was done to the Armenian people. April 24, 1915 is a day that will forever live in infamy. A Turkish campaign to eliminate Armenians from the face of the earth began that day. In the end, that campaign killed 1.5 million people.

More than 200 religious, political and intellectual leaders were assassinated. 500,000 people were exiled from their homes. As a result of this violence, one of earth's oldest civilizations virtually ceased to exist.

Unfortunately this terrible chapter of history is not well known. Many Americans don't know much about the Armenian genocide, but it should stand as a constant reminder to all of us that we must be vigilant and stand firm against bigotry and hatred at every turn.

We must take the horrors of the past and transform them into compassion and hope. We must learn from the Armenian genocide—learn about perseverance and hope. We can't change the past, but we can prepare for the future.

While we remember with sorrow, we must also be heartened that eighty-five years later, Armenians remain a proud, dignified people. Their spirit lives in the independent republic of Armenia and in many communities around the United States, particularly in my home state of California.

Every one of these people is the product of generations of courage, perseverance and hope. Understanding what it is to struggle as a people motivates many Armenians to educate others about the atrocities committed in the past.

The bonds between Armenia and the United States are growing stronger all the time. Economic cooperation is growing. Democracy is blossoming. These are testaments of strength to the Armenian people.

While we did not do enough for the victims eighty-five years ago, we can honor their memory now, and ensure that nothing so horrendous happens again.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, today we solemnly commemorate the 87th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, when the Ottoman Government unleashed a campaign of devastation and destruction against its Armenian population.

Over the course of eight years, beginning in 1915, Armenian communities were systematically destroyed. One and a half million men, women, and children were murdered and nearly one million others were deported. From the ashes of destruction, the survivors rebuilt their lives and many established vibrant Armenian communities here in the United States, but the scars of the massacres are deeply embedded in their history and our conscience.

The world was silent during the bloodshed of Armenians. It was tragically just a short

number of years before this inaction degenerated into paralysis against Hitler's attempt to annihilate the Jews.

At a time when the flames of anti-Semitism are reigniting across Europe, we have a responsibility to redouble our efforts against the bigotry and intolerance that sparked the Armenian Genocide and later the Holocaust. At a time when there are still attempts to refute the Armenian Genocide and Holocaust denial is spreading rampantly through the Arab world, we have an obligation to resolve ourselves against the dangers of historical revisionism.

Today we mourn the victims, pay tribute to the survivors, and stand together with all who are committed to promoting awareness about this dark chapter of history. Today we remember to never forget.

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

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

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

(Mrs. MORELLA addressed the House. Her 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. LIPINSKI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

PREDICTIONS

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, our government intervention in the economy and in the private affairs of citizens and the internal affairs of foreign countries leads to uncertainty and many unintended consequences. Here are some of the consequences about which we should be concerned.

I predict U.S. taxpayers will pay to rebuild Palestine, both the West Bank and the Gaza, as well as Afghanistan. U.S. taxpayers paid to bomb these areas, so we will be expected to rebuild them.

Peace, of sorts, will come to the Middle East, but will be short-lived. There will be big promises of more U.S. money and weapons flowing to Israel and to Arab countries allied with the United States.

U.S. troops and others will be used to monitor the "peace."

In time, an oil boycott will be imposed, with oil prices soaring to historic highs.

Current Israeli-United States policies will solidify Arab Muslim nations in