

well as the exploits and victories of the Greek Navy under Miaoulis, Kanaris, Bubulina, and Kolokotronis inspired the people of Europe, who finally brought pressure upon their governments to intervene in the fighting and compel the Sultan to recognize Greek independence, which finally secured the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829.

We commemorate Independence Day each year for the same reasons we celebrate our 4th of July. It proved that a united people through sheer will and perseverance can prevail against tyranny. Both of our nations share an illustrious history in defense of this cherished ideal. Both countries have shared a common commitment to the principles of equality and freedom. In many ways, the American experiment might not have been possible without the Greek experience.

Indeed, as Thomas Jefferson noted: "To the ancient Greeks we are all indebted for the light which led ourselves, American colonists, out of the Gothic darkness." Democracy and freedom are the guiding beliefs that give hope to millions around the world.

Remembering the sacrifice of the brave Greeks who gave their lives for the cause of liberty helps us all realize how important it is to be an active participant in our own democracy.

As Plato noted: "The penalty good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men." Greeks, like Americans, have never been indifferent to the welfare of mankind. We share a belief that citizens must be engaged in governmental affairs and must work to promote liberty and justice throughout the world. That is why we honor those who secured independence for Greece nearly two centuries ago. Let us always remember their commitment to freedom. God bless America and Zito I Ellas.

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

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

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

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

H. RES. 106 AND THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GENOCIDE SCHOLARS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to urge my colleagues this evening to support House Resolution 106, a resolu-

tion that reaffirms the Armenian genocide.

I also wish to express my support for its swift passage in the House of Representatives. As the first genocide of the 20th century, it is morally imperative that we remember this atrocity and collectively demand reaffirmation of this crime against humanity.

The resolution, which I introduced with Representatives SCHIFF, RADANOVICH and KNOLLENBERG, has over 180 co-sponsors. It's also the exact same resolution that passed the International Affairs Committee last Congress by an overwhelming majority.

I strongly believe it is important for Members to understand that this is a matter of historical fact. Many Turkish deniers have been meeting with Members of Congress and sending correspondence, discouraging this resolution. They are claiming that passage of such a resolution would be untimely and counterproductive.

Mr. Speaker, for 92 years this has not been reaffirmed here in this Congress. I think 92 years is far too long for a proper recognition to be made, and its reaffirmation is a matter of conscience.

In the meantime, the Turkish Government has threatened to close supply routes to U.S. troops in Iraq if this resolution is considered. It's appalling that a country who claims to be our ally would put the lives of soldiers at risk in the pursuit of its desperate campaign to deny the systematic slaughter of 1.5 million Armenians.

The highly reputable International Association of Genocide Scholars recently wrote to Members of Congress urging support for the Armenian genocide resolution, and I request permission to insert their letter in the RECORD.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GENOCIDE SCHOLARS

March 7, 2007.

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS: We write to you as the international organization of scholars who study genocide. We strongly urge you to co-sponsor H. Res. 106, the House Resolution recognizing and commemorating the Armenian Genocide.

In three previous statements of the International Association of Genocide Scholars—first, a unanimous resolution declaring that the Turkish massacres of Armenians in 1915–1918 constituted genocide; second, an Open Letter to Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan calling upon him to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide; and third, an Open Letter concerning scholars who deny the Armenian Genocide—we have made our position clear: the historical record on the Armenian Genocide is unambiguous and documented by overwhelming evidence. It is proven by foreign office records of the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia, and perhaps most importantly, of Turkey's World War I allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary, as well as by the records of the Ottoman Courts-Martial of 1918–1920, and by decades of scholarship.

We believe it is important for Members of Congress to understand that Turkey's nine-decade-long campaign to deny the facts of the Armenian Genocide is driven by a government that has yet to engage in the honest historical self-critique that is a vital part of

the democratic process. The numerous trials and imprisonments of Turkish intellectuals and journalists and the assassination of the Armenian-Turkish journalist Hrant Dink in January make this clear. It should be noted that there are Turkish scholars who are urging their government to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide, and many parts of Turkish society share this pro-democratic perspective. We would note, however, that a government that still encourages extreme, uncritical nationalism has created a false narrative about the Armenian Genocide in order to absolve its predecessors of responsibility for the extermination of the Armenian people and their culture in the Ottoman Empire in 1915.

We are aware that you may be pressured by a small number of academics who support Turkey's denialist stance for often self-interested reasons. Such academics willingly falsify, distort, and manipulate the evidence in sometimes subtle ways to present a false view of history. These academics violate the ethical obligations of historical scholarship. We have noted that academics who deny the Armenian Genocide are no different than academics who deny the Holocaust, the Rwandan Genocide, or the Cambodian Genocide. The recent conference in Teheran devoted to Holocaust denial is a case in point. "Where scholars deny genocide in the face of decisive evidence . . . they contribute to false consciousness that can have the most dire reverberations. Their message, in effect, is . . . mass murder requires no confrontation, but should be ignored, glossed over. In this way scholars lend their considerable authority to the acceptance of this ultimate crime" (Roger Smith, Eric Markusen, Robert Jay Lifton "Professional Ethics and the Denial of the Armenian Genocide," Journal of Holocaust and Genocide Studies, vol. 9, Spring, 1995).

We urge you to reject the Turkish campaign of denial, as you may be meeting with groups and individuals who are ardent deniers. We would underscore that the Armenian Genocide is not controversial, but rather is denied only by the Turkish government and its apologists.

We urge you to pass H. Res. 106:

(1) It is a recognition of an historical turning point in the twentieth century, the event that inaugurated the era of modern genocide. In spite of its importance, the Armenian Genocide has gone unrecognized until recently, and warrants a symbolic act of moral commemoration. The Armenian-American community first arrived in the United States as refugees and survivors of this great catastrophe and of earlier massacres in the late 19th century.

(2) Congress will honor America's extraordinary foreign service officers (among them Leslie A. Davis, Jesse B. Jackson, Oscar Heizer, and Ambassador Henry Morgenthau) who often risked their lives rescuing Armenian citizens in 1915. These courageous American diplomats left behind some 4,000 reports totaling 37,000 pages, now in the National Archives, documents that prove the Armenian mass murders were government-planned, systematic extermination—what Raphael Lemkin named genocide. By this resolution the U.S. Congress would demonstrate that the moral principles and courage of those foreign service officers continues to represent a powerful example of American leadership. It is in the interest of the United States to support the principles of human rights that are at the core of American democracy.

(3) Inasmuch as the popular effort in the United States to rescue and bring relief to the Armenians, first from massacres in the 1890s and then from genocide in 1915, set the

stage for the era of modern human rights activism, H. Res. 106 would honor this significant contribution to United States history.

(4) We expect that the United States would not permit foreign governments to intrude on its own legislative process. We also expect that the U.S. government would not be influenced by threats to close American military bases or cut off sales of military hardware, especially when that pressure comes from a country with a deeply disturbing human rights record today, including violence and repressive measures against writers, minorities, intellectuals, and scholars.

(5) As crimes of genocide continue to plague the world, Turkey's policy of denying the Armenian Genocide gives license to those who perpetrate genocide everywhere. Just as we would not sanction denying the Holocaust, we cannot give credence to Turkey's falsification of the facts of 1915. Denial is the final stage of genocide, as it seeks to demonize the victims and rehabilitate the perpetrators.

We believe that it is in the interest of the Turkish people and their future as proud participants in the international democratic community to acknowledge the responsibility of a previous government for the genocide of the Armenian people, just as the German government has done in the case of the Holocaust.

We would be happy to meet with you in person, and would gladly supply you with the scholarly evidence that has led to the unanimous resolution of the International Association of Genocide Scholars that the Turkish massacre of over one million Armenians from 1915 to 1918 was a crime of genocide.

Sincerely,

ISRAEL CHARNY, PH.D.,
President, International Association of
Genocide Scholars.

GREGORY H. STANTON, J.D., PH.D.,
Vice President, International Association of
Genocide Scholars.

I would say, if I could quote some sections of that letter, in that letter the scholars state their position clearly, noting that the Armenian genocide "is proven by foreign office records of the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia and even of Turkey's World War I allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary."

They also say: "Just as we would not sanction denying the Holocaust, we cannot give credence to Turkey's falsification of the facts of 1915; denial is the final stage of genocide." They are unanimous in their findings.

Mr. Speaker, the American people and this Congress should deserve a full and truthful account of the role of the Turkish Government in denying the Armenian genocide. Congress should be allowed to reaffirm that genocide was orchestrated by the Ottoman Empire in 1915 to exterminate its Armenian citizens.

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

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

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

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' HEALTH, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

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

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow this body will vote on the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health, and Iraq Accountability Act.

After 4 years of failed policies from the Bush administration, and absolutely no accountability demanded by the previous Republican-led Congresses, this body has the opportunity to say enough. We say enough to continuing the open-ended war with no end in sight. We say enough to giving away hard-earned taxpayer dollars to the Iraqi Government without any real mechanisms for accountability. We say enough to ignoring the will of the American people who have overwhelmingly demanded a new direction and a new course in Iraq.

This week the Iraq war will enter its fifth year. It has already eclipsed the length of the U.S. participation in the Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. More than 3,200 American heroes have paid the ultimate sacrifice, while more than 24,000 have been injured, and tens of thousands of Iraqis have been killed, just as millions have been fleeing the country.

Despite this immense sacrifice and hardship, the President's war strategy has not made the Middle East or our Nation safer.

Today the Middle East is less stable than it was in 2003. An Iraq in chaos and an emboldened Iran has fundamentally changed the balance of power in the region in a way that undermines the security of our Nation and the entire region. The war has caused us to lose sight of the mission in Afghanistan where the Taliban is resurgent and Osama bin Laden, Ayman al Zawahiri, and other key members of al Qaeda, the terrorist group responsible for killing 3,000 Americans on 9/11, are still at large and still plotting against us.

Our own National Intelligence Estimate tells us that the war in Iraq estimate has increased, and the threat of terrorism globally has increased.

Just 2 weeks ago, I visited Iraq, and I met with the brave servicemen and -women. I deeply admire these individuals and their families. Out of pure selflessness and a profound love of our Nation, they have volunteered to serve. They do so humbly and honorably.

The Bush administration owes them a strategy that is worthy of their sacrifice. When they failed to provide it, we must hold them accountable. Our Nation can no longer afford the failed policies put forward by President Bush.

We must step forward, abandon the rubber-stamp policies of the previous Congress, and reassert our place as a coequal branch of government. Tomorrow we will have the opportunity to meet this obligation and put the administration on notice. The days of writing a blank check for the mistaken and mismanaged war are over.

When we send our men and women into Iraq without the proper equipment, training and rest, as the President continues to, we expose them to greater danger. This legislation we will vote on tomorrow recognizes this fact by requiring the President to honor his own standards and the standards the Department of Defense has set for the troop readiness, training and equipment.

When our own wounded warriors return to the United States, we as a Nation have an obligation to ensure that they are taken care of. There is simply no excuse for the deplorable conditions of neglect that our soldiers have faced at Walter Reed medical center. That is a national disgrace.

This legislation addresses our veterans health care crisis by adding \$1.7 billion to treat the growing number of veterans, to address the maintenance backlogs at the VA health care facilities, and to ensure a significant level of personnel to deliver quality services. This legislation recognizes that the only solution in Iraq is political and diplomatic.

As General Petraeus, the top military commander in Iraq, has said: "There was no military solution to a problem like that in Iraq."

This legislation will hold the Iraqi Government accountable by requiring them to meet their own benchmarks for political progress.

We are putting them on notice that they must take the political steps necessary to achieve stability, including disarming the militia and a plan that equally shares oil revenues around the country.

We are also sending a strong clear message to the Bush administration that they must engage in tough diplomacy needed to ensure that Iraq's neighbors do not continue to undermine the efforts of our troops or they undermine the hope for stability in Iraq.

Most significantly, this legislation will lead to the responsible end of our military engagement in Iraq through a phased redeployment of U.S. combat troops.

Instead of continuing the President's policy of open-ended commitment, strategically redeploying combat troops from Iraq, while maintaining a small presence to train Iraqi troops and engage in counterterrorism operations is the most responsible strategy in Iraq.

We will move our troops from direct engagement. It will require the Iraqis to protect Iraqis, and it will allow our Nation to be better prepared for other contingencies affecting the security of our Nation.