

106<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. RES. 596

Calling upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 27, 2000

Mr. RADANOVICH submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

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# RESOLUTION

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1       *Resolved,*

2       **SECTION. 1. SHORT TITLE.**

3           This resolution may be cited as the “Affirmation of  
4 the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide Reso-  
5 lution”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The House of Representatives finds the following:

3 (1) The Armenian Genocide was conceived and  
4 carried out by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to  
5 1923, resulting in the deportation of nearly  
6 2,000,000 Armenians, of whom 1,500,000 men,  
7 women, and children were killed, 500,000 survivors  
8 were expelled from their homes, and which succeeded  
9 in the elimination of the over 2,500-year presence of  
10 Armenians in their historic homeland.

11 (2) On May 24, 1915, the Allied Powers, Eng-  
12 land, France, and Russia, jointly issued a statement  
13 explicitly charging for the first time ever another  
14 government of committing “a crime against human-  
15 ity”.

16 (3) This joint statement stated “[i]n view of  
17 these new crimes of Turkey against humanity and  
18 civilization, the Allied Governments announce pub-  
19 licly to the Sublime Porte that they will hold person-  
20 ally responsible for these crimes all members of the  
21 Ottoman Government, as well as those of their  
22 agents who are implicated in such massacres”.

23 (4) The post-World War I Turkish Government  
24 indicted the top leaders involved in the “organization  
25 and execution” of the Armenian Genocide and in the  
26 “massacre and destruction of the Armenians”.

1           (5) In a series of courts-martial, officials of the  
2 Young Turk Regime were tried and convicted, as  
3 charged, for organizing and executing massacres  
4 against the Armenian people.

5           (6) The chief organizers of the Armenian Geno-  
6 cide, Minister of War Enver, Minister of the Interior  
7 Talaat, and Minister of the Navy Jemal were all  
8 condemned to death for their crimes, however, the  
9 verdicts of the courts were not enforced.

10          (7) The Armenian Genocide and these domestic  
11 judicial failures are documented with overwhelming  
12 evidence in the national archives of Austria, France,  
13 Germany, Great Britain, Russia, the United States,  
14 the Vatican and many other countries, and this vast  
15 body of evidence attests to the same facts, the same  
16 events, and the same consequences.

17          (8) The United States National Archives and  
18 Record Administration holds extensive and thorough  
19 documentation on the Armenian Genocide, especially  
20 in its holdings under Record Group 59 of the United  
21 States Department of State, files 867.00 and  
22 867.40, which are open and widely available to the  
23 public and interested institutions.

24          (9) The national archives of Turkey should also  
25 include all of the records pertaining to the indict-

1       ment, trial, and conviction of the Ottoman authori-  
2       ties responsible for the Armenian Genocide.

3               (10) The Honorable Henry Morgenthau, United  
4       States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from  
5       1913 to 1916, organized and led protests by officials  
6       of many countries, among them the allies of the  
7       Ottoman Empire, against the Armenian Genocide.

8               (11) Ambassador Morgenthau explicitly de-  
9       scribed to the United States Department of State  
10       the policy of the Young Turk government as “a cam-  
11       paign of race extermination”, and was instructed on  
12       July 16, 1915, by United States Secretary of State  
13       Robert Lansing that the “Department approves your  
14       procedure . . . to stop Armenian persecution”.

15              (12) Senate Concurrent Resolution 12 of Feb-  
16       ruary 9, 1916, resolved that “the President of the  
17       United States be respectfully asked to designate a  
18       day on which the citizens of this country may give  
19       expression to their sympathy by contributing funds  
20       now being raised for the relief of the Armenians”,  
21       who at the time were enduring “starvation, disease,  
22       and untold suffering”.

23              (13) President Wilson concurred and also en-  
24       couraged the formation of the organization known as  
25       Near East Relief, chartered by an Act of Congress,

1 which contributed some \$116,000,000 from 1915 to  
2 1930 to aid the Armenian Genocide survivors, in-  
3 cluding 132,000 orphans who became foster children  
4 of the American people.

5 (14) Senate Resolution 359, dated May 11,  
6 1920, stated in part, “the testimony adduced at the  
7 hearings conducted by the sub-committee of the Sen-  
8 ate Committee on Foreign Relations have clearly es-  
9 tablished the truth of the reported massacres and  
10 other atrocities from which the Armenian people  
11 have suffered”.

12 (15) The resolution followed the April 13, 1920,  
13 report to the Senate of the American Military Mis-  
14 sion to Armenia led by General James Harbord, that  
15 stated “[m]utilation, violation, torture, and death  
16 have left their haunting memories in a hundred  
17 beautiful Armenian valleys, and the traveler in that  
18 region is seldom free from the evidence of this most  
19 colossal crime of all the ages”.

20 (16) Setting the stage for the Holocaust, Adolf  
21 Hitler, on ordering his military commanders to at-  
22 tack Poland without provocation in 1939, dismissed  
23 objections by saying “[w]ho, after all, speaks today  
24 of the annihilation of the Armenians?”.

1           (17) Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term  
2           “genocide” in 1944, and who was the earliest pro-  
3           ponent of the Genocide Convention, invoked the Ar-  
4           menian case as a definitive example of genocide in  
5           the 20th century.

6           (18) Raphael Lemkin described the crime as  
7           “the systematic destruction of whole national, racial  
8           or religious groups. The sort of thing Hitler did to  
9           the Jews and the Turks did to the Armenians”.

10          (19) The first resolution on genocide adopted  
11          by the United Nations at Lemkin’s urging, the De-  
12          cember 11, 1946, United Nations General Assembly  
13          Resolution 96(1) and the United Nations Genocide  
14          Convention itself recognized the Armenian Genocide  
15          as the type of crime the United Nations intended to  
16          prevent by codifying existing standards.

17          (20) In 1948 the United Nations War Crimes  
18          Commission invoked the Armenian Genocide “pre-  
19          cisely . . . one of the types of acts which the mod-  
20          ern term ‘crimes against humanity’ is intended to  
21          cover” as a precedent for the Nuremberg tribunals.

22          (21) The Commission stated that “[t]he provi-  
23          sions of Article 230 of the Peace Treaty of Sévres  
24          were obviously intended to cover, in conformity with  
25          the Allied note of 1915 . . . , offenses which had

1       been committed on Turkish territory against persons  
2       of Turkish citizenship, though of Armenian or Greek  
3       race. This article constitutes therefore a precedent  
4       for Article 6c and 5c of the Nuremberg and Tokyo  
5       Charters, and offers an example of one of the cat-  
6       egories of ‘crimes against humanity’ as understood  
7       by these enactments”.

8               (22) The United Nations Commission on  
9       Human Rights adopted in 1985 a report entitled  
10      “Study of the Question of the Prevention and Pun-  
11      ishment of the Crime of Genocide”, which stated  
12      “[t]he Nazi aberration has unfortunately not been  
13      the only case of genocide in the twentieth century.  
14      Among other examples which can be cited as quali-  
15      fying are . . . the Ottoman massacre of Armenians  
16      in 1915–1916”.

17              (23) This report also explained that “[a]t least  
18      1 million, and possibly well over half of the Arme-  
19      nian population, are reliably estimated to have been  
20      killed or death marched by independent authorities  
21      and eye-witnesses. This is corroborated by reports in  
22      United States, German and British archives and of  
23      contemporary diplomats in the Ottoman Empire, in-  
24      cluding those of its ally Germany”.

1           (24) The tragedy of the Armenian Genocide has  
2           been acknowledged by countries and international  
3           bodies such as Argentina, Belgium, Canada, the  
4           Council of Europe, Cyprus, the European Par-  
5           liament, France, Great Britain, Greece, Lebanon,  
6           Russia, the United Nations, the United States, and  
7           Uruguay.

8           (25) The United States Holocaust Memorial  
9           Council, an independent Federal agency, unani-  
10          mously resolved on April 30, 1981, that the United  
11          States Holocaust Memorial Museum would include  
12          the Armenian Genocide in the Museum and has  
13          since done so.

14          (26) President Reagan in proclamation number  
15          4838, dated April 22, 1981, stated in part “like the  
16          genocide of the Armenians before it, and the geno-  
17          cide of the Cambodians, which followed it—and like  
18          too many other persecutions of too many other peo-  
19          ple—the lessons of the holocaust must never be for-  
20          gotten”.

21          (27) President Bush, in 1988, speaking of the  
22          Armenian Genocide, stated “we must consciously  
23          and conscientiously recognize the genocides of the  
24          past—the enormous tragedies that have darkened  
25          this century and that haunt us still. We must not



1       only commemorate the courage of the victims and of  
2       their survivors, but we must also remind ourselves  
3       that civilization cannot be taken for granted. . . .  
4       We must all be vigilant against this most heinous  
5       crime against humanity”.

6               (28) President Bush, in 1988, stated further  
7       “[t]he United States must acknowledge the at-  
8       tempted genocide of the Armenian people in the last  
9       years of the Ottoman Empire, based on the testi-  
10      mony of survivors, scholars, and indeed our own rep-  
11      resentatives at the time, if we are to insure that  
12      such horrors are not repeated”.

13              (29) President Clinton, on August 13, 1992,  
14      stated “[t]he Genocide of 1915, years of communist  
15      dictatorship, and the devastating earthquake of  
16      1988 have caused great suffering in Armenia during  
17      this century”.

18              (30) Reviewing an aberrant 1982 expression  
19      (later retracted) by the United States Department of  
20      State asserting that the facts of the Armenian Geno-  
21      cide may be ambiguous, the United States Court of  
22      Appeals for the District of Columbia in 1993, after  
23      a review of documents pertaining to the policy  
24      record of the United States, noted that the assertion  
25      on ambiguity in the United States record about the

1 Armenian Genocide “contradicted longstanding  
2 United States policy and was eventually retracted”.

3 (31) Despite the international recognition and  
4 affirmation of the Armenian Genocide, the failure of  
5 the domestic and international authorities to punish  
6 those responsible for the Armenian Genocide is a  
7 reason why similar genocides have recurred and may  
8 recur in the future, and that a proper judicial and  
9 firm response, holding the guilty accountable and re-  
10 quiring the prompt enforcement of verdicts would  
11 have spared humanity needless suffering.

12 (32) In a commendable letter on April 9, 1999,  
13 Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat, then Under Secretary  
14 of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural  
15 Affairs, pledged that the administration would raise  
16 with the Republic of Turkey the issue of the recov-  
17 ery of Armenian assets from the genocide period  
18 held by the Imperial Ottoman Bank.

19 (33) It is important that the President ensure  
20 that the foreign policy of the United States reflects  
21 appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning  
22 issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and  
23 genocide documented in the United States record re-  
24 lating to the Armenian Genocide and the con-

1 sequences of the failure to enforce the judgments of  
2 the Turkish courts against the responsible officials.

3 **SEC. 3. DECLARATION OF POLICY.**

4 The House of Representatives—

5 (1) calls upon the President to ensure that the  
6 foreign policy of the United States reflects appro-  
7 priate understanding and sensitivity concerning  
8 issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and  
9 genocide documented in the United States record re-  
10 lating to the Armenian Genocide and the con-  
11 sequences of the failure to enforce the judgments of  
12 the Turkish courts against the responsible officials;  
13 and

14 (2) calls upon the President in the President's  
15 annual message commemorating the Armenian  
16 Genocide issued on or about April 24 to characterize  
17 the systematic and deliberate annihilation of  
18 1,500,000 Armenians as genocide and to recall the  
19 proud history of United States intervention in oppo-  
20 sition to the Armenian Genocide.

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