

90TH COMMEMORATION OF THE
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

SPEECH OF

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 26, 2005

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in remembrance of the Armenian Genocide—one of the most horrific tragedies of the 20th century. Beginning on April 24, 1915, leaders of the Ottoman Empire began murdering thousands of Armenian people. By 1923, the number of Armenians murdered was over 1.5 million. Yet, 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 recognize that this tragedy took place on its soil. Turkey should follow the example of Germany in its swift commendation and acknowledgement of the Holocaust. It is also equally vital for the United States to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide, just as many other governments have.

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.

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SPEECH OF

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 26, 2005

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with Armenians throughout the United States, Armenia, and the world in commemorating the 90th 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 8-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 and now the ongoing genocide in Darfur, Sudan.

In the 90 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, 6 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.

ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 21, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 6) to ensure jobs for our future with secure, affordable, and reliable energy.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I regret that I missed last week's votes during House consideration of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 due to a death in my family. I wanted to take this opportunity to talk about some of the important issues which came up during this debate.

For the past several years, fluctuating and high energy prices have caused a severe burden on American consumers and businesses. Without a comprehensive energy policy in place our economic and national security continues to be affected. Unfortunately, the bill passed by the House falls short regarding some very important issues, and I wanted to take an opportunity to state my concerns on this matter.

I remain opposed to drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, ANWR, and will continue to support the removal of this provision from a final energy bill. I have continually supported amendments, similar to the one offered by Mr. MARKEY which protects ANWR from exploration and development. Drilling in the Arctic would do little to address our country's long-term energy needs, and the cost to a critical environmental asset would be substantial.

I also support the amendment offered by Representative CAPPS regarding MTBE contamination. As we now know, this highly-soluble additive is contaminating our water and posing a threat to our communities by leaking out of underground storage tanks and from gasoline spills and spreading rapidly into groundwater. The current circumstances demonstrate that our reliance on MTBE has resulted in harmful side-effects. We need energy policies which promote the use of cleaner burning fuels that do not endanger our water supply. By phasing-out the use of MTBE and allowing states to pursue alternative courses to meeting strong clean air standards, significant strides might be made in our effort to create sensible, well-rounded environmental policies. The Town of Wappinger and the Village of Pawling, two water providers in my district, have filed suit against oil companies because of MTBE contamination of their drinking water sources. I've also heard from residents in the Town of Highlands, who have expressed to me their opposition to a proposal that would retroactively apply the product liability waiver to October 1, 2003. I opposed this provision when it was included in the energy bill considered by the House in the last Congress. My colleague, Mrs. CAPPS offered a sound amendment which would ensure that the oil and chemical industries remain fully liable in order to ensure that public health and safety are protected. Though the amendment unfortunately failed, I will continue to work with my colleagues on this provision to ensure my communities are protected.

The time has come to reform our Corporate Average Fuel Economy, CAFE, standards for vehicles. As my record indicates, I have consistently voted in favor of amendments which will do just that. This year, my colleague from New York, Mr. BOEHLERT offered a smart amendment to increase the fuel economy of America's vehicles to 33 miles per gallon by 2015. America's cars and trucks consume over 8 million barrels of oil per day and are a major source of the heat-trapping pollution that causes global warming. We could safely achieve 33 miles per gallon and not only save American consumers money at the gas pumps but curb global warming emissions.

The encouragement of a more domestic production of oil with incentives such as a streamlined permit process, promotes a greater refining capacity to bring more oil to market, and increases the gasoline supply by stopping the proliferation of expensive regional boutique fuels. The nation needs to reduce its dangerous dependence on foreign oil. Mr. WAXMAN's amendment advances this policy by allowing new domestic oil and gas exploration and development by authorizing expansion of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve's capacity to 1 billion barrels.

We need a clean fuels program that will help reduce smog in afflicted areas, primarily the eastern half of the country, which has the greatest smog problems. More than 150 million Americans live in areas where EPA has determined that ground-level ozone or smog levels are high enough to cause serious health problems. I continue to be a supporter of the Clean Smokestacks Act, which calls for significant emission reductions for sulfur dioxide, mercury, nitrogen oxide and carbon dioxide, and have made it clear to the EPA my opposition to any modifications to the Clean Air Act which will increase pollution.