

they have been made to wait just because they need this test to see if a pocket mouse is in that area.

The frustration here that the kids do not understand and the parents don't understand is "Wait a minute, I thought that the private citizen was innocent in our society until proven guilty." However, with many of these regulations, the way they are being administered, and we need to address this, they do not have any rights until the Federal agency says "OK."

I think we need to look at that. We are a Jeffersonian democracy. We are a democracy who believes that the individual is a premier element of our society, and that the individual's rights desperately have to be preserved and cannot be trod under by a well-intentioned but misguided majority.

I do not think any of us that ever supported environmental regulation or environmental preservation expected the Constitution to be destroyed in the works.

□ 1815

Mr. LATHAM. The gentleman is absolutely right.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I think it is very remarkable that here, TOM, you are from Iowa, BRIAN, you are from California, I am from Georgia. We represent three different parts of the country, East to West and in the middle.

I think it is very interesting that all three of us have heard the same concerns from our constituents over the last 3 weeks. Basically they are the same things that we all campaigned on last summer and that are contained within the Contract With America.

It is exciting to me to see the people all over the country as excited about politics and about what is going on in Washington as they are. Obviously we all shared the same experiences concerning these issues.

I think that is very interesting, and again goes to reinforce that the American people did speak on November 8, that the American people want changes, and even though they may not agree with every single thing we are doing in Washington right now, they understand we are doing something.

I heard that again time after time: "We may not agree with everything you're doing, but by golly, you guys are doing something, you're making progress, and just keep at it." That probably was the most constant theme I had the whole time I was home.

Mr. BILBRAY. My district has over 10 naval military facilities there, in fact, one of them North Islands where I was born. That just shows you, you may think Californians move around a lot, but I am still living in my district.

The fact is the military is learning, in San Diego, in California, across this country, a new reality. They are changing, adapting, becoming progressive, looking at ways of doing more with less. I think it sets an example for those of us in Congress and the way we look at our laws.

The fact is there is a new progressive change that has taken over here. A lot of people call it conservative, but the fact is if you look at this by definition, you have citizens who are saying, "We want you to do better. We want you to be brave enough to try new things."

The new majority, and especially led by those of us that are freshmen, are the progressives who are willing to say the old was fine for them, but not for the future. We not only have a right to change things for the better, we have a responsibility to do that.

I would like to thank you two gentlemen for participating in part of the revolution that is moving this progressive agenda along.

Mr. LATHAM. I thank the gentlemen for this great conversation.

I just want to say, I pointed out at every town meeting that I had that the Contract With America was not passed just with the 53 percent in the House here that is Republican. On the average, in total, 78 percent of the Members of Congress supported items in the Contract With America.

It is not a partisan issue. The change and reform, new ideas, and the idea of bringing back responsibility and accountability to the Government is not a partisan issue. It is on both sides of the aisle, when you have over three-fourths of the Members supporting what was in the Contract With America. Obviously, there are some things that we differ on, but the American people know who is on what side. They will remember next year, whatever.

Again, we have all mentioned it, but the thing that I was told time after time after time was, "TOM, keep it up, don't let up. You have just started to turn the wheel of this great aircraft carrier we call the Government. It is just starting to turn, but there is a lot of work out there ahead. Keep up the pressure, redouble your efforts."

We are going to do that. As freshmen Members, we are going to keep up the heat, continue the efforts, and, folks, you haven't seen anything yet, like they say.

EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORBES). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I intend to use some of this 60 minutes for myself, and then yield to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] and the gentleman from California [Mr. MOORHEAD], who are here. We are here basically to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

Mr. Speaker, April 24, 1995, marked the 80th anniversary of the unleashing of the Armenian genocide. Each year, Members of Congress from both the House and the Senate take time to honor the memory of the Armenian

men, women, and children who were slaughtered by the Ottoman Turkish Empire.

I am proud to continue this proud congressional tradition today. In my capacity as the cofounder, along with the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, I will be working with many of my colleagues on behalf of continued support for the people of Armenia and for the significant Armenian-American community. I will also work to continue to press for the modern Republic of Turkey—a NATO member and recipient of hundreds of millions in United States aid every year—to finally accept responsibility for this crime against humanity and express its sorrow and contrition. I also believe we should continue to use the means at our disposal to force modern Turkey to lift the blockade it has imposed on Armenia. I know many of our colleagues feel the same way.

Mr. Speaker, today's occasion is, of course, a time for solemn reflection on the suffering of a people, the Armenians, as well as the larger question of humanity's capacity for evil. Yet, it is also time for us to celebrate the human capacity of resilience, the ability even of people faced with the most unthinkable disasters to rebuild their shattered lives. This capacity to overcome unimaginable horrors can be seen on the individual level in the faces of the survivors, a group of whom attended a very moving reception here on Capitol Hill today. On the national level, the struggle for survival and the sense of hope for the future can be seen by the very existence of the independent, democratic Republic of Armenia.

On April 24, 1915, 200 Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders from Istanbul were arrested and exiled—in one fell swoop, silencing the leading representatives of the Armenian community in the Ottoman capital. This date is thus the symbolic beginning of the genocide. Over the years from 1915 to 1923, 1.5 million men, women, and children were deported, forced into slave labor, tortured, and exterminated.

What happened in the Ottoman Turkish Empire during the years 1915–23 was more than a series of massacres in a time of instability, revolution, and war. It was the first example of genocide in the 20th century, a precursor to the Nazi Holocaust, and other cases of ethnic cleansing and mass extermination in our own time.

But, unlike the case of Germany, which officially accepts its guilt for the crimes against humanity committed by the Nazi regime and has made restitution to many of the victims, modern Turkey continues to deny that the Armenian genocide took place. There were no Nuremberg trials, no concerted effort to aid the survivors and let them give their testimony. While various Turkish sources express the view that certain unfortunate incidents took place, it denies that any

systematic, ethnically based policy targeted against the Armenian people ever took place. In fact, many Turkish accounts actually suggest Armenians deserve a share of blame for having stirred up trouble in the Ottoman Empire—while vastly understating the number of victims.

It is not entirely clear why Turkey continues to deny the truth of its past—perhaps concerns about reparations claims may be one reason, combined with a misguided sense of national honor. In any case, it is a disgraceful policy, refuted by the historical record. Americans should continue to press Turkey's leaders to finally acknowledge the truth—even if it is a diplomatic irritant in United States-Turkish relations.

U.S. Administrations have avoided using the term "genocide" in describing what happened 80 years ago. While President Clinton and his predecessors have acknowledged that the Armenian people were the victims of tragic massacres, these Presidential statements have not sufficiently conveyed the full extent of the evil that occurred. Earlier this month, Congressman PORTER and I, as cochairmen of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, asked our colleagues to join us in urging the President to make a much stronger statement acknowledging the genocide. Sixty-eight Members of the House of Representatives signed this letter to the President. Although the President's statement was strong and moving last week, it still failed to use the word genocide, a very important issue. We will continue to press the administration on this, as well as future administrations.

The preponderance of evidence about the historical fact of the genocide against the Armenian people is strong and undeniable. The U.S. National Archives holds the most comprehensive documentation in the world on this historic tragedy—more than 30,000 pages. Of course, I personally have seen some of this. The United States Embassy in Constantinople, Istanbul, as well as various consulates, closely monitored events in Turkey, and received reports from other countries to which some Armenians had escaped. This information is specific and detailed, collected from eyewitness accounts. Newspaper accounts from this period also provide strong documentation, based on a wide variety of sources, of wholesale, ethnically based killings of Armenians.

Formal protests were made by the United States Ambassador Henry Morgenthau to the Turkish Government. American consular officials and private aid workers secretly housed Armenians, distributed aid, and helped in their escape to other nations—at great personal risk to themselves and in direct defiance of Turkish orders not to help the Armenians. The first-hand accounts of U.S. government officials, journalists and aid workers on the scene provides a vast amount of objec-

tive evidence of the genocide, including information on: deportation, massacres, refugee camps, condition of deportees, confiscation of property, methods of deportation, policy of extermination, execution of the male population, mistreatment of women and children, forced conversions, use of slave labor, malnutrition and starvation, cases of resistance, survivors, orphanages and resettlement of survivors. All of it is very well documented.

After the genocide occurred, there was some effort to bring the organizers of the genocide to court, or to justice.

Some of the organizers of the genocide were court-martialed in absentia in Paris after World War II. But no attempt was made to carry out the sentences, many accused war criminals were set free and no serious efforts were made by the Allies to assist the Armenian victims. In fact, the Allies, after the First World War, caved in to Turkish nationalist demands that no Armenian independent state be created. Revised peace treaties did not even mention Armenia or Armenians. Armenians who returned to their homes in Turkey were again driven out. Armenian place names were changed, and Armenian cultural monuments were destroyed. The geographical term "Armenian plateau" was changed to Eastern Anatolia. Thus, the Turks attempted to obliterate not only the Armenian people, but any vestiges of their culture. The 3,000-year presence of Armenians in Asia Minor had come to an abrupt end by 1923.

With the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe during the 1920's and 1930's, and the outbreak of World War II, the Armenian genocide was largely forgotten. It is said that Hitler, when planning the Nazi strategy of conquest and extermination against the Jews, remarked: "Who remembers the Armenians?"

Most of the survivors of the genocide have since died, while the few who are still living are extremely old now. But their sons and daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren will continue to speak out for generations to come.

Remembering the Armenian genocide is important not only for the Armenian people. Many school districts in this country have developed curricula on issues of genocide, and it is important that these programs be promoted and expanded to expose children of all ethnic groups to the facts of history.

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

One of the most inspiring events of recent years has been the emergence of the Republic of Armenia. Rising out of the ashes of the former Soviet Union, the Republic of Armenia has shown a remarkable resilience, a commitment to democracy and a market economy.

And it has not been easy: Armenia has been squeezed by cruel and illegal blockades imposed by modern Armenia's two neighbors, Turkey and Azerbaijan. In spite of these difficulties, last year, Armenia's was the only former Soviet Republic to register positive growth in its gross domestic product. Given the industriousness and proven determination of the Armenian people, I am confident that this small, emerging nation will become an economically viable, self-sufficient nation in the near future.

I wanted to give a little background about what our caucus on Armenian issues has been doing to help promote the Republic of Armenia.

A few weeks ago, I testified before the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of Appropriations that oversees foreign aid to call for U.S. assistance to at least remain at its present level of \$75 million. In addition, I will be working to maintain United States participation in the International Development Association, a World Bank program that has assisted Armenia with \$145 million in support for earthquake reconstruction, power and irrigation systems, and transition to a market economy. I hope I'll have strong support from my colleagues. I know many members of the Armenian Caucus are here today and will speak after I speak.

I believe 1995 will be a critical year for the Republic of Armenia, and the United States can play a major role. These programs are not handouts: by helping Armenia to get on its feet we can help establish a strong and stable member of the international economic community, a viable market for American goods and services and a market for other emerging nations. Given the terrible suffering of the Armenian people during the Ottoman Empire and their repression under the Soviet Empire, I believe we have a moral obligation to support the Republic of Armenia.

Another way we can help Armenia is by ending the illegal blockades imposed by Turkey and Azerbaijan. Current United States law blocks the provision of American assistance to Azerbaijan until the Azeris lift their blockade. We must continue that provision of the U.S. law.

□ 1830

I also strongly support the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act which bars United States assistance to any country that blocks delivery of United States humanitarian assistance, in other words, Turkey. I find it incredible that a country like Turkey that gets \$600 million in United States taxpayers' funds can get away with blocking the delivery of American humanitarian assistance to its small, struggling neighbor. While in Washington many know that the Turkish Prime Minister told President Clinton a few weeks ago that Turkey would open an air corridor to Armenia, but frankly this is a very minor step, and even if it

actually happens it does not have much significance; it does not change the need for the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act. We still have to insist on reopening the land routes, and we should continue to link United States aid to Turkey to that country's international behavior.

Earlier this year Congressman PORTER and I founded the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues to be a voice for a stronger United States-Armenia partnership and to better represent the interests of the Armenian-American community. We now have 35 Members, from both parties and all regions of the country.

In closing, I want to pay particular tribute to the survivors of the genocide, some of whom made the trip to Washington today. Many of us who are in the Chamber now were at a reception that was held earlier today where many of the survivors were present and some spoke. The horrors that they witnessed and experienced are unthinkable. We have to remember what happened to them, their families, their neighbors, their friends. And I want to pledge to their survivors, their children, grandchildren, that they have friends in this United States Congress who are committed to keeping alive the memory of what happened to the Armenian people in the past, and to play a role in working for a brighter future for the Armenian people.

The bottom line is we have no choice, Mr. Speaker. The Armenian genocide was really the first genocide in this 20th century, but the problem remains that the Turkish Government has not recognized it, and until the day comes when we can see the Prime Minister of Turkey come here to Washington and recognize the genocide and see the type of commemoration of the genocide in all places, in all towns and villages in Turkey, then I do not think that we can rest. I think the lesson of history is we cannot forget the past, and that is why we are here today to commemorate this 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

I now yield to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER], who is the cofounder and the cochairman of our Armenia caucus.

Mr. PORTER. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] for yielding to me. I commend him for the tremendous leadership that he has brought to bear on the question of Armenia and Armenian issues in the Congress, and was very pleased to join with him when he called me earlier this year and asked me if I would join him as cochairman of the Armenian Issues Caucus. I can think of nothing more important for us to do, and I commend him for his leadership this evening in bringing the question of Armenian genocide again before the American people, who must know its history, who must understand its meaning, as he has done so very forcefully this evening.

We do mark the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, which did not

occur in 1 year, 1915, but lasted over an 8-year period, from 1915 to 1923, during which time the Turks of the Ottoman Empire carried out a systematic policy of eliminating its Christian Armenian minority.

There are those who would say we should not offend our Turkish allies by using the word genocide, but let us call it what it was. It was a genocide, a most horrible genocide, resulting in the deaths of over a million and one-half people, resulting in 500,000 Armenians being exiled as well, and eradicating the Armenian historic homeland from Turkey.

The horrors of this genocide rank as one of the most heinous violations of human rights in all of human history. Let us call it what it was, and is. Let us remind ourselves that our country at the time and all of the rest of the world at the time turned away and did nothing to prevent these horrible human rights violations against an innocent people, and let us remind ourselves as well that today in Turkey another genocide is occurring by the Turkish Government against yet another Turkish minority, the Kurdish people, and today thousands of Turkish troops not only have driven through the southeastern portion of Turkey, executing those in the Kurdish minority who oppose them, burning and tearing down Kurdish towns, but have crossed into the border in Iraq to attack Kurdish peoples in their camps, refugee camps. And let us remind ourselves as well, Mr. Speaker, that our Government has not acted to prevent this additional genocide, but has actually supported it, our President has supported this action against an innocent people.

We remind ourselves today of our responsibilities to other human beings, and in commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, each one of us should say to ourselves we are our brother's keeper, we do have a responsibility to others and to stand up and tell the world that a genocide occurred in 1915 to 1922, and another genocide is occurring today.

Last year through the appropriations process on the Foreign Operations Subcommittee we initially struck 25 percent of the support, economic and military support, foreign assistance that we give to Turkey. We ended up with cutting it by only 10 percent in conference. We did it because of ongoing human rights abuses by the Turks, not only against the Kurdish people but against their own people, systematic torture, execution, and disappearances, the kinds of things that a country like ours should stand up against in outrage, and we should in fashioning a foreign assistance bill in this year of this 104th Congress look once again as we always should to our own values of a belief in democracy and human rights, in the rule of law, in free-market economics, and provide, I believe, not 1 cent of assistance to Turkey until re-

forms, major reforms, come about in that society, in each of these areas.

We also see Turkey cutting off any opportunity for us to give humanitarian assistance across their borders to the Armenians. This to me is unacceptable. If we have an aid program and cannot deliver it through a supposed ally, that ally cannot be claiming to be a friend of ours whatsoever. We should pass the Humanitarian Corridor Act and cut off humanitarian assistance to any country, cut off all assistance to any country who would cut off our own aid programs crossing their borders to help others.

We made great progress in the last few years in helping to establish a new Armenia, an Armenia that is free and democratic, and moving ahead to provide through economic freedom a greater economic life, a more prosperous economic life to its people and greater stability for its future. We made that commitment previously. We have to renew that commitment this year. And even in tough budgetary times we ought to realize that if we can provide the kind of foreign assistance to Armenia that does reflect the values that this country stands for and believes in, we will do a great deal to extend those values across this world.

We are working with the Armenian-American community to provide that kind of assistance.

Mr. Speaker, let me end by saying many people in the Turkish Government say well, this is just anti-Turkish rhetoric. You just want to play games with your constituents in America. You do not want to be allies with us.

We do want to be allies with the Turks. We understand the importance of a free Turkey. We understand the importance of a democratic Turkey, but we also understand that we do not have a free and democratic Turkey today. We have a Turkey with a democratic government that is elected but only can do those things that the Turkish military permits it to do. And it is time that Turkey looked to its future. It is time that Turkey looks to its past and acknowledges that it did commit genocide against the Armenian people. It is time that it looks currently at what it is doing to its Kurdish minority. It is time that it stop its human rights abuses against the Kurds and others within its own borders. It is time that it release the six parliamentarians that were tried and imprisoned for standing up for Kurdish human rights and to drop the charges of sedition against its most famous author, whose only crime was to stand up and say we cannot be doing this to our own people.

It is time that Turkey look to a part in the economic development of Europe. It wants to be a part of the economic community. I would like to see it a part of the economic community, but it can never be part of the economic community in Europe nor a close ally of the United States until it looks to itself and reforms its way.

The values we look to are democracy, human rights, the rule of law, free economics, the things the American people have stood for over 200 years. We should not be providing aid to those who do not believe in those same values; we should be providing it to those that do.

We believe we should be a strong supporter of Armenia, who is moving in all of the right directions, and we should be a strong supporter of Turkey only when it also changes its ways, reforms and moves in those directions.

It is time America stood up for its own values and counted across the world those who believe in the same things we believe in and support them, and not those that are moving in other directions.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is providing the kind of leadership on this issue that is bringing us together in a bipartisan way, it is keeping the issues affecting Armenians before you, the Congress, and this observance of the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide is a very, very important acknowledgment of the past and also a very, very important acknowledgment of what we must see changed in the future. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. PALLONE. I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] for those insightful remarks. And I think particularly his reference to what Turkey is doing today with the Kurdish population points out very well that the problems that we face from Turkey historically with Armenia have not gone away, and they are continuing now in a different form against another minority people.

I also wanted to say I was with your wife, Kathryn, in Times Square a couple of weeks ago when we did the commemoration there, and I do not think I have ever heard anyone speak so well about the problems that Armenia faces and the Kurds face, and she really expressed such passion over the issue. I know she has been over there so many times, and she just summed everything up better than certainly I could say or certainly any of us could say on this issue, so thanks again.

Mr. PORTER. If the gentleman will yield, I very much appreciate your kind and generous comments. I am very proud of the fact that Kathryn has taken a very, very active role in working with the Armenian people, in attempting to make a difference in that country that is struggling to reflect the things that we believe in and is fighting to prevent ongoing abuses against the Kurdish people, which as you very eloquently pointed out, is a reflection today of exactly what they did to the Armenian people 80 years ago. It has to change.

□ 1845

Mr. PALLONE. I thank the gentleman. I yield now to the gentleman from California [Mr. MOORHEAD].

Mr. MOORHEAD. Mr. Speaker, 1995 marks the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

Every year in Congress April 24 is remembered on the floor of the House, and I have participated in this occasion for a large number of years, a tribute to the Armenian martyrs who are the victims of one of the worst genocides of this century.

On this date in 1915, hundreds of Armenian political and intellectual leaders were rounded up, exiled, and eventually murdered in remote places.

In the years that followed from 1915 to 1923, 1.5 million men, women and children were murdered in attempted genocide of the Armenian people by the government of the Ottoman Empire. We must never forget this tragic crime against humanity.

I have had friends that were present during that time. I know those people that will claim that this never took place. One friend of mine had been turned over to a Turkish family by his own father and mother, and he had to stand in the community square and watch every single member of his family murdered by the Turks as they came into the community. That man never grew an inch after that time. He died a man barely 4 foot 6 inches tall.

A strong, resilient people, the Armenians survived these cruelties as they have survived persecution for centuries. Their durability comes from their love and intense faith in God dating back to the fourth century when Armenia became the first nation to embrace Christianity.

The survivors and descendants who now number more than 1 million Americans have not forgotten the Armenian genocide. As a nation, we must never forget the terrible widespread massacre of the Armenian people and their deportation from their homeland of almost 3,000 years.

We must remind mankind genocide is a crime against all humanity, not just those who perished in the first genocide of this century.

As a leader of a free and democratic nation, we have a moral obligation to acknowledge and deplore the events surrounding the Armenian genocide, and we must ensure that such atrocities do not continue.

Armenia, now independent but burdened with the war in Nagorno-Karabakh, is blocked by Turkey and Azerbaijan; we live in a humane, civilized world, and cannot continue to allow another reign of terror against the Armenian people. Violence is not the solution to this crisis. With aggression inflicted by both sides, it will only lead to more deaths, greater suffering, continued hatred and instability in the region.

History is a cruel teacher, but has shown that gross inhumanities have not perished from the Earth.

The brutality against Armenians continues today. This is why recognition of the Armenian genocide by the United States is vital. I hope all Amer-

icans and the entire U.S. Congress will join with the Armenian community in commemorating this 80th anniversary.

Along with several of my colleagues here with us today, I have sponsored Concurrent Resolution 47 which honors the members and the victims of the Armenian genocide. It specifically calls on the United States to encourage the Republic of Turkey to take all appropriate steps to acknowledge and commemorate the atrocities committed against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923.

This resolution renews the commitment of the American people to oppose any and all genocide. The United States must send a strong message to the world about our Nation's resolve and determination to prevent crimes against humanity.

Today Armenians flourish in the United States, as prominent and successful citizens in spite of the crimes committed against them. Many of the survivors of this genocide live in my district. I believe I have more than any other district in the United States. The mayor of Pasadena is an Armenian. A member of Glendale city council, who has several times served as our mayor, is Armenian. A member of our community college board of education is Armenian. Many of the leading citizens of our community are serving the community well, but they are concerned about Armenia also.

They have sent several plane loads of materials to the survivors there in Armenia who have suffered so much, and they will continue to do so as long as this tragedy continues.

I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE], for arranging this special order and for the work that he is doing on the Armenian task force.

Mr. PALLONE. I want to thank the gentleman from California for those words.

I now yield to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR], the minority whip.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today democracy is beginning to flourish in Armenia—and freedom's flame is burning bright.

But 80 years ago, things were different.

Eighty years ago—in the midst of World War I—beginning on the night of April 24, 1915—the religious and intellectual leaders of the Armenian community of Constantinople were taken from their beds, imprisoned, tortured, and killed.

In the days that followed—the remaining males over 15 years of age were gathered in cities, towns and villages throughout Turkey—roped together, marched to nearby uninhabited areas, and killed.

In the ensuing weeks, families were deported.

Innocent women and children were forced to march through barren wastelands—urged on by whips and clubs—denied food and water.

And when they dared to step out of line, they were constantly attacked, robbed, raped, and killed.

And when all was said and done—over a million Armenians lay dead, and a homeland which had stood for over 3,000 years was nearly completely depopulated.

Mr. Speaker, we come to this floor today to remember the victims—and the survivors—of the Armenian genocide of 1915.

We do so at a very solemn time in America.

While some of us gathered the past week to remember the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide—most Americans were focused on the senseless tragedy in Oklahoma City.

The murder of innocent men, women, and children is no easier to understand today than it was 80 years ago.

Tragedies like these remind us all of the true meaning of the words family, friendship, community, compassion, and faith.

It is this same strong sense of community that has enabled the Armenian people not only to survive—but to thrive—the past 80 years.

Mr. Speaker, as we come to this floor today we do so with the knowledge that all of us have a responsibility—to remember the victims, to speak out and to make sure that tragedies like this are never allowed to happen again.

That's part of the reason why some of us have introduced a resolution to remember the victims of the Armenian genocide.

Now—more than ever—those of us who embrace democracy have a responsibility to speak out for all those who live under tyranny.

Because sadly, the world does not seem to have learned the lessons of the past.

From Bosnia, to Rwanda, to Nagorno Karabakh, we see new examples every day of man's inhumanity to man.

The conflict taking place in Nagorno Karabakh is one of the great tragedies of our time.

This is not a CNN war.

For most Americans, Nagorno Karabakh is not a place that registers on the radar screen.

But it is a place where 100,000 have been killed or wounded in the past 6 years—where over a million people have been left homeless.

It is a place where doctors are forced to operate without anesthesia, where land mines continue to maim innocent women and children.

Mr. Speaker, we're all hopeful this terrible tragedy ends soon. We're all hopeful that the year-long cease-fire leads to a peaceful end.

And we're all encouraged by President Clinton's announcement last week that he will appoint a Special Negotiator to advance the negotiations.

But there is much more that needs to be done.

The United States has tried to send humanitarian aid to Armenia but it

has continually been blocked by a blockade enforced by Turkey.

It is utterly unconscionable to me—that a country who is an ally of ours—who is a member of NATO, and who accepts U.S. aid, would think it has the right to block U.S. humanitarian assistance, and we should do all we can to lift that blockade.

Mr. Speaker, some of us have introduced a bill that would cut off all aid to Turkey until the blockade is lifted, and thankfully, we are seeing some progress.

Turkey recently announced it would open one air corridor to Armenia—possibly as soon as this week—and that's a hopeful sign.

But we must keep working until the blockade is lifted entirely, or the need for aid is eliminated entirely.

For 70 years, the people of Armenia and the people of Nagorno-Karabakh lived under the brutal boot of Soviet dictatorship, and they shouldn't be forced to live under these conditions any longer.

It's in all of our interests to see a free and democratic Armenia and that's why the United States has made aid to Armenia such a priority the past 6 years.

But today, we pause and remember the victims and survivors of the Armenian genocide, and to say: Never again.

We can never forget that in 1939, another leader used the Armenian genocide as justification for his own genocide.

This leader said, and I quote: "I have given orders to my Death Units to exterminate without mercy or pity men, women, and children belonging to the Polish-speaking race. After all," Adolf Hitler asked, "who today remembers the extermination of the Armenians?"

Mr. Speaker, it is up to all of us to remember.

For centuries, the Armenian people have shown great courage and great strength.

The least we can do is match their courage with our commitment.

Because in the end, we are their voices and we must do all we can to remember.

Because if we don't, nobody else will.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minority whip, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR], for participating in our special order. As many of you know, he has been a long-time advocate of human rights in this House.

Next, I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE].

Mr. BLUTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from New Jersey. I want to commend you and the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] for arranging this important commemoration of a terrible period in history.

Recent history has seen the Armenian people subjected to a number of very difficult, troubling, and tragic circumstances, from being forced to live under the Soviet Communist regime, to the terrible 1988 earthquake, much

worse than any this Nation has ever seen, to the present blockade and violence imposed by the Azeris.

There can be no doubt that the Armenian people have long suffered, but nothing is more tragic and more important to remember than the genocide which took place from 1915 to 1923; 1.5 million people died, countless more lost mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, uncles and aunts, comrades and friends.

We stand here today in the people's House of Representatives, more than a half century later, to ensure that others will never forget, not forget the massacres, not forget the persecutions, the death marches, the bloodshed, and not forget that all citizens in the world deserve to live in freedom without the threat of destruction, without the fear of systematic oppression and murder.

And that is why it is important we commemorate this 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. We cannot afford to let the people of the world or the people of our own country forget that genocide can and does happen.

Just this week we marked the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Dachau and the terrible genocide in Europe perpetrated against the Jewish people, and already in this decade, there have been many events in places like Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia that remind us of man's inhumanity to man, and that evil forces still exist in our so-called modern world.

In light of these sorry events in those countries, we must do everything in our power to make sure that the people of the world remember that genocide in Armenia 80 years ago, for if we forget the past, we most certainly will be condemned to repeat it.

□ 1900

And as part of this effort, the distinguished minority whip, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR] and I, and others have introduced House Concurrent Resolution 47. This resolution would put the House on record honoring the memory of the 1.5 million genocide victims. The House should pass this resolution and send a message to the world that we will never forget what happened during that terrible period in history and that we will do every thing in our power here in the House of Representatives to make sure that it does not happen again anywhere in our world.

I want to commend my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE], and my colleague from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] for their great leadership on this issue and for making sure that we did not let this 80th anniversary pass without taking some time on the floor of this House to remember this terrible period, and I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for the time and for his leadership.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE] and now yield to

the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY].

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, as the proud Representative of a large and vibrant community of Armenian-Americans, I rise to participate in this important and timely special order.

Let me first commend my friends FRANK PALLONE and JOHN PORTER, the cochairs of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, not only for sponsoring this special order, but for all of their hard work in the area of human rights and international decency.

My colleagues, this year we mark the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II and the defeat of the Nazi killing machine.

It has often been asked: "How could the world have done nothing to prevent the deaths of six million Jews in the Holocaust?"

Tragically, the answer lies in the haunting and hateful words of Adolf Hitler, who cruelly justified the Final Solution by asking, "Who remembers the Armenians?"

Tonight we remember the Armenians.

Tonight we recall that 80 years ago, Ottoman Turkish forces launched their brutal reign of terror which resulted in the deaths of 1½ million Armenians. When the carnage ended 8 years later, two out of every three Armenians living in Ottoman Turkey had been killed.

Tonight we express our sorrow for those who died, and renew our respect for those who survived.

Eight decades have passed since this hideous episode in the history of man's inhumanity to man, but tonight we must pledge that we will hold commemorations like this one 80 years from now and 80 years from then to ensure that the lessons of the Armenian genocide are never forgotten.

Nothing we can ever say or do will bring back to life those who perished.

But we can endow their memories with everlasting meaning by teaching the lessons of the Armenian genocide to future generations.

The first lesson is the truth.

The time has come for Congress to pass the Armenian genocide resolution. We must put our Government squarely on the side of the facts. I commend our colleagues DAVID BONIOR and PETER BLUTE for introducing House Concurrent Resolution 47, which I have cosponsored.

This resolution not only represents official United States recognition of the memory of those who died, but will also put pressure on the Turkish Government to do what it has callously refused to do—to acknowledge and commemorate the atrocities committed 80 years ago.

There is no statute of limitations on genocide. Congress must not condone the efforts of those in Turkey and elsewhere who seek to downplay the terrible events of 80 years ago, or worse yet, who claim that the Armenian genocide never even happened.

And the second lesson is one of current international significance.

We must use the commemoration of this terrible era to renew our friendship with Armenia. This valiant and struggling nation deserves and needs U.S. humanitarian and developmental assistance.

And the United States must make this demand of Turkey: "Allowing a few airplane flights in is not enough! Lift your blockade of Armenia now!"

Tonight we salute the indomitable spirit of the citizens of Armenia.

We commend the magnificent contributions that Armenian-Americans have made to our own society.

And we pledge to honor the martyrdom of the victims of the Armenian genocide to ensure that their sacrifices will never be forgotten and their fate never repeated.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY] for her comments, and now I yield time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX].

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] and the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] for this special order and for their leadership in making the proper recognition of the Armenian genocide.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. As you know, 1.5 million Armenians were massacred by the Turkish Ottoman Empire between 1915 and 1923.

The Armenian community in the United States is mostly descended from survivors of this tragedy who were forcibly exiled from their homeland. These citizens, many of whom reside in Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, have made tremendous contributions to American life while honoring their own rich traditions.

Mr. Speaker, on the evening of April 24, 1915, the political, religious, and intellectual leaders of the Armenian community in Constantinople—now Istanbul—were arrested, exiled from the capital city, and murdered. After the "young Turk" government silenced the voices of the Armenian community in this inhumane way, they began a systematic deportation and extermination of all Armenians.

Mr. Speaker, it is our duty to ensure that these reprehensible crimes against humanity are not forgotten. I am deeply concerned that the Turkish Government refuses to acknowledge this shameful genocide, even today. We know all too well the consequences of forgetfulness. As Elie Wiesel reports, and the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR] and others reiterated this evening, "Before planning the final solution, Hitler asked, 'Who remembers the Armenians?'"

Today Turkey refuses to allow U.S. shipments of humanitarian aid to reach Armenia. I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act (H.R. 942),

which would eliminate U.S. aid to countries that would obstruct the delivery of U.S. humanitarian assistance.

I have recently learned that Turkey will open air corridor H-50, and I call upon the Government of Turkey to immediately cease all interference with the transport and delivery of U.S. humanitarian aid to Armenia. I hope that our message is heard.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for allowing us to be part of this important special order to make sure we highlight the 80th anniversary of the genocide of Armenians, and I thank the gentleman for this time.

Mr. PALLONE. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX], and next I yield to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. ESHOO], who I believe is maybe the only, but certainly one of the, Armenian Members of Congress.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE]. I would like to pay tribute to him and the wonderful leadership that he has given here in the House of Representatives on behalf of American Armenians. It is so important that there be Members that take on what he has, and I want to pay tribute to him, to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] and all of my other colleagues that are part of this special order that is helping to raise the awareness on the 80th anniversary. I wish there was not such an anniversary. This is not in celebration. This is, of course, in commemoration of the Armenian genocide and the millions of Armenians who were systematically exterminated by the Ottoman troops.

The slaughter began on April 24, 1915, when hundreds of Armenian leaders were arrested and executed in Istanbul and other areas.

By the time they were finished, Ottoman troops had executed 1.5 million Armenians including innocent women and children.

Tragically, the crying voices of these innocent victims fell upon deaf ears because the international community refused to confront the perpetrators of these atrocities.

As the only Member of Congress of Armenian descent, I know full well how the Ottoman Empire decimated people and wrote one of the darkest chapters in human history. I am committed to ensure that their suffering is not diminished and cannot be denied by the perpetrators of this disgraceful policy.

By recalling the atrocities of the Armenian genocide we remind the world that a great tragedy was inflicted upon our people, that the murder of Armenians was a catastrophe for the entire family of nations, and that unchecked aggression leads to atrocity.

By mourning the losses of our past, we renew our determination to forge a future in which our people can live in peace, prosperity, and freedom.

And we remember that Armenians were persecuted throughout the Ottoman Empire because we were a vulnerable, homeless people with no nation of our own in which we could seek sanctuary, no borders behind which we could seek protections. Isolated and abandoned, we were attacked and killed.

Despite our history of suffering at the hands of others, Armenians have remained a strong people. We are committed to our families and united by our enduring faith.

And we have risen from the ashes of the Armenian genocide to form a new country from the remains of the Soviet Union * * * a new country which flourishes in the face of severe winters, ongoing military conflict in Nagorno-Karabagh, and the absence of strong international assistance.

Today's Armenia is a living tribute to our people's indelible courage and perseverance and the greatest assurance that what took place 80 years ago will not be repeated.

As we remember the tragic history of my people, it is essential also for us to discuss the future of Armenia and the role which the United States can play in establishing peace in the Caucasus. Many of the Members speaking this evening have worked tirelessly with the administration to encourage it to take a more proactive role.

And President Clinton recently announced he will nominate a special negotiator for Nagorno-Karabagh at the rank of ambassador.

This could be an important first step. Yet, in my view, true peace in the Caucasus will only be achieved when the political and economic isolation of Armenia ceases and regional leaders recognize the inherent rights of Armenia—including its land and its history. Congress can play an important part in this process.

For example, there is pending legislation which would help ensure lasting peace in the Caucasus. The Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act is essential because it would exert the appropriate pressure on countries which block U.S. foreign assistance to the region.

It is not enough for third party nations to allow commercial flights into aid-recipient countries—land convoys must be allowed through in order to move necessary amounts of American food, medicine, and clothing. I urge my colleagues to pass this important bill.

In addition, we must maintain the Freedom of Support Act which prevents U.S. foreign assistance going to Azerbaijan until they lift their blockade of Nagorno-Karabagh. In my view, the Freedom of Support Act must be upheld until the isolation of Armenia ends and its territorial rights are adhered to.

Mr. Speaker, if the tragedy of the Armenian genocide has taught us anything, it is that sitting back is tantamount to helping Armenia's oppressors.

As the recent decision by the President to end all United States trade with Iran indicates, tensions in the Caucasus are rising and they are global in scope. The United States is finding that it cannot sit back and observe events unfolding in the region. The Russians, Chinese, and Turks have important interests in the region, and so do we.

As Members of Congress, we have the responsibility of ensuring that an enhanced United States role in the affairs of the Caucasus follows a course sensitive to the region's history and culture. This includes a heightened sensitivity to Armenia, whose history and culture are often denied or misunderstood.

I thank my colleagues who have joined us here today to remember the Armenian genocide.

We must do all we can to prevent this tragic history from repeating itself and help advance a proactive foreign policy to bring lasting peace to the region.

□ 1915

I genuinely thank my colleagues, and pay tribute to each one of you who have joined in this tribute this evening, a commemoration of the Armenian genocide. Many of my family members of another generation were taken during that genocide. So we must do all that we can to prevent this tragic history obviously from repeating itself, but we must renew ourselves in the efforts that really count today toward the end of this century and preparing for a new one, to help advance a proactive foreign policy to bring lasting peace to the region.

The Armenian community will be in great gratitude to the Congress of the United States as we renew our efforts toward this goal. I again pay tribute to you, Mr. PALLONE, and all of my colleagues for doing what you have done in the past and your tireless efforts on behalf of the issues that affect Armenians around the world, certainly in the region. On behalf of the Armenian-American community, I pay tribute to you as well.

Mr. PALLONE. I just want to thank the gentlewoman from California for her remarks. It is particularly I think appropriate that you conclude our special order. I know we have other speakers. I just wanted to say one thing. One of the things I noted over the weekend, as you know, the last week was also the occasion when we commemorated the Nazi Holocaust. I was with many of the victims of the Nazi Holocaust over the weekend and shared thoughts with some of them. But the one thing that was outstanding and the big difference, if I could make the comment, is that those victims of the Nazi Holocaust at least knew that the German Government recognized that it occurred and that people today in Germany hold commemorations and basically say they are sorry for what occurred.

Unfortunately, that is not the case with the Government of Turkey or in

fact most of the people of Turkey, many of whom are not aware of what happened 80 years ago. That is why we have to continue with our special order. We have to make it so the day comes when Turkey takes notice of what happened and the same type of commemoration occurs in Turkey as takes place now in Germany with reference to the Nazi Holocaust.

Ms. ESHOO. The gentleman has made a very, very important profound point and underscored a very profound issue here. It seems incomprehensible that a government of today would not look over its shoulder and say these are the sins of the past that were visited upon innocent people, but that it is a different day and time.

I think that this Congress can and will make the difference, and you have done much to lead us toward that. I thank the gentleman.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I just want to comment on the profound words of my colleague from New Jersey, Mr. PALLONE. Adolph Hitler himself said that the world's indifference to the slaughter in Armenia indicated that there would be no world outcry if he undertook the mass murder of Jews and others he considered less than human, and he was right. It was only after the Holocaust that the cry "never again" arose throughout the civilized world, but it was too late for millions of victims, too late for the 6 million Jews, and too late for the 1.5 million Armenians. I too appreciate your having that special order.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with my colleagues to honor the 1.5 million Armenians who were murdered during the Armenian genocide of 1915 to 1923.

Mr. Speaker, Armenians wiped away their tears and cried out "Let us never forget. Let us always remember the atrocities that have taken the lives of our parents and our children and our neighbors." I rise today to remember those cries and to make sure that they were not uttered in vain.

Unfortunately, this tragedy is still not even acknowledged by the Turkish Government, and today the Armenian people continue to suffer.

Mr. Speaker, as many of us know, the ongoing conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh led last year to an Azerbaijan-orchestrated blockade. I am deeply concerned for the innocent people who are suffering as a result of this blockade, which left many in Armenia without power, food, or medicine. As my colleagues and I stand here today to remember the events of 80 years ago, let us not lose sight of the events that have transpired recently. Let us take this opportunity to pledge to do everything in our power to settle the ongoing dispute in Nagorno-Karabakh. Let me be perfectly clear: The United States must stand firm against any dealings with Azerbaijan until it ends the blockade against Armenia and against Nagorno-Karabakh.

Mr. Speaker, last year I fought to have \$75 million in the 1995 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act earmarked for Armenia. Regrettably, too few of my colleagues shared my belief that we must set aside these sorely needed funds for Armenia. It is critical that we take the time today to make explicit our commitment to the people of Armenia. I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do so.

Strongly support section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which restricts aid to Azerbaijan until that nation lifts its embargo against the people of Armenia.

Cosponsor H.R. 942, the "Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act," which would prohibit U.S. assistance to any country which in any way restricts the transport or delivery of U.S. humanitarian assistance to other countries. This legislation will ensure the speedy, unhindered, and effective delivery of needed United States humanitarian assistance to Armenia.

And finally, I implore my colleagues to call on Azerbaijan to negotiate a peace settlement under the guidelines established by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe [CSCE].

It is tragic that Azerbaijan's tactics denied food and medicine to innocent men, women, and children within Armenia, and created thousands of refugees. The war over Nagorno-Karabakh has set a dangerous precedent for the resolution of conflicts among the many new nations that were formerly part of the Soviet Union. We must make clear that warfare and blockades aimed at civilians are unacceptable as means for resolving disputes.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate that I will always remain mindful of the terrible suffering the Armenian people have endured during this century. I cannot stress enough that we must never forget the Armenian genocide, and that we must do everything in our power to ensure that the Armenian nation can live in peace and security from this time forward.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today I join with my colleagues in Congress and Armenians all over the world to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. Once again we call today for recognition of this tragedy because the horrible truth of the Armenian genocide is still not universally acknowledged, even after all these years.

We must forever speak out against genocide as a constant reminder of the consequences of silence in the face of oppression. We must call attention to the reality of the Ottoman Empire's systematic persecution of Armenians in part so that such inhumanity is never tolerated again, ever. And we must voice our support for the rights of all people as we demand an end to the extermination of innocent civilians caught in ethnic conflicts today in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Nagorno-Karabagh.

Our remembrance of the loss of 1½ million Armenian lives is our declaration of absolute opposition to such acts of inhumanity and our statement of hope for a world free of genocide. We must not let this atrocity be forgotten.

To let this happen would be to condemn future generations to the same fate. Only through remembrance and recognition can we stop such acts of senseless cruelty and violence against humankind from happening again.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to remember the 1.5 million Armenians who lost their lives in one of the greatest tragedies of this century. The year 1995 marks the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian genocide, and I would like to add my voice to those who are commemorating this grievous event. The murder of over 1 million people is such an unspeakable appalling act that it is difficult for a person to comprehend. For this reason it is important to recognize the genocide, and in remembering we will ensure that such an atrocity will never occur again. It serves as a lesson that we can never ignore a situation where such a callous disregard for human rights is demonstrated.

The Armenian genocide began on April 24, 1915, when Turkish officials rounded up and murdered over 200 Armenian intellectuals in Constantinople. During the next 8 years, over 1.5 million Armenians were needlessly butchered. By 1923, only one in every three Armenians who was alive before 1915 was still living. Before planning the final solution in Nazi Germany, Adolph Hitler asked, "Who remembers the Armenians?" We owe it to the memory of these brave souls to make sure that they are never forgotten again.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for having been invited to join in this special order today honoring the memory of the hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women, and children who suffered a horrible death of the genocidal actions carried out by the former Ottoman Empire starting 80 years ago.

The genocide perpetrated against the Armenian people of the former Ottoman Empire during the First World War was merely a portent of things to come.

Only a few years later, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians were to die in the artificial famine created by the Communist dictator of the former Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin.

A few years after that, millions of Jews and others were to fall victim to the genocide perpetrated by the former Nazi regime of Adolph Hitler.

It has always been my honor and privilege to participate in congressional ceremonies and special orders commemorating the Armenian genocide during the time that I have served as a Representative to the Congress.

I am indeed pleased to be a part of such ceremonies again this year, which carry on with an important tradition.

Just as the unfortunate victims of the Holocaust and of the Ukrainian famine should be remembered, so must the victims of the genocidal action against Armenians be in our thoughts at this time.

As we contemplate their suffering, we note that today the death of those innocents 80 years ago is commemorated not just by their descendants around the world but by the people of the newly independent state of Armenia.

Certainly, the people of Armenia face difficult new challenges today, but they now are free of foreign rule for the first time in hundreds of years.

As we commemorate the victims of a bloody persecution that began 80 years ago, let us therefore join in celebrating Armenia's new-

found independence—the best guarantee that such bloody persecutions will not befall the Armenian people again.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to address the House of Representatives to commemorate the Armenian genocide. Only by remembering the tragic events of the Armenian genocide can we ensure respect for human rights and democratic principles throughout the world.

In 1894, a pattern of persecution emerged in the Ottoman Empire, placing the Armenian population in great jeopardy. The persecutions climaxed in 1915, marking the height of systematic massacres and forced exile of the Armenian people. Over 1 million people were murdered. Today, less than 100,000 Armenians remain in Turkey. We must never forget the atrocities of the Armenian genocide as we look back on this 80th anniversary.

I feel proud to be the Representative of an active and prosperous Armenian community in my own district of Massachusetts. They have given me hope for future generations of Armenians. It is for these people, as well as Armenians around the world, that I both commemorate the Armenian genocide and urge the world not to tolerate anything of this kind again.

Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

Beginning on April 24, 1915, hundreds of Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were rounded up, exiled, and murdered. The genocide of the Armenian people by the Turkish Ottoman Empire continued for 9 years and claimed over 1,500,000 lives. Another 500,000 Armenians were forced to flee their homeland, some of whom formed the origins of the Armenian community in our country. Therefore, it is imperative that we, as the elected Representatives of the people of the United States, recognize and commemorate the genocide of the Armenian people.

In addition, it is incumbent upon us to speak out about messages of hate and bigotry on the rise in this country. As we have learned in this country and witnessed abroad at least twice this century, hate must not be allowed to grow unchecked. We must continue to denounce messages of hate and bigotry and promote tolerance within our communities.

Mr. Speaker, the commemoration of this tragic episode in world history is vitally important. I urge my colleagues to join me in commemorating the genocide of the Armenian people.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the tragic events leading to the deaths of over 1.5 million Armenians. I join millions around the world in vowing, once again, to ensure that our generation and future generations never again have to bear witness to such inhuman behavior and feel the pain and suffering of an entire people.

We had hoped that the crime of genocide would never again be allowed to mar the history of humankind.

Yet today as we stand with our Armenian brothers and sisters to remember and share in their grief for those who died from 1915 to 1923, we are all reminded of the ongoing genocide in Bosnia today in 1995, where we too, share in the people of Bosnia's anguish.

Let us also today be reminded, as Americans, of the freedoms we enjoy but so often take for granted.

We must remember that only too often has this disrespect for the most basic of our human rights—the right to speak, to worship, and to believe as one pleases—led to the deaths of millions in the Holocausts of this century. We must continue to hold vigil for those who have perished so that the rights of all humanity will be protected in the future.

Finally, I am pleased to stand here today to pay tribute to the Armenian people. Armenia is a land composed largely of rock and stone, hewn out of the earth by 1 million years of evolution and left to its people as the basis of construction of one of the world's oldest and richest civilizations.

The people of Armenia, like the stone out of which they have built their history, are a strong and lasting people, a people who have withstood the onslaught of tragedy. Because of the resilience of the Armenian people, they will continue to enrich our world with their creativity and tradition.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, Today we commemorate the memory of generations of Armenians, victims of a horrible genocide that we all hope will never be repeated.

From 1915 to 1923, the Ottoman Empire systematically murdered over 1.5 million Armenians living in Turkey. And, throughout history, we have witnessed similar acts of unspeakable cruelty—the killing of over 12 million during the Holocaust, escalating death tolls in Bosnia and Rwanda and, most recently, the bombing in Oklahoma City.

It is vital for us as a nation to remember what happened in Turkey 80 years ago, and to recognize that we must work to promote peace and democracy throughout the world to help prevent such atrocious crimes from repeating themselves.

As we pay tribute to and remember those in the Armenian community who lost their lives, Americans must continue to denounce racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, bigotry, religious persecution, and ethnic violence. Only by learning from past experiences, no matter how difficult they might be to remember, can we grow and develop as a nation. Because, as we continue to wipe out existing stereotypes and prejudices, we are able to refocus our attention on the important contributions that all groups of people make to our country.

As Americans became aware of the tremendous suffering being endured 80 years ago and took steps to end the senseless tragedy, thousands of Armenians came to the United States in search of better lives. Now, they, their children, and their children's children have grown to be successful in all aspects of life. Having one of this Nation's largest Armenian community's, I can proudly say that their strong sense of family values and emphasis on education symbolize what is best in America, and a model for other families to follow.

But, despite all that has been achieved, we must also remember that Armenia's plight is not yet over. In the middle of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict, Armenia finds itself in a struggle for survival. While the international community increases its efforts to bring about democracy and stability in the TransCaucasus, we, too, must continue our resolve to restore security in the region and cleanse it of ethnic hatred.

None of us will ever forget the awful tragedy that took place on this 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. And, by working to reconcile present conflicts, we hopefully will not

have to look back on similar tragedies in the future.

Mr. DOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

This terrible human tragedy must not and will not be forgotten. Like the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide stands as an historical example of the human suffering that results from hatred and intolerance. More often than not, when people think of genocide or ethnic cleansing, it is the Holocaust that comes to mind. However, let us remember that the Armenian genocide was the historical basis of Adolf Hitler's plan for the Holocaust. Today we commemorate the Armenian genocide and reflect upon the suffering endured by Armenia and her people—to ensure that this terrible tragedy is not forgotten.

One and one-half million Armenian people were massacred by the Ottoman Turkish empire between 1915 and 1923. 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 a great tragedy to forget that this loss of human life and homeland ever occurred. Years prior to unleashing his plans for the Holocaust, Hitler predicted that no one would remember the atrocities and the human suffering endured by the Armenians. After all, it was Hitler who posed the question, "Who remembers the Armenians?" Our statements today are intended to preserve the memory of the Armenian loss, and to remind the world that the Turkish Government continues to refuse acknowledgement of the Armenian genocide.

This 80th anniversary is underscored by the current suffering of the Armenian people, who remain immersed in tragedy and violence by the continuing unrest between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in the region of Nagorno-Karabagh. Thousands of innocent people have already perished in this dispute, and still many more have been displaced and are homeless. Frustrating the situation is the continuing destruction of fuel and power lines, as well as the blockade of supply routes into Armenia through neighboring Georgia and Turkey.

In the face of this difficult situation comes an opportunity for reconciliation. Now is the time for Armenia and its neighbors, including Turkey, to come together, to work toward a lasting peace and to rebuild relationships between countries. The first step in this process should be ending of the blockades that are hampering the recovery of Armenia and her people. Although Turkey has recently opened an air corridor to Armenia, the land blockade continues to frustrate humanitarian relief efforts.

Meanwhile, in America, the Armenian-American community prospers and continues to provide solidarity and assistance to its countrymen and women abroad. Numbering nearly 1 million, 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 remember the tragedy of their past, not to place blame, but to answer a fundamental question, Who remembers the Armenians?

Today our commemoration of the Armenian genocide speaks directly to that end, and I answer, We do.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. PALLONE and Mr. PORTER, co-chairs of the Armenia caucus, for their leadership in once again giving this House the opportunity to address the deep concerns many of us have about developments in Armenia.

Over the course of my years in Congress, we have been engaged on many fronts on the Armenia issue—whether it be emergency relief after the massive earthquake that devastated the country in 1988, trying to address the suffering and deprivation caused by the withering blockade of Armenia imposed by Agerbajian and Turkey, or offering support for efforts to end the fighting in the region through a negotiated peace process.

But today is a special day. It is a time for special remembrances, for reflection, commemoration, and to remind ourselves of our moral obligations to our fellow human beings, whatever their ethnicity, their religion, or their color.

I am reminded that the first action I saw when I came to Congress with regard to Armenia was the attempt to get this Congress to recognize the Armenian genocide on April 24, 1915—the beginning of a terrible campaign against the Armenian people that resulted in the killing of more than 1 million people merely on the basis of their nationality.

Today, we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the genocide, a 9-year reign of terror that set a gruesome standard for 20th century atrocities. All of us in the Congress and across America and the world, should take a moment to remember this horrible crime, and to resolve that we will fight injustice wherever we find it.

While the experience of trying to win recognition of the Armenian genocide was a painful one, I must say that the vast majority of my work on issues of Armenia and with the Armenian community here in the United States has been a joyful experience.

I have been inspired by the ability of the Armenian community here to make a deep and lasting contribution to our Nation—to our schools and neighborhoods, in the areas of art and culture, and in the political arena. My home State of Massachusetts has one of the most vibrant and active Armenian communities in the United States and we are a better, stronger State because of that.

At the same time, Armenians in the United States have done a tremendous job of maintaining their own culture, their language and their churches, and a remarkable commitment to maintaining ties to their homeland or the homeland of their ancestors. Recent articles in the Boston Globe attest to the strength of this community in my district, the State of Massachusetts, and the Nation.

This commitment, and a capacity to respond, has of course been demonstrated in moments of crisis such as the earthquake, 30,000 people were killed in an instant. In many parts of the country there was incalculable damage to homes, to factories, and to infrastructure. Thousands of Armenians continue to live today, 7 years later, without electricity or running water in makeshift shelters that were set up in the wake of the loss of their homes.

The response of the Armenian community in the United States was phenomenal. They provided food, clothing, medicine, and funds. Just as importantly, they challenged this Nation,

and other nations around the world, to recognize the extraordinary scale of damage done by the earthquake and to provide the resources that were needed to address this humanitarian disaster. It is important to recognize that the humanitarian challenge posed by the earthquake has yet to be fully met. I was pleased to see that just in February 1994 the World Bank released a long-delayed loan designed to rebuild housing and repair other damage from the earthquake.

While the earthquake—a dramatic event—focused the attention of the international community, the blockade against Armenia, which remains in place until this day, exacts its terrible, unrelenting cost, day in and day out, over years. It has driven a proud and determined people to face the types of choices that no civilized nation should have to confront—the choice, for example, of stripping the nation of trees and burning its books in order to provide heat to prevent infants and the elderly from freezing to death.

It is absolutely crucial that the United States remain clear and focused in its efforts to secure the lifting of this blockade and the opening up of commerce, transportation, and communication throughout Transcaucasia. This means maintaining the prohibition against United States assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan until they are willing to lift the blockade. And it means continued pressure on the Government of Turkey—which receives more than \$500 million in United States economic aid and military loans—to do the same.

That is why I introduced, along with Representative CHRIS SMITH, the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act. We must maintain this pressure not out of vengeance, but as a sign of our commitment to finding a solution to open up all the borders in the region. If this type of arrangement can be put together—whereby Turkey and Azerbaijan lift their blockade against Armenia—then I think there is no question that there would be overwhelming support in the Congress, and, I think, in the Armenian community in the United States, for lifting the restriction on direct assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan as well.

I had the opportunity to see the desperate situation Armenians face first hand when I visited Armenia in February 1993. We arrived at the Yerevan airport late at night and went by van to downtown Yerevan. It was snowing so hard and there was not a light in the place, so that we could not even tell we were in the middle of a city. What we found was that there was no heat, no electricity, no running water, no telephones; and yet, the spirit of the Armenian people continued to provide a bright light.

I visited orphanages where the little babies were lying in empty, cold rooms, in soiled clothes that could not be changed because there was no place to wash or dry the clothes. I visited senior citizens stuck in hospitals who have lived through the Armenian genocide we commemorate here this evening, who lived through the earthquake, who were now forced to suffer and to die in a climate inside of a hospital room where the temperature never rises above 15 to 20 degrees.

It was one of the most devastating few days of my life, to see the kind of human suffering that takes place. But it reestablished my own personal commitment to stand strong for the people of Armenia, to stand strong with people of this great nation that has inspired freedom-loving people throughout the world.

So I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to add my voice to those of my colleagues in saying: We must never forget.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleagues in commemorating one of the most heinous atrocities committed against humanity: the Armenian genocide.

In 1915, the Armenian people of the Ottoman Empire were subjected to systematic extermination through a policy of deportation and massacre. It is estimated that a million and a half Armenians eventually perished because of the atrocities committed against them by agents of the Ottoman Turks.

This terrible event is known as the first genocide of the 20th century, and we must never forget it. Elie Wiesel, chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council and a survivor of the Holocaust, summed up the reason why. He said, "Before planning the final solution, Hitler asked, 'Who remembers the Armenians?' No one remembered them, as no one remembered the Jews."

Today, all people of conscience remembers the Armenians. Let us resolve on this day of remembrance never to forget the one and a half million people who lost their lives solely because they were Armenian. And let us resolve to speak out whenever genocide is used by tyrants as an instrument of state policy.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join in the observation of the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian genocide during the Ottoman Empire. I commend my colleagues Representatives PORTER and Pallone for calling this special order to draw Congress' attention to the tragic slaughter of the Armenian people. In addition to participating in this special order, I am proud to have joined Representatives BONIOR and BLUTE in cosponsoring House Concurrent Resolution 47, which honors the memory of the 1.5 million Armenians who perished earlier this century. I have also joined a number of my congressional colleagues in writing President Clinton urging that he, too, issue a strong statement of remembrance and recognition of the Armenian genocide as a crime against humanity.

On April 24, 1915, despots of the Ottoman Empire began a systematic campaign of terror, brutality and murder against the Armenian people. This campaign was the first genocide of the 20th century. By the end of the campaign of terror in 1923, 1.5 million Armenian men, women, and children had been massacred and more than 500,000 had been deported from their homeland of 3,000 years. These actions were a clear case of genocide. The genocide was horrific, it is well-documented and it must not be forgotten.

Today, the Armenian-American descendants of the Armenian exiles make a vibrant contribution to the life and energy of the San Francisco Bay area. I join with them in observing this anniversary of the Armenian genocide and in honoring the memory of their ancestors.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, words fall short of expressing the shock and revulsion Americans felt in the wake of the brutal terrorist bombing in Oklahoma City. Words especially ring hollow when we struggle with the vision of bloody and dying children. While we did not know these children or their families, we know in our hearts that not one ever did anything to warrant their fate.

There is a well-worn saying that "Time heals all wounds." In the wake of the tragedy in Oklahoma, we can draw some solace from it. Mercifully, the immediate pain and sadness of even a most horrible event pass over time. However, it does not mean that we are expected or should forget.

With the TV pictures fresh in our minds, and the sadness of this time fresh in our hearts, we must come to grips with the fact that this crime was the work of Americans. It was the product of hate and evil that originated in this country. Hate and evil know no boundaries.

This is an especially poignant time to recall another horrible act of hate and evil, the genocide committed against the Armenian people in Turkey 80 years ago. Just as we will never forget the terrorism committed in Oklahoma, it is important that we not forget the 1.5 million Armenian men, women, and children who were brutally murdered in the inaugural genocide of the 20th century.

Each year, Americans, and not just Armenian-Americans, come together on this occasion. We do so to do more than simply remember that the Armenians were the first victims of what sadly has become man's bloodiest century. Rather, we each hope that raising the consciousness of past atrocities helps prevent similar tragedies in the future.

With tragedy so near and so fresh in our minds, we are easily reminded that hate and evil are unfortunate aspects of the human condition. However, it is our responsibility as Americans to remain vigilant against hate, violence, and intolerance, whenever and wherever it rears its ugly head.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and join my distinguished colleagues in commemorating the tragedy of the Armenian genocide.

During and after the First World War, from 1915 to 1923, over 1.5 million Armenians were deliberately starved, murdered, and drive from their homeland by the Ottoman Turks. It was the first modern example of the gruesome policy of ethnic cleansing.

Unfortunately, it was not the last. Since 1923, genocide has frequently become the policy of choice for totalitarian governments and aggressor states. From Adolf Hitler to the Bosnian Serbs, ethnic cleansing has been used by a variety of tyrants. The victims of this horrible act have been as widely different as German Jews, Ukrainian farmers, and Rwandan Tutsis. History has repeated itself time and again.

History threatens to repeat itself today. Across the globe, minorities like the Bosnian Muslims are threatened with extinction. As members of the free world, we must not allow these murderous intentions to succeed. We must stand up and tell those who wish to murder whole nations that we will not permit them to follow this gory tradition. It is a tradition that must end now.

Mr. Speaker, the world must act now to stop any further repetitions of the Armenian genocide. We cannot allow any other ethnic minorities to be slaughtered as the Armenians were slaughtered. To permit another example of the horrible practice of ethnic cleansing would be to dishonor the memories of those who died at the hands of the Ottoman Turks.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my colleagues. Mr. PALLONE and Mr. PORTER,

for organizing this special congressional opportunity for both houses of Congress to pause to honor the memory of the one-and-a-half-million Armenians who were killed between 1915 and 1923 by agents of the Turkish Ottoman Empire in what is known in infamy, and perhaps with some controversy, as the Armenian genocide.

Some would claim that our remembrance today fans the flames of atavistic hatred and that the issue of the Ottoman government's efforts to destroy the Armenian people is a matter best left to scholars and historians. I do not agree. For whatever ambiguities may be invoked in the historic record of these events, one fact remains undeniable: the death and suffering of Armenians on a massive scale happened, and is deserving of recognition and remembrance.

This solemn occasion permits us to join in remembrance with the many Americans of Armenian ancestry, to remind this country of the tragic price paid by the Armenian community for its long pursuit of life, liberty, and freedom.

Today, I rise to recall and remember one of the most tragic events in history and through this act of remembrance, to make public and vivid the memory of the ultimate price paid by the Armenian community by this blot against human civility.

We come together each year with this act of commemoration, this year being the 80th anniversary of this genocide, to tell the stories of this atrocity so that we will not sink into ignorance of our capacity to taint human progress with acts of mass murder.

The Armenian genocide was a deliberate act to kill, or deport, all Armenians from Asia Minor, and takes its place in history with other acts of genocide such as Stalin's destruction of the Kulaks, Hitler's calculated wrath on the Jews, and Pol Pot's attempt to purge incorrect political thought from Cambodia by killing all of his people over the age of 15.

We do not have the ability to go back and correct acts of a previous time, or to right the wrongs of the past. If we had this capacity, perhaps we could have prevented the murders of millions of men, women, and children.

We can, however, do everything in our power to prevent such atrocities from occurring again. To do this, we must educate people about these horrible incidents, comfort the survivors, and keep alive the memories of those who died.

I encourage everyone to use this moment to think about the tragedy which was the Armenian genocide, to contemplate the massive loss of lives—on both sides of this conflict, and to ponder the loss of the human contributions which might have been.

Although, the massacre we depict and describe started 80 years ago, the Armenian people continue to fight for their freedom and independence. Today, in the Nagorno Karabagh, Armenian blood is being shed even while negotiations continue to attempt to find a solution to this deadly conflict.

Again, this year, I would like to close my remarks with an urgent plea that we use this moment as an occasion to re-commit ourselves to the spirit of human understanding, compassion, patience, and love. For these alone are the tools for overcoming our tragic, and uniquely human proclivity for resolving differences and conflicts by acts of violence.

This century has been characterized as one of the bloodiest in our archives of human his-

tory. Certainly, the genocide perpetuated against the Armenian peoples has been a factor in this dismal record.

The dawning of a new century offers our human race two paths. One continues along a road of destruction, distrust and despair. Those who travel this path have lost their connection to the primal directives, which permit us as a society to maintain balance, continuity and harmony.

I would ask my colleagues, on this 80th anniversary of one of histories bloodiest massacres of human beings, to contemplate the second path. The map to this path exists within the guiding teachings of all major world religions and are encapsulated in what Christians refer to as the 10 Commandments. I would ask my colleagues, no matter their religious or political persuasions and beliefs, to re-visit these core teachings which form a common bond between all peoples. To use these common beliefs as the basis for action and understanding in these common beliefs as the basis for action and understanding in these trying times. The surface differences between peoples, offer only an exciting diversity in form. At the core all peoples are united by common dreams, aspirations and beliefs, in a desire for harmony, decency, and peace with justice.

Let these testimonies of the atrocities perpetuated against the Armenian people serve as a reminder that as a human race we can, and must, do better. It takes strength and wisdom to understand that the sword of compassion is indeed mightier than the sword of steel.

Certainly, as we reflect over the conflicts of this century, we can only come to the conclusion that violence begets violence, hatred begets hatred and that only understanding, patience, compassion and love can open the door to the realization of the dreams which we all hold for our children and for their children.

Let our statements today, remembering and openly condemning the atrocity committed against the Armenians, help renew the commitment of the American people to oppose any and all instances of genocide.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleagues here today in commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. I want to thank my colleagues, Mr. PORTER and Mr. PALLONE, for their work in organizing this tribute.

This observance takes place every year on April 24. It was on that date in 1915 that more than 200 Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were arrested in constantinople and murdered. Over the next 8 years, persecution of Armenians intensified, and by 1923, more than 1.5 million had died and another 500,000 had gone into exile. At the end of 1923, all of the Armenian residents of Anatolia and western Armenia had been either killed or deported.

The genocide was criticized at the time by United States Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, who accused the Turkish authorities of "giving the death warrant to a whole race." The founder of the modern Turkish nation, Kemal Ataturk, condemned the crimes perpetrated by his predecessors. Yet this forthright and sober analysis has been spurned by Turkey and the United States during the last decade.

The intransigence of this and prior administrations to recognizing and commemorating the Armenian genocide demonstrates our continued difficulty in reconciling the lessons of history with realpolitik policies; that is, those

who fail to learn the lessons of history are condemned to repeat it. We have seen continually in this century the abject failure to learn and apply this basic principle. The Armenian genocide has been followed by the holocaust against the Jews and mass killings in Kurdistan, Rwanda, Burundi, and Bosnia. Many of these situations are ongoing, and there seems little apparent sense of urgency or moral imperative to resolve them.

Commemoration of the Armenian genocide is important not only for its acknowledgement of the suffering of the Armenian people, but also for establishing the historical truth. It also demonstrates that events in Armenia, Nazi Europe, and elsewhere should be seen not as isolated incidents but as part of a historical continuum showing that the human community still suffers from its basic inability to resolve its problems peacefully and with mutual respect.

I hope that today's remarks by Members concerned about Armenia will help to renew our commitment, and that all of the American people, to opposing any and all instances of genocide.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. While this anniversary may evoke painful memories, it would be worse if we did not remember the terrible atrocities perpetrated against the Armenian people. It began on April 24, 1915, when over 200 religious, political, and intellectual leaders of the Armenian community in Istanbul were executed by the Turkish Government. Thus began a war of ethnic genocide by the governments of the Ottoman Empire against Armenians. When it ended in 1923, over half of the world's Armenian population—an estimated 1.5 million men, women, and children—were killed.

The Armenians are an ancient and proud people. In the fourth century, they became the first nation to embrace Christianity. In 1915, Christian Russia invaded the Moslem Ottoman Empire, which was allied with Germany in World War I. Amid fighting in the Ottoman Empire's eastern Anatolian provinces, the historic heartland of the Christian Armenians, Ottoman authorities ordered the deportation of all Armenians in the region. By the end of 1923, virtually the entire Armenian population of Anatolia and western Armenia had been either killed or deported.

While it is important to remember this horrible fact of history in order to help comfort the survivors, we must also remain eternally vigilant to prevent future calamities. Only a fraction of the Armenian population escaped this calculated attempt to destroy them and their culture. Approximately 500,000 Armenian refugees fled north across the Russian border, south into Arab countries, or to Europe and the United States.

I am proud to say that a strong and vibrant Armenian-American community is flourishing in northwest Indiana. In fact, my predecessor in the House of Representatives, the late Adam Benjamin, was of Armenian heritage. There are still strong ties to the Armenian homeland among Armenian-Americans. Mrs. Vicki Hovanessian and her husband, Dr. Raffy Hovanessian, residents of Indiana's First Congressional District, helped to raise over \$750,000 for purchases of winter rescue supplies of heating fuel and foodstuffs for victims of the devastating Armenian winter of 1992-93. Last year, Dr. Heratch Doumanian and his

wife, Sonya, also residents of northwest Indiana, spearheaded the organization of a highly successful legislative conference focusing on important issues of concern to the Armenian-American community.

The Armenian genocide is a well-documented fact. The U.S. National Archives contain numerous reports detailing the process by which the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire was systematically decimated. However, there is an unsettling tendency among both individuals and governments to forget or blot out past atrocities. Less than 20 years after the Armenian genocide, Adolph Hitler embarked upon a similar extermination of European Jews. While the Jewish holocaust is certainly as terrible an event as the Armenian genocide, at least the Jews have had the catharsis of the world's recognition of what happened to their people. In search of acknowledgment of what happened to their families and ancestors between 1915 and 1923, regrettably, Armenians too often hear that their claims of genocide are lies or exaggerations.

Unfortunately, there is still a concerted effort to deny the existence of the Armenian genocide. As representatives of the American people, those of us who have the privilege to serve in Congress must lead the way in shining the bright light of truth onto those who claim that the genocide did not occur. All attempts at historical revisionism must be condemned, whether done in ignorance or simply to avoid controversy. For example, as recently as last year, a court in France strongly criticized a history professor for publishing literature denying the existence of the Armenian genocide. The French court stated that the genocide was an internationally recognized historical fact, not subject to denial.

Although it has suffered greatly, Armenia is once again a sovereign, independent country. Its people are strong and determined to succeed. I am proud to support Armenia and the many ideals which it represents. It is my sincere hope that the United States continues to strengthen its relationship with the nation and the people of Armenia.

In closing, I would like to commend my colleagues, Representatives PORTER and PALLONE, for organizing this special order to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. This remembrance will not only console the survivors and their families, but may also serve to avert future atrocities.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian holocaust. One and a half million Armenians were ruthlessly slaughtered at the hands of the Turks, a people were scattered throughout the world, a culture was defiled and churches were demolished while their stones were used to build shelter for the oppressors. We can never forget this infamous and despicable chapter in history.

As Americans, we have witnessed the eternal courage and strength of the Armenian people here in their adopted land, where they have displayed great patriotism and valor. And we have seen this strength in the Armenian Republic, where its people struggle to maintain freedom and to prosper in a dangerous world. However, these brave people cannot stand alone. Our two great countries, the United States and the Republic of Armenia, must stand as one.

As we commemorate the suffering of the Armenian people, we honor the spirit of the Ar-

menian people. This spirit has endured the unendurable. It has transformed the horror of this holocaust into a lasting commitment to honor those whose lives were lost and those who continue to fight for freedom. We must pledge that the Republic of Armenia shall never stand alone, that America will always stand with her and together, we will stand for democracy, decency, and the dignity of all people.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I join today with millions of Armenians, human rights advocates, and ordinary caring people the world over in observing the 80th anniversary of a most tragic period in history—the deaths of more than 1.5 million Armenians. Remembering this catastrophe for the Armenian people and their culture is a difficult but necessary part of being ever vigilant that such events do not recur.

Yet, sadly, awareness by the many does not always seem to stop the actions of a few. The bombing of the Federal building in Oklahoma City is the most recent example of this, showing once again that hatred of those who are seemingly threatening still provides an excuse for some to carry out massive violence against innocents. Such hateful deeds are stunning and incomprehensible whether they took place 80 years ago or last month, and the dislocation and dehumanization they represent must and will be condemned and mourned.

As I observe the Armenian suffering of the past, as a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, I also want to make a commitment to building and maintaining a strong and dynamic relationship between Armenia and the United States and to appending to a memory of occupation and persecution a future legacy of personal and sovereign freedom and security, prosperity and democracy for the Armenian people.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, today I ask you to join me in commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. On April 24, 1915, under the direction of the Turkish Ottoman Empire, a campaign of Armenian extermination began. By 1923, 1.5 million Armenians were murdered, with another 500,000 forced into Russian exile. Today we recognize the struggle of the Armenian people to live peacefully in their historic homeland.

Armenians in the United States and elsewhere should know that their history of suffering has not and will not be ignored. Like the Jewish and Cambodian holocausts, the Armenian genocide stands out as one of the world's most morally reprehensible acts. We need to address and trace the causal factors leading to the rise of totalitarian governments, and ensure that the seeds of Fascism are never again planted.

On this day, we all should take a moment to remember those Armenians who died 80 years ago. The United States and our allies should also reaffirm our resolve to ensure that no nation will ever again have the opportunity to participate in mass genocide.

Mr. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, on the night of April 23–24, 1915, the Ottoman Empire initiated one of the great human disasters of the modern age when it began the systematic arrest, deportation, and execution of Armenian political, religious, educational, and intellectual leaders. During the years that followed, more than 1.5 million Christian Armenian men, women, and children lost their lives and an-

other 500,000 were cruelly uprooted from their ancestral homes.

Today we mark the 80th anniversary of this terrible and tragic blight on humanity. It is essential that we honor the memory of those who perished in the Armenian genocide. But as we remember the victims of this vicious event, it is also essential that we renew our determination to preserve basic human rights for all people everywhere. I believe deeply that the Armenian Christians so senselessly murdered 80 years ago deserve nothing less than our utmost efforts to prevent such a tragedy from happening again.

The efforts of the Armenian Assembly of America, the Armenian National Committee, and the entire Armenian-American community have ensured that the passage of time does not erase the memory of these terrible events which started 80 years ago. In these efforts, they have performed a great service for all people and I want to take this opportunity today to recognize and to honor their very important work.

Mr. Speaker, as we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, we pause to remember its 1.5 million victims and all those who have suffered crimes against humanity. And, in doing so, we reaffirm our pledge that such crimes will not be repeated.

Mr. ZIMMER. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to join my colleagues today in remembering and honoring the 1½ million Armenians who were victims of a brutal campaign of genocide between 1915 and 1923 by the Ottoman Empire and its successor state.

This systematic campaign of murder and forced exile is one of the darkest events in this century, and as we recognize it we should also vow to do whatever we can to help prevent such atrocities again.

Today, we honor those who fell in the Armenian genocide. But we also honor the spirit of perseverance and courage that has enabled Armenians to transcend such horrible destruction by surviving not only as individuals but also as a vital people.

Eighty years after the onset of the genocide, Armenia is an independent, democratic state. It was the first among the former Soviet Republics to privatize agricultural land and livestock production, and it is working hard to build a strong economy despite tremendous obstacles, both natural and manmade. The 1988 earthquake continues to leave deep scars, and the blockade of Armenia's rail lines and roads has severely limited international trade. Turkey's refusal to allow humanitarian relief to pass through its territory to Armenia also has taken a tragic human toll.

Armenians time and again have displayed enormous courage in the face of adversity, and it is that quality that we commemorate the most here today, even as we honor those Armenians who suffered the evil of the genocide eight decades ago.

Mr. MANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide of 1915 to 1923 and pay tribute to the more than 1.5 million Armenians killed by the Turkish Ottoman Empire. I commend my colleagues, Congressman PORTER and Congressman PALLONE, for arranging this special order to observe this horrific day in world history.

On this date, 80 years ago, the Ottoman Turkish Government launched their systematic and deliberate campaign of genocide against

the Armenian people. This violent campaign resulted in the deaths of over one-third of the Armenian population living in the Ottoman Empire and the exile of approximately 500,000 Armenians from their homeland.

In 1915, the New York Times reported on the devastating suffering and victimization of the people of Armenia. A reporter noted that children under 15 were thrown into the Euphrates to be drowned; women were forced to desert infants and to leave them by the roadside to die; young women and girls were appropriated by the Turks and thrown into harems. They also reported on the murder and torture of men and the turning of women and children into the desert where thousands perished of starvation.

Unfortunately, the persecution of the Armenians did not end in 1923, but continues today. Since 1988, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict involving Armenia and Azerbaijan, has left more than 1,500 Armenians dead and hundreds of thousands of refugees in the three territories. A withering blockage of economic disruption has made everyday life a struggle for Armenians. Acquiring necessities for survival has become a great obstacle.

As a member of the Congressional Armenian Caucus, I have been working with my colleagues on the caucus on issues which effect the Armenian community. Recently, I joined my colleagues in sending a letter to President Clinton asking him to discuss with Prime Minister of Turkey, Tansu Ciller the continuing pattern of misguided and punitive policies toward the Republic of Armenia by Turkey. I also joined my colleagues in sending the President a letter asking him to join the Congressional Armenian Caucus in reaffirming the American record on the Armenian genocide and to honor the memory of the survivors.

In addition, I urge my colleagues in joining me in cosponsoring House Concurrent Resolution 47, honoring the memory of the victims of the Armenian genocide. It calls for the United States to encourage the Republic of Turkey to acknowledge and commemorate the atrocity committed against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire from 1915–1923.

It is my hope that next year when we remember the 81st anniversary of Armenian Martyrs Day we will be able to celebrate a restored peace to the Armenian people and confidently proclaim that never again will the world allow such a senseless tragedy to occur.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues tonight in commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. The 20th century has tragically been marked by campaigns of ethnic, racial, and religious genocides that have indelibly stained the annals of human history.

The unforgivable fact, Mr. Speaker, is that the world was silent in the face of the first systematic, bloody effort to eliminate an entire group of people—the Armenian people. On April 24, 1915, the Ottoman Turks unleashed the forces of hatred and death throughout their empire, wreaking havoc on unsuspecting Armenian men, women, and children. An estimated 1.5 million Armenians died at the hands of the Ottoman Turks through ruthless marches of forced starvation and endless waves of bloody massacres.

Mr. Speaker, we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide to remember the heroic spirits of these fallen victims,

and to render justice to their cause. It is difficult to grasp the concept that man is capable of such a barbarous monstrosity, of such ruthless depravity. But yet this century is littered with the victims of racial hatred and intolerance. The Armenian people, however, have the unenviable distinction of being the first community to fall victim to this heinous crime against humanity—a crime that we must never allow to be expunged from our memory.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we observe the Armenian genocide tonight so not to forget. We remember the horrific conflagration that engulfed the lives of 1.5 million innocent men, women, and children so that governments around the world will know that they will be held accountable for their actions. Let it be known that there is not enough time in eternity to wipe out the memory of the first genocide of the 20th century—the first systematic campaign to exterminate a whole race of people.

Eight decades have now come and gone since this tragic event unfolded and, yet, the Turkish Government continues to deny the undeniable and refute the unrefutable. Although it is difficult, to say the least, for any generation to recognize the atrocities committed by their parents or their parents' parents, true healing can never occur until Turkey acknowledges its role in orchestrating the Armenian genocide.

Mr. Speaker, the Armenians around the world demand no less, and the United States of America cannot ask for any less.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the memory of the more than 1.5 million innocent Armenian men, women, and children exterminated by the Ottoman Turks in 1915—and the more than 1 million Armenians who were forced into exile from their ancestral homeland of 3,000 years.

Three years later, Henry Morgenthau, United States Ambassador to Turkey, wrote in his memoir, "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story":

When the Turkish authorities gave the order for these deportations, they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race; they understood this well, and, in their conversations with me, they made no particular attempt to conceal this fact.

The survivors of this deportation made their homes in different lands. They formed the core of what became the largest Armenian community in the Diaspora. In the United States, Armenians—proud of their heritage—have dedicated themselves to the preservation of democracy. And I was proud to be in Yerevan when the Armenian people declared their independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. But the memories of the horrible nightmare of 1915 are deeply ingrained in their memories.

In this age of genocide—the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, and the genocides being perpetrated upon the innocent in other countries—the members of the Armenian community stand shoulder to shoulder with all who cherish freedom and human dignity in seeking an end to these crimes against humanity.

In commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, I am proud to join my colleagues in supporting legislation which would honor the victims and survivors of this tragedy. The United States must take a principled stand on this issue and encourage Turkey to acknowledge and commemorate this sad page in its history.

If Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, was able to condemn these massacres by his predecessors, the leaders of present-day Turkey can do no less.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. The Ottoman Empire, between 1915 and 1923, tried to advance its political interests by committing genocide against the Armenian people. The genocide of the Armenian people is widely recognized as the first genocide of the 20th century. Each year, throughout the United States and the world, Armenians and all people of good conscience pause to remember the 1.5 million victims of this crime against humanity.

While these crimes are in the past, their significance has not faded from the consciousness of Armenia. The victims of these massacres not only represent the attempts of an oppressive regime to extinguish the dignity and spirit of a people, but also of the consequences of permitting such a regime to go unchecked.

By recognizing the victims of this act of genocide, we commemorate both their sacrifices and those who have perished in the name of freedom since. In addition, recognition of this atrocity will help erase the vestiges of an era in which propaganda and deceit held precedent over truth and human dignity. The United States must take a stand and encourage other countries to do the same. We must always voice our firm opposition to the use of violence and repression as tools of government.

Mr. Speaker, with the dawn of the post-cold-war era, and the emergence and development of newly independent nations, it is more important than ever for the United States to directly convey its rich tradition of respect for fundamental human rights. It is for this reason that I rise today to remember the anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in memory of people killed in an event so horrific that at the time, there was no word to describe it. I am referring to the mass slaughter of Armenians that began on April 24, 1915. The Armenian people endured a forced deportation from their homes that turned into a death march. It is estimated that more than 1 million Armenians died during this tragic event. Today we have a word for crimes like this: genocide. And we have learned as well the result when genocide is allowed to be carried out with impunity. Adolf Hitler asked rhetorically, "Who remembers the Armenians?" He used the example of the atrocities against the Armenians to reassure his followers that no one would care if he exterminated the Jewish people.

It would be wonderful to say that, following the hardships inflicted upon them in the early part of this century, the Armenian people have been able to enjoy peace and prosperity. Unfortunately, that is far from the case. Instead, decades of Communist rule meant hunger and deprivation. The Soviet Union has collapsed, but Armenia is surrounded by hostile neighbors, and Armenians are enduring a blockade against all goods, including humanitarian assistance.

There would be no more fitting memorial to those who died in Armenia than to build a just and lasting peace for all people. To do otherwise would be to condone genocide.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a grim and shameful chapter in world history: the perpetration of a genocide against Armenian men, women, and children carried out with brutal precision during the waning days of the Ottoman Empire. On this solemn day of remembrance, I join Armenians throughout the United States, in Armenia, and around the world in commemorating the 80th anniversary of this horrific period.

In 1915, a systematic massacre of Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders began. Continuing until 1923, the cruelty and ruthlessness which marked this campaign of terror still shock us 80 years later. Between 1915 and 1923, 1.5 million Armenians lost their lives, and more than 500,000 were expelled from their homes. Innocent Armenians were rounded up and sent away to unknown destinations to be murdered. Uncovered by a researcher only a few years ago, a report from a United States consul stationed in eastern Turkey from 1914 to 1917 provides disturbing details of this coordinated effort to commit genocide against the Armenian people. This record of cold-blooded murder is harrowing.

Despite the calculated attempt to purge the Armenian people from their land and erase Armenian culture and traditions, today the Republic of Armenia is emerging as a vital and progressive nation committed to establishing democratic institutions. The Armenian Government has drafted a constitution, launched a program of industrial reform, privatized agricultural land, and made substantial progress in small-enterprise privatization. Armenia also has taken steps toward resolving the Karabakh conflict and moved to stabilize its economy based upon free-market principles.

I am pleased that our government has recognized the importance of Armenia and has been working closely with international lending institutions to help ease Armenia's transition to a market economy. Through a comprehensive assistance program, USAID has funded numerous initiatives in Armenia, including one aimed at improving the distribution of much-needed commodities such as kerosene. Armenia has cooperated with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, made the difficult fiscal decisions necessary to construct a market-based economy, and steadily progressed toward a free and open democratic system.

As we mark the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, we join with our Armenian friends in remembering those who lost their lives in the early years of this century. While we reflect upon the past and dedicate ourselves to preserving the history of this humanitarian disaster, we also look forward. We look forward to a future in which Armenia will, we hope, grow prosperous, achieve economic strength, and, above all else, enjoy peace.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the Armenian genocide, which began 80 years ago, when the Ottoman Empire launched the first of this century's campaigns against an entire people. It has become traditional for friends of Armenia to mark this awful April anniversary with them, to demonstrate our solidarity and to express the determination never again to allow such a horror to take place.

Though April 24 is the date singled out to mark the catastrophe, the actual process of genocide took place over a period of years. During that nightmarish era, which lasted from

1915 to 1923, some 1.5 million Armenians were brutalized, tortured, massacred, starved, deported, and force-marched to death.

But, the Armenian spirit survived intact this ruthless assault. Steeled by adversity, many of the survivors came to the United States, where they could nurse their physical and emotional wounds, and begin their lives anew. The community of new arrivals prospered in America, contributing to our cultural development, enhancing our diversity, and influencing our political process.

American-Armenians never forgot their origins, or the horrific circumstances of the flight and exile from their native lands. The Armenian Apostolic Church has nurtured the spiritual growth and national consciousness of its flock. Armenian-Americans resolved to mark the atrocities and exile every year, to keep the memory of their relatives alive, not to let the world forget. And, they have consistently preached the message that what happened to the Armenians must never be permitted to happen again to anyone else. With this universal message, I—and other Members of this body—have often expressed our solidarity. I do so again today, in sorrow and in pride, with a strengthened sense of dedication, as I think about independent Armenia.

In commemorating the Armenian genocide, we mourn the dead and recall the suffering and sacrifice of the victims. Yet, we also reflect upon the heroic, moving odyssey of the Armenian people in modern times. During the 20th century, the Armenians have lived through their worst moment—the genocide—and their best, most exhilarating moment as well: the restoration of an independent Armenian state, after centuries of dreaming and struggle on behalf of that cause.

The people of independent Armenia have gone through very difficult times, coping with the consequences of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, as well as a wrenching transition from Communist misrule to pluralism and a market economy. But throughout, the Armenian people have demonstrated the sturdiness of character and perseverance that have become their hallmark. Their spirit remains strong, despite the deprivations they have endured; their commitment to democracy, and to Armenian nationhood and statehood, has not faltered.

Thankfully, a ceasefire in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been in place since May 1994. We all hope the ongoing multilateral talks in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe will soon lead to a peaceful conference and a negotiated settlement. The survivors of the 1915 horror and their descendants could enjoy no better gift, all the more treasured for having been so hard-won, than peace and prosperity for a rejuvenated Armenia that will surely stun the world with its enterprise and success. Nor could the memories of the victims of 1915–1923 be better honored, a worthy goal for all of us to strive for, as we note this solemn anniversary.

Mr. KING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate one of the most tragic events of the 20th century, and indeed, of all recorded history, the Armenian genocide. This year the world marks the 80th anniversary of the century's first calculated campaign of official mass murder.

In 1915, the Ottoman Turkish Empire undertook a deliberately planned effort to exterminate the Armenian people. The Ottoman Turks were responsible for the deaths of more than

one million Armenian men, women and children. This vicious campaign of genocide was only halted by the Ottoman Empire's defeat by the Allies in 1918.

Unfortunately, the Armenian genocide has been largely forgotten by the people of the world. It has been reported that on the eve of the beginning of his "Final Solution," Adolf Hitler cynically remarked that the world would stand by and allow him to murder the European Jews, because, he asked "who today remembers the Armenians?"

Just as we remember the Holocaust, we must honor the memory of the victims of the Armenian genocide, so that future generations never forget these monumental crimes against humanity nor fail to realize the human potential for profound evil.

In the first 80 years of this century, the world witnessed the Armenian genocide, Stalin's mass murder of the Kulaks and millions of political opponents, the Holocaust, the millions of dead in Mao's cultural revolution, and Pol Pot's liquidation of more than a million Cambodians. In our own time we have witnessed the ethnic cleansing of the Bosnian Moslems and the brutal tribal mass murders in central Africa.

We must not disgrace the memories of the victims of the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide and this century's other countless victims of institutional mass murder by standing by and allowing the Bosnian Moslems to be exterminated as the killing begins anew in the former Yugoslavia. We must act to make the words, "never again," a reality. We must stop history from once again repeating itself. I can think of no better way to commemorate the victims of the Armenian genocide.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, as a long-time friend of the Armenian-American community, I am once again proud to join my colleagues in our annual special order commemorating the Armenian genocide of 1915—to take time to honor the victims and survivors of this atrocity and pay our respects to their families.

Persecution of Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire began toward the end of the 19th century and increased through the beginning of the 20th century. On April 24, 1915—the date that symbolizes for Armenians the beginning of the Armenian genocide—over 200 religious, political and intellectual leaders of the Armenian community were arrested, exiled and murdered. Armenian representation in Turkey was eliminated. In a single night, the voice of the Armenian nation in Turkey was silenced.

From that infamous date until 1923, 1.5 million Armenians died from the Ottoman Empire's attempts to eliminate the Armenian people. According to the United States Ambassador to Turkey at that time, "When the Turkish authorities gave the orders for these deportations, they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race; they understood this well and in their conversations with me, they made no particular attempt to conceal the fact."

Mr. Speaker, we must remember this deplorable example of man's inhumanity towards his fellow man, so that we can renew both our responsibility and our pledge to prevent the repetition of similar atrocities against any other people anywhere in the world. I thank my colleagues, Mr. PALLONE of New Jersey and Mr. PORTER of Illinois, for calling this special order

and focusing our attention on this horrible blight on our history.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide of 1915 to 1923.

Today, we are marking the anniversary of a terrible time for the Armenian people, a time of tragic oppression and horrific suffering. April 24, 1915, marks the date when many Armenians were uprooted and deported from Turkish Armenia, dying of starvation, disease, and massacres. An estimated one and a half million people died during the period 1915–1923, the victims of the last years of the Ottoman Empire.

In recalling those awful days, we are also commemorating the strength of the Armenian people whose fortitude of character and culture gave them the will to triumph over their tragedy. In our own country, Armenian-Americans have flourished. Their individual accomplishments have contributed greatly to the wealth of our Nation. Their achievements are a moving testimony to the truth that tyranny cannot extinguish the human spirit.

In remembering this tragedy, we are remembering as well other acts of savagery and genocide in human history. Murder and destruction have not been eliminated from this Earth. In Bosnia today evil men and women still seek to exterminate a people and eliminate their culture. We end this century as we began it: with the death of innocents on the altar of tyranny.

By marking this day the Armenian genocide, we, the American people, are renewing our commitment to oppose the persecution of any people.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in remembering the tragedy of the Armenian people and in renewing our commitment to human rights.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues today in remembrance of the tragedy that overtook the Armenian people in the years 1915–23.

Extensive massacres of Armenians took place in eastern Anatolia during the latter years of the Ottoman Empire. Those events have indelibly and permanently marked the consciousness of many Americans, including Americans of Armenian descent, who commemorate April 24, 1995, as a national day of remembrance of man's inhumanity to man and a special day of remembrance for the Armenian victims of these tragic events in the early years of this century.

April 24 this year marks the 80th anniversary of this calamity. It is appropriate on this occasion to direct our attention and prayers to the memory of the men, women, and children—most scholars believe more than 1 million—who died in these tragic events.

It is in the interest of all of us and in the interest of mankind that this type of tragedy not occur again. The leading organizations of the Armenian-American community have been seeking to work within our political system for a statement concerning these critical events in their heritage. I feel we should work with them in a constructive fashion and this is why it is important for us to recognize this day of remembrance. No one can deny these events and the centrality of these events in modern Armenian history. I am proud to be associated today with my colleagues in this important day of remembrance.

The Republic of Armenia, a country of 3.3 million people, is developing important ties with the United States. Americans have an interest in the economic development of Armenia, its progress toward a free-market economy, and its development of democratic institutions. We want to work for the earliest possible end to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. We want to work with Armenia and its neighbors to promote peace, stability, and economic progress in the Caucasus region. As a small step in this direction, I welcome Turkey's decision to restore an air corridor to Armenia for humanitarian relief. I hope that the Government of Turkey will take additional steps to reopen a land corridor to Armenia. There is no better way to honor the misdeeds of the past than to rededicate ourselves to a better future, for Armenia and all the people and states of the region.

We should also use this occasion to rededicate ourselves to the cause of human rights. I commend those governments, private organizations, and individuals, including Armenians and the Armenian-American community, who are working toward this end. I hope that their efforts will make the world a safer place, where innocent people no longer suffer the unspeakable crimes of war and terror.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the special order just given.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. SAXTON (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today on account of preparation for Base Realignment and Closure Commission hearing.

Mr. ROGERS (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, on account of illness in the family.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, on account of illness in the family.

Mr. MENENDEZ (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of official business.

Mr. BAESLER (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of a death in the family.

Mr. MORAN (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today after 2:30 p.m. and tomorrow, on account of illness in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. JACKSON-LEE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOYER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MFUME, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WYNN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. DELAURO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. SCHROEDER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MINETA, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HAMILTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GIBBONS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, for 5 minutes today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. WAMP) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes today.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mr. MILLER of California.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts.

Mr. BERMAN in three instances.

Mr. HAMILTON in three instances.

Mr. OBERSTAR.

Mr. MOAKLEY.

Ms. DELAURO.

Mrs. MALONEY in three instances.

Mrs. LOWEY.

Mr. LEVIN.

Mr. FAZIO of California.

Mr. TOWNS in eight instances.

Mr. MENENDEZ in four instances.

Mr. BELENSON.

Mr. GEJENSON.

Mr. COLEMAN.

Mr. LANTOS.

Mr. GEPHARDT.

Mr. NADLER in two instances.

Mr. COSTELLO.

Ms. KAPTUR.

Mr. GONZALEZ.

Mr. BONIOR in two instances.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. WAMP) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mr. RADANOVICH.

Mr. LARGENT.

Mr. CLINGER.

Mrs. MORELLA.

Mr. DAVIS.

Mr. BAKER of California in three instances.

Mr. FORBES.

Mr. BUNNING.

Mr. WOLF.

Mr. SOLOMON in two instances.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana.

Mr. ZELIFF.

Mr. BOEHLERT.

Mr. COBLE.

Mr. SPENCE.

Mr. MARTINI.

Mr. ZIMMER.