

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 6, 2019

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

As we commemorate the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the first genocide of the twentieth century, we can take great pride in knowing America's military and the American people played a vitally important role in helping to save thousands of survivors of a centuries-old Christian people.

Major General James G. Harbord, who served as General John J. Pershing's Chief of Staff during World War I, at the direction of President Woodrow Wilson, led an American Military Mission to Armenia in 1919. General Harbord, who was accompanied by Brigadier Generals Frank R. McCoy and George Van Horn Moseley, completed his report while on board the USS Martha Washington. The report read in part: "[M]utilation, violation, torture and death have left their haunting memories in a hundred beautiful Armenian valleys, and the traveler in that region is seldom free from the evidence of this most colossal crime of all the ages."

The plight of the Armenian people captured the attention of the American public with President Woodrow Wilson stating that "the sympathy for Armenia among our people has sprung from untainted consciences, pure Christian faith, and an earnest desire to see Christian people everywhere succored in their time of suffering, and lifted from their abject subjection and distress and enabled to stand upon their feet and take their place among the free nations of the world." In fact, dozens of local committees for relief were formed across the United States and by the end of 1916, \$20 million had been raised, including from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Guggenheim Fund. Donors held fundraising rallies in New York City's Amsterdam Opera House, the Philadelphia Stadium in Pennsylvania, Detroit Michigan's Billy Sunday Tabernacle and contributed the entire proceeds of the 1916 Harvard-Yale football game as an expression of solidarity in the face of what U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire described as a "campaign of race extermination."

President Theodore Roosevelt stated that the atrocities committed by the "Turks on the Armenians" was "so hideous that it is difficult to name them...people whose little children are murdered and their women raped." In a letter to Cleveland Dodge, who led the congressionally chartered Near East Relief organization headquartered in New York City, President Roosevelt stated further that it "was the greatest crime of the war, and failure to act against Turkey is to condone it..." And as you stated in your April 24, 2018 statement, "the Meds Yeghern [is] one of the worst mass atrocities of the 20th century, when one and a half million Armenians were deported, massacred, or marched to their deaths in the final years of the Ottoman Empire."

We want to express our disappointment that your statement did not directly acknowledge the Armenian Genocide as President Ronald Reagan did during his presidency. However, there is no wrong day to recognize the Armenian Genocide. We hope you will consider future opportunities to pay fitting tribute to the memory of those targeted for their faith, those who perished and those who survived, as well as to the brave men and women in our military, who continue to proudly serve our country and defend our most cherished ideals and freedoms.

Sincerely,



JACKIE SPEIER

Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chair



GUS M. BILIRAKIS

Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chair



FRANK PALLONE, JR.

Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chair



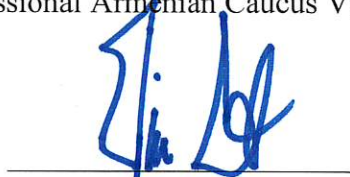
PETER T. KING

Congressional Armenian Caucus Vice Chair



ADAM B. SCHIFF

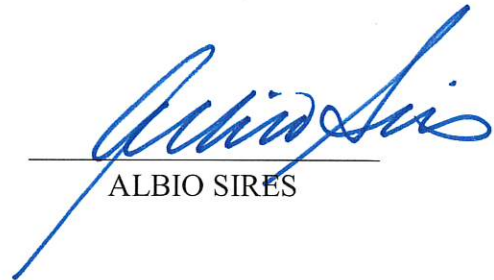
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