

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 148

Commemorating the 75th anniversary of the burning of Smyrna and honoring the memory of its civilian victims, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 9, 1997

Mrs. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. BILIRAKIS) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 75th anniversary of the burning of Smyrna and honoring the memory of its civilian victims, and for other purposes.

Whereas in 1914 the Turkish Nationalist regime initiated a systematic campaign to eradicate the ethnic Greek population in Asia Minor, consigning and killing thousands of male conscripts in forced labor battalions and destroying Greek towns and villages and slaughtering additional hundreds of thousands of civilians in areas where Greeks composed a majority, as on the Black Sea coast, Pontus, and areas around Smyrna;

Whereas in 1922, Smyrna, the largest city in Asia Minor, a cosmopolitan hub populated by a highly educated Greek community and flourishing commercial and middle class-

es, was sacked and burned and its inhabitants massacred by the Turkish forces of Kemal Attaturk;

Whereas Turkish forces turned on the Greek population, whose numbers had swelled to 400,000 with the influx of refugees from Greek villages destroyed in the countryside, after first slaughtering the Armenians of Smyrna in their quarters;

Whereas on September 9, 1922, Turkish soldiers, led by their officers, set fire to Smyrna and razed most of the city under the gaze of United States, British, and French ships and foreign diplomats and journalists stationed offshore;

Whereas Metropolitan Chrysostomos, the spiritual leader of the Orthodox Christians in Smyrna who refused to abandon the city, was seized from religious services he was conducting in the cathedral by Turkish police forces and given over to be dismembered by a mob in the streets;

Whereas 3 other Orthodox metropolitans were brutally tortured to death in 1921 and 1922, as were 37 Armenian clerics and thousands of priests in the broader period from 1894 to 1923;

Whereas in 1923 more than 1,200,000 Greeks were expelled from Turkey; and

Whereas persecutions of Greeks in Turkey were repeated in a pogrom in Istanbul in 1955 whereby Orthodox churches and Greek businesses were burned and vandalized, again in 1964 with the expulsions of Greeks, and continues today with restrictions on press and religious freedoms and harassment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) the Congress joins the Hellenic and the Ar-
4 menian American communities in honoring the mem-
5 ory of the victims of Smyrna in 1922 and the mil-
6 lions of Orthodox Christians who perished in the
7 genocidal campaign in Asia Minor from 1894 to
8 1923;

9 (2) the United States should encourage the Re-
10 public of Turkey to take all appropriate steps to ac-
11 knowledge these crimes against humanity and com-
12 memorate the victims at Smyrna; and

13 (3) the American people should never forget
14 these events, and an accurate history thereof should
15 be restored and preserved so that such atrocities
16 may never be repeated.

○