

More than Ninety Years

By Diana Der-Hovanesian

**By now we should have finished grieving.
By now we should have found some peace.
By now there should have been atonement and the pain slightly eased.
By now witnesses are almost gone.
And the lies about our bones believed.
By now they thought we would be forgotten.
and our blood dried to dust and blown.
By now they thought the smoke and fire
would be either greened or stone.
By now they thought our stolen children would have all turned into Turks.
By now they thought the aid money
sent back to America would do its work
in changing truth to lies:
that we were never here alive.
By now they thought the last survivors
and their children would be in graves.
They didn't count on our children's children even angrier, and more outraged.**

Ms. Der-Hovanesian is the author of twenty-three books of poetry and translations and president of the renowned New England Poetry Club. Twice a Fulbright professor of American poetry, she has received numerous awards for her work from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Poetry Society of America, and PEN-Columbia Translation Center, among others.

Reprinted with the author's approval. www.dianaderhovanesian.com

A Man with the Courage of his Conviction

Featured **RMHA** Candidate Retired Marine Col. John Flerlage
District 6 Democrat Challenger

John has taken the extra step on the Armenian Genocide. He has incorporated his co-sponsorship position statement into his campaign platform.

Last month, John released his **April newsletter** memorializing the Armenian Genocide while announcing the Capital commemoration ceremony.

John has posted his 2010 pledge on his WEB site signifying his fidelity to his word of honor. We believe John exemplifies a Colorado candidate with character. You may view his pledge at www.flerlageforcongress.com

John submitted his Armenian Genocide co-sponsorship pledge to **RMHA** on February 1st citing his own military

experience in Bosnia as a reality genocide lesson. **RMHA** released a special edition e-newsletter (Issue 21) announcing John's pledge.

On April 29th John added that; *“As President Carter said over thirty years ago, we have reaffirmed America's commitment to human rights as a fundamental tenet of our foreign policy.... Our policy is based on an historical vision of America's role. Our policy is derived from a larger view of global change. Our policy is rooted in our moral values, which never change.”*

This reaffirmation does not end and requires us to acknowledge the injustices of the past, to include the injustice of genocide, wherever it takes place.

This is why I have agreed, when elected, to co-sponsor a 112th Congressional Armenian Genocide resolution.”

Armenian Colorado Activists Get Ink

- On March 4th, the **Greenwood Villager** printed an OP ED by Vi Bashian Cooper in its **“Our Readers Speak”** column. Vi spoke directly to the unfulfilled 2008 Armenian Genocide pledge statement of Congressman Mike Coffman, **District 6** Republican. Representative Coffman is not a co-sponsor of H.Res.252. Vi credited his Democrat challenger, John Flerlage, with having provided **RMHA** with his 2010 co-sponsorship pledge statement.
- On April 8th, **University of Colorado Boulder** hosted a panel discussion entitled: **‘Genocide by Any Other Name.’** It was part of the highly acclaimed 62nd annual **Conference on World Affairs** which attracts international participants. Hasmik Nikoghosyan attended and reported the Armenian genocide was cited in the panel's general discussion. Following her question to the panelists, further discussion ensued.
- On April 15th, the **Intermountain Jewish News** editorial by Rabbi Goldberg titled; **“When the last Holocaust survivor is gone”**.....laments the loss of Holocaust and Armenian Genocide survivors and their living testimony to the truth.
- On April 23rd Heather and Stephan Isberian assembled twenty Colorado Armenian families in sponsoring a full page **Aspen Times and Aspen Daily News** Armenian Genocide commemoration proclamation. The ANCA designed public notice is titled: **‘End Turkey's Gag Rule’** and calls for the adoption of H.Res.252. The Aspen Times serves **District 3**, represented by Armenian Genocide co-sponsor John Salazar (D).
- On April 24th, the **Aspen Daily Newly** printed its half page length interview with Stephan Isberian as he recounted and memorialized his genocide-lost family members and the recount of so many other lost loved-ones. Stephan cogently added that **“There's absolutely no family [sic Armenian] in the diaspora anywhere all over the world that was not directly affected by the genocide.”**
- A ‘Letter to the Editor’ from Anahid Katchian Logue was printed in the **Longmont Times** on April 23rd followed by a second printing on April 24th in the **Boulder Camera**. Anahid's letter honored her father's survival story and his wish that the Armenian Genocide be acknowledged. Anahid resides in Congressional **District 4**, represented by Betsy Markey (D). During a very heated 2008 campaign, Congresswoman Markey pledged to support an Armenian genocide resolution. Her predecessor,

Marilyn Musgrave (R) was a two-term Armenian genocide resolution co-sponsor. Tom Lucero and Cory Gardner are her 2010 Republican challengers. Both have provided their genocide resolution co-sponsorship pledge statements. Last week they embellished on their pledge statements.

On April 29th Tom Lucero wrote; "In February, I submitted my campaign pledge to co-sponsor an Armenian Genocide resolution in the 112th Congress. It will be a privilege to represent Colorado's Armenian community and fulfill my pledge to officially affirm their tragic historical record."

On April 30th Cory Gardner offered; "As a state legislator, I have sponsored legislation honoring the Armenian people. As a U.S. Congressman, I will continue to fight tirelessly against genocide."

- On April 24th, 80 Colorado Armenians assembled at the **AOC commemoration**, despite severe inclement weather, to honor our genocide ancestors at the State Capitol Armenian Genocide Memorial Plaque. Armenians of all persuasions unite around the Armenian genocide.
- May 2nd, **The Takacs Quartet**, an internationally renowned string group, honored Armenia's ancient instrument the Duduk in a piece entitled 'A Cool Wind.' The Takacs commissioned John Psathas of New Zealand to write the score. Takacs First violinist Edward Dusingberre described the instrument as 'mournful' and 'soulful.' As the only remaining Armenian instrument it is a symbol and expression of our national identity. Psathas notes that the piece was inspired by the world-renowned artistry of Djivan Gasparyan and offers his piece as a "plea for a balm, a cool wind, to ease anguish and torment" – a fitting testament to the 95th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. The contemporary piece is part of the Takacs' repertoire.

Summary Review of Remaining Congressional Districts

As most of our readership knows Congressional Districts 1, 2, and 3 – seats held by Democrats – are Colorado H. Res. 252 co-sponsors since its introduction in April 2009. They are Representatives Diana DeGette, Jared Polis, and John Salazar.

District 5 is represented by Congressman Doug Lamborn (R). In 2008 he pledged to support an Armenian Genocide resolution. He is not a co-sponsor of H.Res. 252 and is seeking re-election unchallenged.

District 7 is represented by Congressman Ed Perlmutter (D). Mr. Perlmutter, following a nine year record of co-sponsoring Armenian genocide resolutions in the General Assembly and the House and despite his 2008 pledge to support the Armenian Genocide resolution, withdrew his support last year. He has accepted, at last tally, \$28,000.00 in campaign contributions from American military contractors who have been identified by the Associated Press and Reuters as lobbying against the adoption of H.Res. 252. Committee membership is generally the motivator for campaign contributions from this sector but the Congressman is not a Member of the House Armed Services Committee or any other committee associated with defense or the care of our country's Veterans. The Congressman's Republican challenger Ryan Frazier provided **RMHA** with his AG co-sponsorship pledge statement. He recently reaffirmed that pledge statement.

On April 29th Ryan Frazier wrote; "Congress should support a resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide. I believe that a resolution is important as a means to learn from the past. If evil is not recognized and confronted, atrocities like this one could happen again."

Senate Race: Senator Michael Bennet (D) is a co-sponsor of S.Res. 316. **RMHA** has secured individual pledge

letters from the Senator and his primary challenger, Andrew Romanoff. Republican primary candidates Jane Norton, Tom Wiens, and Ken Buck have pledged to *RMHA* that they will co-sponsor an Armenian Genocide Resolution. This highly significant response rate corroborates Colorado's statewide support for an Armenian Genocide resolution. In the last Congress, Senior Senator Allard (R) and Senator Salazar (D) were both Armenian Genocide co-sponsors.

Senator Udall's Armenian Genocide Commemoration Statement

On April 23 Senior Senator Mark Udall released a statement reaffirming the Armenian Genocide framing our genocide as causing "somewhere north of one million Armenians" to perish.

Senator Udall selected the blogosphere of the Denver Westword to issue his 95th Armenian Genocide statement. The Westword is a daily paper associated with entertainment and restaurant reviews. This odd pathway secured him a premier internet posting allowing the Senator to set the stage for his orchestrated message, while avoiding questions from the mainstream press on his absence from S.Res. 316.

Senator Udall's final memorial paragraph states:

"After the events of 1915, we said 'never again.' We haven't kept faith with those words in the years since – but we must keep faith with them now. I thank all of those around the world, who continue to keep alive the memory of the atrocities of 95 years ago and who remind us all that by working together, we can make a difference in the world today."

Those appear to be the fighting words of a true loyalist Senator who during his multiple House terms faithfully co-sponsored an Armenian Genocide resolution;
They are the words of Candidate Udall who pledged during his 2008 Senate campaign to sustain his congressional record of support;
They are also the words of our Senior Senator, who in October 2009 refrained from co-sponsoring the Armenian Genocide resolution and honoring his campaign pledge when S.Res. 316 was posted; and,
They are the words of a public servant who has disengaged with Colorado Armenian families and the overwhelming 'sense of Colorado' as our Governor, Denver Mayor, and General Assembly have embraced our cause.

These beguiling words of Senator Mark Udall mask his declared February position to NOT co-sponsor and NOT vote for an Armenian genocide resolution. It appears Senator Udall has forgotten that it was his decisive and longstanding support for an Armenian Genocide resolution that secured our community's state and national allegiance – just barely one year ago - that helped elect him.

We would urge each of you NOT FORGET his unacceptable change of heart and his broken campaign pledge.

RMHA will continue to press Senator Udall to reconsider his current position.

Vi Bashian Cooper and Pamela Barsam Brown

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