

April 19, 1990

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

PROCLAMATION

ARMENIAN MARTYRS' DAY

APRIL 24, 1990

"I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this. The great massacres and persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared with the sufferings of the Armenian race in 1915." These were the words of Henry Morgenthau, American Ambassador at Constantinople from 1913-1916, in referring to the systematic annihilation of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire in the first quarter of this century.

Seventy-five years ago, on the night of April 23-24, 1915, Armenian political, religious, education and intellectual leaders in Constantinople were arrested, deported in to Anatolia, and put to death. Mass deportations followed. Ambassador Morgenthau states that these deportations were tantamount to a "death warrant to a whole race."

Armenians were driven out, not only from the war zones, but across the Empire and sent to the deserts of Syria and Mesopotamia.

Armenians serving in the Ottoman armies, already segregated into unarmed labor battalions, were systematically executed. The Armenian women and children were then driven for months over treacherous terrain.

All told, more than half of the Armenian population of the Empire perished in this, the first genocide of the 20th century, while the rest were forcibly driven from their ancestral homeland.

On this 75th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, we all join with the Armenian people in mourning this crime against humanity. We must never let our children and grandchildren forget such a great human tragedy and must educate them to ensure that future genocides will never against befall any people anywhere.

Therefore, I Robert P. Casey, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim April 24, 1990, as ARMENIAN MARTYRS' DAY in Pennsylvania. I urge all Pennsylvanians to reflect upon the tragedies which nations and governments have wrought upon each other, and to be united in a new resolve to ensure that our future will be peaceful and harmonious.

GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, this nineteenth day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and ninety, and of the Commonwealth the two hundred and fourteenth.

(SIGNED)
Robert P. Casey
Governor