COMMEMORATING THE GENOCIDE IN CANADA (VIDEO-CLIP)

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Category: Opinions

Interview with Robert Fisk

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Armenian Canadians rally in Ottawa to remember the killings
CBC News, 24 April 2010

Hundreds of Armenian Canadians rallied in Ottawa Saturday for Turkey to recognize the killing of 1.5 million Armenians nearly a century ago as a genocide.
The mass killings by Ottoman Turks began in 1915 and continued for a decade.

"We are not able to forget that, so we're going to repeat that each year," said Robert Kouyoumdjian, executive director of the Armenian National Committee of Canada, about the rally. Beginning at noon on Parliament Hill, the rally lead into a march to the Turkish Embassy.

Similar events will be held annually until Turkey stops claiming that the deaths took place during a civil conflict, Kouyoumdjian said.

"We didn't fight any war against Turkey. We were part of Turkey," said Kouyoumdjian, whose grandfather fought in the Turkish army. He added that Turkey had created its own version of history — "To make forget the truth and anything else."

Turkey has long said the estimated death toll of 1.5 million people around the time of the First World War is an inflated figure. It also maintains that those killed were victims of civil war and unrest, not genocide.

Nevertheless, Canada's House of Commons voted in 2004 to recognize the killings as genocide. The U.S. foreign affairs committee endorsed a similar resolution this past March, even though the Obama administration had urged Congress not to offend Turkey by approving it.

Robert Kouyoumdjian, executive director of the Armenian National Committee of Canada, said similar events to Saturday's rally will be held annually until Turkey recognizes the killings as a genocide.Robert Kouyoumdjian, executive director of the Armenian National Committee of Canada, said similar events to Saturday's rally will be held annually until Turkey recognizes the killings as a genocide. (CBC)Ottawa police had expected about 1,000 people to turn out for Saturday's rally. Speakers included Ottawa-Orleans MP Royal Galipeau and Scarborough-Agincourt MP Jim Karygiannis, who brought forward the 2004 private member's bill leading to Canada's recognition of the genocide.

The crowd sang and chanted while waving the red, blue and orange Armenian flag.

Demonstrators placed flowers around the Eternal Flame before marching to the Turkish Embassy.

Some of the demonstrators said Armenians today are still strongly affected by the deaths and by Turkey's refusal to recognize them as a genocide.

"We need to fight," said Cécile Kozadjian, who described herself as a member of the fourth Armenian generation after the war.

"We need to say that it really did happen and they shouldn't be in denial 'cause it's the truth." "We need to remember," agreed Raffi Sarkissian. "That's the only way we can end the cycle of genocide and prevent future cases of genocide anywhere else."

Ottawa Rally

Montréal City Council Commemorates the Genocide of Armenians (video)

Armenian Genocide Commemoration in Toronto

The main Toronto commemoration of the 95th anniversary of the Genocide of Armenians took place Sunday evening, April 25, at the Armenian Youth Centre theatre in North York. The standing-room only gathering featured Hon. Michael Ignatieff, federal leader of the Official Opposition; Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration; MPPs from the Ontario Legislature; represenatives of Metro Toronto, Markham. and other Greater Toronto Area politicians.
Eloquently and in unison the speakers demanded that Turkey recognize the 1915 Genocide of Armenians. However, the star of the evening was keynote speaker Robert Fisk, the Middle East correspondent of The Independent of London. Mr. Fisk's speech was bracketed by standing ovation. He advised Armenians to put greater focus on gathering photographic documentation of the Genocide. Armenians should also honour righteous Turks who disobeyed the genocide order and saved Armenians at the risk of their own lives, he said. The award-winning journalist, who had flown from Beirut to address the commemorations, said that many leading Turks know that Ottoman Turkey committed genocide against its Armenian citizens.

The guest speaker was Ken Hachikian, chairman of the Armenian National Committee of America.

Toronto Rally

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