

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 166

BY SENATOR MURRAY

A RESOLUTION

To express sympathy in support of the families of victims of massacres and atrocities perpetrated against the Armenian people in Azerbaijan.

WHEREAS, the Armenian populated area of Nagorno-Karabakh is located between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan; and

WHEREAS, in 1920 the Soviet Union forcibly established control over the areas of Armenia and Azerbaijan; and

WHEREAS, the Soviet Union created the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast within Azerbaijan in 1923 and this region became a source of dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh peacefully demonstrated against Azerbaijan for the right of self-determination and individual freedom from repression and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, in February 1988, in the seaside town of Sumgait in Soviet Azerbaijan a pogrom targeted the Armenian population when mobs composed of largely ethnic Azerbaijanis formed groups which attacked and killed hundreds of Armenians on the streets, in their apartments in a situation that was allowed to continue by Soviet and Azerbaijan officials for three days before government forces imposed a state of martial law and curfew bringing the crisis to an end; and

WHEREAS, the crimes committed against Armenians in Sumgait remain unpunished thereby opening the door for similar atrocities against the Armenian people starting in the capital Baku and spreading to other areas of Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan seeks to avoid responsibility for the violence and atrocities by falsifying historical events and by portraying the involvement of Soviet troops to Baku to restore order on the seventh day of the Armenian atrocities as a crackdown on the alleged independence movement in Azerbaijan; and

WHEREAS, it is well known that there was no large scale movement for independence in Azerbaijan due to the fact in a March 1991, referendum that more than 94% of the Azerbaijan constituencies favored preserving the Soviet Union; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan continues to distort events of other atrocities, including the events in the village of Khojaly in which Azerbaijan troops fired on their own population and the deportation of Armenian villages in Nagorno-Karabakh.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sympathy in support of the families of victims of massacres and atrocities perpetrated against the Armenian people in Azerbaijan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate requests that the President of the United States and the Congress exert all available influence on the government of Azerbaijan to cease the falsification of the historical facts and bring to justice those in Azerbaijan who are responsible for the Armenian massacres in Sumgait, Baku, Kirovabad, Maragha, Nagorno-Karabakh, and of the citizens of Khojaly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the President of the United States of America, the secretary of the United States Senate, the clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE