April 24, 1990

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

By His Excellency WILLIAM A. O'NEILL, Governor:

an Official Statement

We who cherish our freedom can never take it for granted. We who respect justice can never be totally secure in it. When freedom is challenged and our influence to meet those challenges and help protect individual life and liberty.

Certainly, no other human rights violation deserves greater protest and attention and demands firmer condemnation by freedom-loving people than genocide.

For the Armenian people, the horror and inhumanity of this devastating crime began in 1915 when young men of Armenian origin were drafted into the Turkish army, soon to be disarmed, transferred to labor battalions and then massacred.

On April 24, 1915, Turkish authorities arrested the most prominent intellectuals and leaders of Constantinople. They were exiled to the interior of Anatolia, either perishing on the way or meeting their fate on arrival.

Eventually, orders were issued by Talaat Pasha for the deportation of all Armenians -- men, women and children -- who were still in the country. Often they were massacred on the spot, and many more driven into the Syrian and Mesopotamian deserts where they fell prey to marauding guards.

These grave facts did not become public knowledge until after World War I. Later, during World War II, similar barbarous crimes became known as genocide, a crime outlawed by the 1948 United Nations Convention on Prevention and Punishment of Genocide.

Survivors of the Armenian massacre and their descendants have settled throughout the world, many of them in the United States. Each year, with solemn religious and patriotic ceremony, Armenians in the international community honor those who did in 1915 and remind all people that genocide on any scale is a crime against all humanity.

Therefore, to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923, I am proud to designate April 24, 1990 as Armenia Cause Day in the State of Connecticut.

(SIGNED)
William A. O'Neill
Governor