

**Speech by Nikos Lygeros in the main event organized  
in Athens by the Pan-Pontiac Federation of Greece  
"Genocide of the Greeks of Pontus"  
"19th May, national commemoration day"  
Unknown Soldier's Monument  
May 19th, 2012**

I didn't come here to suggest you a lamentation. I think that it's enough with the crying on this issue for all of us. It's good to recall it, but it's also good to forward it. I was glad to hear mentions to the countries, which have recognized the genocide of the Pontiacs, as Greece, of course, has done so, in 1994; because, that was good, too. Hopefully, there was Michalis Charalambidis, a respected and honorable friend. It's good to remember that this wasn't easy and that's the reason why the recognition of the genocide of the Armenians followed. After this, you all very well remember that it was in 2006 when the European Union recognized the genocide of the Pontiacs, the Armenians and Assyrians as a single crime against humanity. Recently, two years ago, we also had the recognition by Sweden.

What matters, is that it's good to gather here. However, this isn't enough, because things should change and we should enter a strategy. I don't think that it's due to demand from all the other peoples to recognize our genocide, while we don't recognize theirs. We have to start and show the example from here. You all know too well that the genocide of the Pontiacs didn't take place separately. There were Armenians and Assyrians, as well. We have recognized the first two parts. It would be good to pass on to the third one; and for which reason? It's too simple. When you are before courts and you lack the third part, don't be surprised, if you are told that it was useless that you had come. So, what matters, is that we all realize that the genocide of the Pontiacs is part of a trinity of genocides and not of a triple genocide, which should operate united.

It's in this way that we achieved results in Australia, too. That wasn't mentioned, but you should know it. We will soon have recognition by whole Australia. What matters, is that the victims should be united. You know, the problem is that criminals unite themselves and one learns from the other. We tend to fool each other, because we think that we didn't afford the pressure. So, it's high time we saw that even sheep, when united, are strong.

What matters, is that we don't enter a process which needs to transform genocide in a war crime. I notice that you many times mention – and, in general, we mention - the guerillas. We have to be very careful. This is something that Turkey is using, to transform the genocide in a warfare phase.

Genocide, as condemned by the UN Charter as early as 1948, thanks to Raphael Lemkin, who invented this word, is a process taking place in peace time. We shouldn't say any longer that our own were massacred - I heard it just before. Every time we have to use the same verb: they were genocided. Moreover, you should all be aware that it's not just us

that we are here. We are the others that they didn't manage to genocide. Consequently, when we are here, we are not alone. We are with our diseased. And if some from time to time ban gatherings, as regards the commemoration day, they have to know that even if none alive will attend, the dead will be here; because the genocide of the Pontiacs will not cease existing, not until there is a general recognition.

Furthermore, I would like to tell you that the recognition, either we want it or not, it's only the first phase. We, at last, have to move on to the penalization issue as regards this crime. For, even now you see that we even allow initiatives banning our gatherings and let others not keep a minute of silence; while this regards the genocide and we consider ourselves being in a democratic framework. This is not democracy. Democracy is clear. It is to the interest of all. Democracy isn't about allowing one transforming the whole Pontiac cause into a joke and only into that. We have to halt this process. Otherwise, we encounter difficulties, when we are at international level.

So, we slowly have to decide - for, we have these capabilities and possibilities, too- to recognize on our part as well the genocides committed against other peoples, so that they see that it's us to make the first step. And we may manage this, as we have exactly done so with the genocide of the Armenian. Moreover, when this happens, then the victims are united and they realize that: it's one very simple thing; Hitler, Kemal and Stalin were exactly the same thing. They have one and only one capacity; to be genociders. All the rest is just details.

What matters to humanity, is to name the genociders, to condemn them so that they get punished. We can't allow even to a neighboring country to be founded on a man who for us, the only thing that he is, is a genocider. It's not only about the issue of the recognition of that time. We have to think that what happened, must not take place again. But, that's not enough; because, this still happens. Even now; you see that Turkey continues not recognizing. And not only isn't she recognizing, but she's also, in fact, accusing the Pontiacs and Armenians of being the ones who have committed the genocide

So, we have to function in a more strategic way, to stop crying which only serves an internal defusing and become able to take action, to be able not only to symbolically demand something - because sometimes, you know, when we in the strategy field hear about this demands, we don't demand it from our own selves. On a commemoration day, what does matter, is to look at what we have done the previous year. If it is to be, that we come again here next year, and I deliver the same speech, there is no need for us to meet here today. What matters, is that next year we will have another recognition one additional conquest; to change this every year, so that we remember when this speech was delivered.

Personally, I am so much tired of constantly hearing the same speeches on genocides, because some think that they simply have to read a text. What matters, is the work we produce to make facts change. When we hear that we constantly anticipate the perpetrator to make the first step, this is a wrong move.

Furthermore, I would like you all to feel that it's very important that we are here, because this is a strategic move. It's important that we are next to our soldiers; that we are next to Leonidas, the Unknown Soldier, because this is a symbol. This will necessarily play a role, and not that we are simply in a parking. We must all as Pontiacs, as well, stop erecting monuments at places where none goes. Monuments must be placed at central spots, at strategic spots. For, the best move is not the good one. It's the one that disturbs the enemy. As long as we don't disturb the perpetrator, this means that, we only diffuse ourselves.

What matters, is the work we produce and does disturb. You all have to be disturbing. And you know that very often the Greeks are accused of being disturbing. Yes! This is something we are and we will continue being this! Simply, we will additionally gain strategy; because even disturbance must be done in a professional way and not from time to time. What matters, is: Don't you all feel depressed! Our people has gone through genocides. It has gone through World Wars. When you feel down now, you must realize that - for all of us dealing with issues like genocides - this elevates you. It's a way for us all to become more humane and not just be individuals in a society which only forgets and is indifferent.

Here; the fact that you are here is important. Your presence is already significant. Simply, I would just like that you contribute to this work for recognition and that we, at last, move on to the stage of penalization; because, you know, it exists in other countries, such as Slovakia and Switzerland, which allow them additionally now to be able to have their manifestations, events, commemorations day, without encountering the problems which have even now in some countries, such as France. There, the issue of penalization has not passed yet. For, as long as you let the other one swearing you, you don't have the right to exist.

It's not enough to cry to exist and remember the others. Here, we have to imagine that our diseased are next to us! Now! Here! With us! And they see, that we remember them and they can say to you "long live". But, if you all are so down and drowned in a daily life, how can we show them that we really deserve the sacrifices they made? We even deserve a genocide, because in the end of the day, it's only few those peoples that have undergone genocide. And the others don't realize how important this is. Here- I repeat- if we don't clearly accuse Kemal by saying that he's exactly the same as Hitler, and that Hitler was, simply, the one who followed Kemal's strategy, then we say nothing.

At the same moment when we are laying wreaths here, we can't accept anything concerning this symbolism. Even if it's due as regards the political aspect; even if it's due as regards the protocol, we don't care about the protocol! What matters are the victims; the genocide. There's no protocol able to trespass genocide and the cause of our struggle. For, the Greeks are not Creon's children. They are Antigone's children. And even if somebody forbids us to be here, we will be here again! Take care. Thank you very much.