



YVAN BAKER, MPP

Etobicoke Centre

NEWS RELEASE

Yvan Baker, MPP for Etobicoke Centre Files Motion to Recognize Katyn Massacre as Genocide

NEWS

April 12, 2018

(TORONTO) – MPP Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre) today filed a Private Member's Motion calling on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to condemn the Katyn Massacre as an act of genocide carried out against the Polish nation.

"The Katyn Massacre to this day remains a deep historical wound for Poles and for Polish communities around the world, including here in Ontario," said MPP Baker. "Over the course of April and May 1940, over 20,000 of Poland's best and brightest were brutally murdered in an act of genocide by the NKVD, the Soviet secret police, on Joseph Stalin's direct order," said MPP Baker.

"The victims of the mass murders were mainly reserve officers, but there were also civilians who were killed. They were fathers and sons - and at least one daughter, pilot Janina Lewandowska. They were the flower of the Polish nation, members of the intelligentsia - engineers, doctors, teachers, university professors. The intent was clear: Stalin wanted nothing less than the beheading of the Polish nation. As the mass graves were discovered in 1943, the Poles knew the true identity of the perpetrator of the crime, the Soviet Union, however Katyn became a forbidden topic in postwar Poland under the communist regime. It was erased from official history until the fall of communism."

"I pay tribute to the resiliency and strength of Poles and Polonia in Ontario who worked tirelessly for decades to ensure the truth of this colossal crime would prevail. By introducing this motion, it is my hope that we, as legislators, can help in further bringing justice to the memory of the victims and accountability to the Soviet perpetrators."

The motion also calls upon the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to recognize that the Katyn Massacre genocide will forever be linked with the memory of those who lost their lives in the 2010 Smolensk Air Disaster.

"Seventy years after the Katyn Massacre genocide, Poland very suddenly had another national tragedy to grieve," said Baker. "On April 10, 2010, while travelling to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Katyn Massacre, 96 people, including Polish President Lech Kaczyński, First Lady Maria Kaczyńska, senior Polish government officials, and relatives of the victims of the Katyn Massacre, lost their lives in a tragic plane crash. On that day, a second beheading of Poland took place close to Katyn. These two tragedies will be forever linked. We honour their memory."



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MOTION

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should acknowledge that the Katyn Massacre (the mass murder of over 20,000 Polish citizens at the hands of the NKVD Soviet secret police on Joseph Stalin's order in 1940) remains a deep historical wound for Poles and for Polish communities across the world, including in Ontario; condemn this act of genocide carried out against the Polish nation; and recognize that the Katyn Massacre will forever be linked with the memory of the senior Polish government officials and relatives of the victims who lost their lives in the Smolensk Air Disaster of 2010."

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