

BICKNELL APPROVAL FOR MEMORY SHAFT

Site in Bicknell Park for a proposed \$25,000 monument to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Armenian massacre of 1915 was approved at Tuesday night's Council meeting, but not without consideration of protests.

At the suggestion of Councilman Joe Spada the word "genocide" was deleted and the word "massacre" substituted in a resolution on the matter, a resolution which had been considerably shortened from the original at the suggestion of Mayor Bruce Odou.

Spada said he had researched the matter in the Britannica and found no mention of the word "genocide" and asked Mike Menashian if he objected to the word being changed to "massacre". Menashian said he did not, but that it was his opinion the word "genocide" was not in use 50 years ago, when nearly half of the Armenian nation was massacred by Turks in what Armenians claim was an attempt to exterminate the Armenian people.

Noted and filed was a written objection from former Councilman Stanley Vegar, who asked: "Who is to pay cost of maintenance?" and "If space is provided for this memorial won't others ask the same consideration?"

John Gabriel and Jack Arakelian, along with other prominent members of the Armenian community of this area, were on hand to hear the Council formally approve use of the 75-foot high monument, which is to be financed by Armenian groups throughout Southern California and will be a permanent memorial to the freedom won by the refugee Armenians and their families found in a new world as they emerged from their near extermination.

Mike Minasian is an officer in the Montebello Junior Jaycees, which has offered to provide 20 picnic tables at Bicknell Park for public use when the monument is completed.

Editor's Note: Elsewhere in this week's Montebello MESSENGER appears complete text of former Councilman Vegar's letter of protest.
