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## House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
December 11, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ROGER W. MARSHALL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

### 36TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EL MOZOTE MASSACRE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, 36 years ago, nearly 1,000 men, women, and children were murdered by Salvadoran soldiers in El Mozote, El Salvador. It is considered one of the worst massacres in modern Latin American history.

On December 2, I traveled to El Mozote with a delegation led by the

Washington Office on Latin America. Four hours after leaving San Salvador, we arrived at El Mozote in the northern region of Morazan, near the border of Honduras.

Three decades ago, El Mozote included about 20 houses on open ground around a square. Facing the square was a church and, behind it, a small building known as the convent, used by the priest to change into his vestments when celebrating Mass. Nearby was a small schoolhouse.

Our delegation sat in the town square with survivors and victims of the massacre. We listened to their stories, shared prayers for their loss and suffering, toured the grounds where this atrocity took place, and visited memorials the community built to commemorate and preserve this tragic history. We also heard from lawyers from Cristosal, a U.S.-based NGO providing legal aid to the association of victims and survivors.

On December 10, 1981, the Salvadoran Army brigade based in San Miguel and the Atlacatl Battalion, an elite infantry unit based in San Salvador, arrived in El Mozote. Over the next 2 days, these troops methodically and viciously murdered the town's residents and those of nearby villages.

On the morning of December 11, troops assembled the people in the town square. They separated the men from the women and children and locked them in separate groups in the church, the convent, and various houses. According to eyewitness accounts, they then interrogated, tortured, and executed the men at several different sites.

Around noon, they began taking the women and girls in groups, separating them from their children and machine-gunning them after raping them. Many families were ordered to remain in their homes while soldiers set fire to their houses.

Over 140 of the children—some, mere infants—were jammed into the convent

next to the church. There, soldiers blocked the doors, aimed guns through the windows, and fired into the mass of children, murdering them all in cold blood. They then threw an incendiary bomb into the building, collapsing the roof and adobe walls.

Mr. Speaker, I walked with members of the community to the site where the children were murdered. A garden cultivated in their memory blooms on the site where they perished. A mural on the side of the church facing the garden depicts tiny angels ascending to Heaven.

Beneath the mural are plaques with the names and ages of the children killed so brutally. They range from zero to 16 years. Walking on such hallowed ground, I was deeply moved and outraged by the atrocity that took place there.

In October 1990, the Salvadoran courts opened an investigation into the El Mozote case, and in January 1992, the civil war ended with peace accords signed between the Salvadoran Government and FMLN guerrillas. In November 1992, the U.S. Truth Commission supervised exhumations of El Mozote remains by Argentine forensic experts, confirming that the stories told by the survivors were indeed true. Then everything was cut short when the Salvadoran Congress passed a sweeping amnesty law in 1993.

However, last year, in July 2016, the Salvadoran Supreme Court overturned the amnesty law as unconstitutional; and in October of 2016, a judge reopened the El Mozote case and began taking testimony, which continues today.

Now, there are many reasons why we in Congress should be engaged in the search for justice in the El Mozote case. First, in the postwar period, the U.S. has supported a strong and independent judiciary in El Salvador, capable of prosecuting corruption and human rights abuses. El Mozote is viewed as an exemplar case on whether this is possible to achieve.

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g.,  1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Second, in the 1980s, the United States armed, trained, and equipped the Salvadoran Armed Forces, in particular, the army. At El Mozote, U.S. guns and bullets were used to massacre infants, children, women, and men.

Third, the U.S. established and trained the Atlacatl Battalion. Ostensibly an elite rapid reaction counterinsurgency force, it was a major actor in the mass murder at El Mozote. Nine years later, the unit also murdered six Jesuit priests and two women at the University of Central America in San Salvador.

Finally, at the time of the massacre, the Salvadoran high command denied that it even happened. The U.S. Embassy and State Department echoed those denials and denigrated The Washington Post and New York Times reporters who traveled to El Mozote and published detailed stories about the massacre.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. should support the Salvadoran judge presiding over the El Mozote case and the Attorney General's Office, including releasing all information in our military and intelligence files relevant to that period of the civil war. It would be a significant contribution to ending the culture of impunity in El Salvador.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 2 p.m.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing as we approach the end of the first session of this 115th Congress. You know well the contentiousness of this session. Look into the hearts of all the Members of this people's House to discern the good will within. May the good will You find be rewarded with Your grace. May any contrary spirit be banished.

In the days that come, help each Member to understand well and interpret positively, as they are able, the positions of those with whom they disagree. Grant to each the wisdom of Solomon and, to us all, the faith and confidence to know that no matter how difficult things appear to be, You continue to walk with our Nation, as You have done for over two centuries.

May all that is done in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAMALFA led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Washington, DC, December 8, 2017.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,  
Speaker, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Effective today, December 8, 2017, at 12:00 noon ET, I hereby tender my resignation as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Arizona's 8th Congressional District.

Serving in the People's House under God and the Constitution of the United States of America has been a true honor and privilege that I will deeply cherish throughout the remainder of my life.

Most sincerely,

TRENT FRANKS,  
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Washington, DC, December 8, 2017.

Hon. DOUG DUCEY,  
Governor, State of Arizona, Phoenix, AZ.

DEAR GOVERNOR DUCEY: This letter is to notify you that I have submitted a letter to Speaker Paul Ryan tendering my resignation as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Arizona's 8th Congressional District effective today, December 8, 2017 at 12:00 noon ET.

Serving Arizona in the People's House under God and the Constitution of the United States of America has been a true honor and privilege that I will deeply cherish throughout the remainder of my life.

Most sincerely,

TRENT FRANKS,  
Member of Congress.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. Franks), the whole number of the House is 432.

#### MURDER IS NOT CAUSED BY GUNS, TRUCKS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to ad-

dress the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, The Times and Democrat of Orangeburg, South Carolina, published a thoughtful editorial on November 21, entitled: "Murder is not caused by guns, trucks."

The editorial begins:

"Every time violence hits close to home, the debate is renewed."

"... the Nation has been stunned by mass killings in Las Vegas, Texas, and New York City. In two of the incidents, guns were the weapon of terror. In New York—as has been the case in Europe in recent times—a truck was used to run over innocent people."

The editorial continues: "It is time to take a look beyond the surface issue such as weapons—and stop the blame game, says Marianne Clyde, a licensed therapist and expert in mental health in the workplace with more than 27 years of experience."

Clyde continues: "The world will change, not by overregulation, blaming, demonizing, but rather by one person at a time, taking personal responsibility for our thought processes and responses, creating an environment that creates unity and solutions that work."

The editorial concludes by noting that, "Clyde's point is to have individuals look deeper and realize that her points back up the title of her writing: 'Murder is not caused by guns or trucks, but by our thinking.'"

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

#### RESTORING INTERNET FREEDOM ORDER

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the issue of FCC Chairman Pai's Restoring Internet Freedom Order.

The narrative out there is that this decision by the FCC will destroy the internet as we know it. I am here to say that simply is not true. The internet was free and open before the Obama administration implemented heavy-handed regulations in 2015, and it will continue to be free and open after these confusing regulations are repealed.

Chairman Pai's plan would simply roll back these regulations that stifle innovation and broadband investment. There are over 4,000 internet providers in this Nation. Do we want more to join or not?

From 1996 to 2015, a light-touch regulatory approach to the internet preserved the free market and private investment soared to the tune of \$1.5 trillion. This created the communications