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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 22, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GEORGE HOLDING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, 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, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

23 IN 1—HONDO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (MR. GALLEGOS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLEGOS. Mr. Speaker, today, as we continue our journey through the 23rd District, I would like to travel to a small town some 40 miles west of San Antonio. That would be Hondo, Texas.

It is about 9.6 square miles of iconic America, and as you pass the city boundary, you are kindly reminded by a sign: "This is God's country. Please don't drive through it like hell." That sign, erected by the local Lions Club in 1930, deters speeders. It has been fea-

tured on postcards; it has been the subject of many photos sent home by tourists; and it even made the cover of National Geographic magazine.

I remember that sign even as a little kid, long before I-10 was built and when Highway 90, through Hondo, was still the main thoroughfare—the east-west highway—from L.A. to Florida.

Actually, the original sign just read: "This is God's country. Don't drive through it like hell," but as you might imagine, it was a somewhat controversial sign for the 1930s. So, finally, in the 1940s, the word "please" was added to soften the tone and to placate those in town who found the sign a bit too harsh. Today, some 84 years after its installation, that sign still serves as a not-so-subtle reminder to slow down and, perhaps, to take a breath from the everyday rush of life and enjoy the little things, like family and friends and God and country.

Though settled in 1891, the Hondo area, which is now located in Medina County, was first explored by Cabeza de Vaca in 1519, only some 27 years after Columbus arrived in the New World. It displaced Castroville as the county seat, and Hondo shares a place in history with the many early Americans who built this Nation through sheer sweat and determination.

With the construction of the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railway, which was built through the county from the east in 1881, Hondo quickly transformed from a small, 25-resident settlement into a trade and shipping center for agriculture and ranching. Hondo was the scene of two bank robberies in the early 1920s. The crooks were the famed Newton Gang, the most successful outlaws in American history. Interestingly, both bank heists occurred on the same night.

Hondo, itself, was incorporated as a city in 1942, and at that time, Hondo applied for a U.S. Army air training facility to be built there. When our Na-

tion was in need, they stepped up. The Hondo Army Airfield was constructed with local funding in 89 days, and it opened on July 4, 1942. The airfield would become the largest air navigation school in the world and would eventually train over 15,000 navigators to serve in World War II.

That airfield still exists, and though it is no longer affiliated with the U.S. military, today, it is a regional facility and is one of the busiest small commercial airports in Texas. Mayor James Danner and city leadership have done a phenomenal job of developing the airfield into a center of transportation and commerce. If your business needs a small airport near San Antonio and not too far from Eagle Ford Shale country, check out the airport in Hondo.

In addition, that airfield is home to one of the largest and most fun and entertaining air shows in Central Texas—and certainly the best air show in all of Congressional District 23. Each year, thousands of airplane enthusiasts descend on Hondo for the air show, which last year featured more than 20 or so World War II-era airplanes. Another feature of the air show was an exhibition called, "Tora, Tora, Tora," a smaller but incredibly well-done reenactment of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, a reenactment which was done using these vintage airplanes. It is a great event to take your kids and your grandkids to.

Hondo is a town of living history as many of its residents are descendants of the original 25 settlers. It is a town not lost in the rush of everyday life, and like much of Texas' 23rd District, its connection and commitment to the U.S. military run deep through its veins.

I invite everyone to take a trip to Hondo and experience iconic America. Remember, this is God's country. Please don't drive through it like hell.

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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AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I am on the floor again to talk about the waste of American taxpayers' money in Afghanistan.

Just last week, we in the House Armed Services Committee heard testimony from Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work, along with other DOD officials, regarding the Department's request for an additional \$58.6 billion to be used overseas, primarily in Afghanistan.

While speaking to Mr. Work, I mentioned the following three headlines, which, I believe, accurately describe the American situation in Afghanistan: the headline from CBS News, "Is the Pentagon wasting taxpayer money in Afghanistan?"; from the Center for Public Integrity, "The U.S. military was no match for Afghanistan's corruption"; then from the World Affairs Journal, "Money Pit: The Monstrous Failure of U.S. Aid to Afghanistan." All of these reports detail a shocking misuse of the American taxpayers' dollar with little to no accountability.

My question to Mr. Work was this:

How can the Pentagon, in good conscience, request this money given the waste, fraud, and abuse that we continue to see with American resources in Afghanistan?

Mr. Speaker, this is money that we could be using right here in America to care for our many wounded veterans, to rebuild our country, our schools, our roads, our infrastructure, and yet, every day, we continue to spend billions and billions overseas with, as I said earlier, just little accountability.

As my good friend Pat Buchanan has said: "Is it not a symptom of senility to be borrowing from the world so we can defend the world?" Let me repeat that one more time: "Is it not a symptom of senility to be borrowing from the world so we can defend the world?"

I would even insert the word "stupidity" instead of "senility," and it would sound this way: "Is it not a symptom of stupidity to be borrowing from the world so we can defend the world?"

Mr. Speaker, beside me, I have a poster of a young Army soldier who lost both legs and an arm. This was from the front page of our Raleigh paper, Mr. Speaker—the News & Observer—about 5 years ago. Why do I have it on the floor today? Four weeks ago, I went to Walter Reed at Bethesda. I saw three Army soldiers from Fort Bragg, which is not in my district, but I chatted with them. All three had lost one leg in Afghanistan. My main purpose of going to Walter Reed was to see two marines from Camp Lejeune who had been severely wounded, but I thank God I had a chance to talk to the three soldiers and to thank them for their gift of their legs for our country.

As I went over to the young marine from Camp Lejeune, who was 23, he was

like this soldier in the poster. The young marine had lost both legs and an arm. I looked in the face of his father, who probably was 50 or 51 years of age, and all I saw was pain and worry and trouble in the eyes of the father because, like this young soldier who had lost both legs and an arm, you can only hope the best for their futures.

The second marine I saw from Camp Lejeune had stepped on a 40-pound IED and had lost both legs. He has a wife—I did not meet her—and an 8-month-old baby girl whom I did not meet, but he was very proud of his wife and his child. I wonder what his future is going to be? I can only hope the best—that God will look after all of these men and women who have given so much for our country.

It brings me back to this, Mr. Speaker: Congress needs to have debates and to stop wasting money in Afghanistan, because it costs our soldiers and their families so much—the lives, the limbs—and there is nothing we have to show for it but pain and a waste of money.

May God bless America.

GENOCIDE

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, the international legal definition of the crime of genocide is found in article II of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide.

It says:

Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

I believe that what is happening to the Christian community in Iraq is genocide. I also believe that it is a "crime against humanity."

Last Thursday, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, more commonly referred to as ISIS, gave the few remaining Christians in Mosul until Saturday to leave or be killed.

From The New York Times, it reads:

Some went on foot, their cars having been confiscated. Others rode bicycles or motor scooters. Few were able to take anything of value as militants seized their money and jewelry. Some—just a few because they were not healthy enough to flee—submitted to the demands that they convert to Islam to avoid being killed.

ISIS is systematically targeting Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq for extinction.

I will submit for the RECORD the complete article from The New York Times and an editorial from today's Wall Street Journal for history to see what is happening.

[From the New York Times, July 21, 2014]

CONCERN AND SUPPORT FOR IRAQI CHRISTIANS FORCED BY MILITANTS TO FLEE MOSUL

BAGHDAD.—A day after Christians fled Mosul, the northern city controlled by Islamist extremists, under the threat of death, Muslims and Christians gathered under the same roof—a church roof—here on Sunday afternoon. By the time the piano player had finished the Iraqi national anthem, and before the prayers, Manhal Younis was crying.

"I can't feel my identity as an Iraqi Christian," she said, her three little daughters hanging at her side.

A Muslim woman sitting next to her in the pew reached out and whispered, "You are the true original people here, and we are sorry for what has been done to you in the name of Islam."

The warm scene here was an unusual counterpoint to the wider story of Iraq's unraveling, as Sunni militants with the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria gain territory and persecute anyone who does not adhere to their harsh version of Islamic law. On Saturday, to meet a deadline by the ISIS militants, most Christians in Mosul, a community almost as old as Christianity itself, left with little more than the clothes they were wearing.

The major players in the Iraq and Syria crisis are often both allies and antagonists, working together on one front on one day and at cross-purposes the next.

Some went on foot, their cars having been confiscated; others rode bicycles or motor scooters. Few were able to take anything of value, as militants seized their money and jewelry. Some—just a few, and because they were not healthy enough to flee—submitted to demands that they convert to Islam to avoid being killed.

"There are five Christian families who converted to Islam because they were threatened with death," said Younadam Kanna, a Christian and a member of Iraq's Parliament. "They did so just to stay alive."

On Sunday, outrage came from many corners of Iraq, and beyond.

In a public address, Pope Francis expressed his concern for the Christians of Mosul and other parts of the Middle East, "where they have lived since the beginning of Christianity, together with their fellow citizens, offering a meaningful contribution to the good of society."

He continued: "Today, they are persecuted. Our brothers are persecuted and hunted away; they have to leave their homes without being allowed to take anything with them."

Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations secretary general, released a statement condemning "in the strongest terms the systematic persecution of minority populations in Iraq" and particularly the threat against Christians.

And Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki, who is struggling to remain in power as Iraq's political factions negotiate to form a new government, said Sunday, "The atrocities perpetrated by ISIS against our Iraqi citizens, the Christians in Nineveh Province and the attacks on the churches and houses of worship in the areas that fall under their control, reveal without any doubt the terrorist and criminal nature of this extremist group that poses a dangerous threat to the humanity and the heritage and legacy that has been preserved over centuries."

He called on the "whole world to tighten the siege on those terrorists and stand as one force to confront them." That was perhaps a reference to the influx of foreign fighters into Iraq, many of whom have also fought in Syria's civil war. On Sunday, ISIS issued a