

State and county authorities to fully assess the damage wrought by this flooding. With that work largely done now, the Governor has requested a major disaster declaration that would unlock Federal assistance for many households, businesses, and the public.

We are still trying to put this all together and figure out how to pay for this. I urge our President to immediately approve Governor Evers' request for a Federal disaster declaration, a request supported by the entire delegation on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, this just shows us the irreplaceable role of the Federal Government in helping to put victims' lives back together.

RECOMMITTING TO CIVILITY AND UNITY

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, 24 years ago today, our Nation was changed forever. I remember that day as a high school student. Standing along the Hudson River, a cloud of smoke and destruction hung over the New York skyline. There was palpable fear and terror in the air. I witnessed a stream of people covered in ashes, trying to get home. It is impossible to forget.

What I remember most is how we came together as a country after that fateful day and how we bridged our divide and joined together as one Nation in grief and mourning but also in resolve and patriotism.

Today, 24 years later, we are once again reminded of how easily those divisions can take hold of us and how they can divide us if we allow them to. We owe it to ourselves and, even more so, to the bravest Americans who answered the call that day and laid down their lives to recommit ourselves to civility and unity.

We must never forget 9/11. We must never forget the victims, the survivors, and their families. I believe with every fiber of my being that we can heal our Nation and mend our wounds. We can truly be the United States of America and "out of many, one."

Mr. Speaker, that is the best way to honor their memory today and every day hereafter.

HONORING JOEL KAWAHARA

(Ms. RANDALL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Joel Kawahara, a 70-year-old commercial fisherman who represented the very best of our maritime community.

In August, Joel was lost at sea while doing what he loved the most, which was fishing for salmon in the Pacific.

Joel wasn't just a fisherman. He was the 2009 National Fisherman's

Highliner of the Year, known up and down the West Coast for the exceptional quality of his catch.

What truly set Joel apart was his unwavering commitment to conservation. For over 30 years, he served on the Save Our Wild Salmon coalition. He would cut his own fishing trips short to attend policy meetings. The last time I saw him, while walking through the boatyard in Port Townsend, he stopped working on the *Karolee* to talk to me about NOAA and how important it was to protect.

Friends remember his infectious laugh at beach parties and his generous spirit. He put his family's 80-acre property in a conservation easement. He understood that caring for the land means caring for the fish and caring for the fish means caring for future generations of fishermen.

Mr. Speaker, Joel showed us that a well-lived life is one spent fighting for what we believe in while lifting up our community along the way. We honor Joel's memory and his legacy of service to our waters and our way of life.

□ 1130

RESTORE LIFESAVING FOOD AID

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

Mr. MAGAZINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, for the 39th time, to call on the Trump administration to restore lifesaving food aid for children around the world.

We are grieving today. We are grieving the lives lost on September 11, 2001. We are grieving the lives of Charlie Kirk and others who have been victims of political violence and mass shootings.

We don't always have the power in this Chamber to save every life, but we do have the power to save many lives, including the lives of children suffering from starvation, lives that are valuable and that deserve a chance.

The Trump administration cut off this program in January, and they have been promising to restore it, going so far as to issue RFPs and to make promises that the program will be restored, but they have not yet done it.

All it takes is for them to take the simple action of restoring the Food for Peace program so that kids like this can have a chance.

RECOGNIZING SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of September being Suicide Prevention Month.

More than 35 years ago, my father took his own life by firearm. Unfortu-

nately, this kind of tragedy is too common in America.

There were 1.4 million suicide attempts in 2019, making suicide one of the most pressing public health crises in America. In 2023, over 49,000 Americans died by suicide. Of those deaths, nearly 6 out of 10 involved a firearm.

Firearms also account for just 5 percent of American suicide attempts, but unfortunately, firearms account for over 50 percent of the deaths.

This points to a disturbing trend that those who attempt suicide by other means often regret their attempt. They don't do it again, and they seek help. That option, unfortunately, is rarely available to those people like my dad who had a weapon available.

Too many people don't seek help when they need it. Whether they are held back by fear, stigma, or lack of access, we need to do more as a society to remove all the barriers and encourage open and supportive communities.

Please, if you are having issues around depression or suicidal thoughts, seek help and call 988.

HONORING BOB HALLMARK, SIGNING OFF FROM KLTV

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. MORAN of Texas was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.)

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bob Hallmark. After nearly three decades of reporting, storytelling, and shining a light on east Texas, Bob Hallmark is signing off from KLTV.

I couldn't let this moment go without thanking him for his service.

Over the years what has always stood out is the way he approached every story with fairness, professionalism, and genuine heart for our community. He had a way of making people feel seen, respected, and understood.

Whether he was covering a serious issue or adding a little humor to the day, Bob was always thoughtful and brought his full self to the job.

Bob never lost sight of the people behind the headlines. He knew every story mattered to someone, and he treated those stories with care. That is rare, and it is why so many trusted him not just as a journalist but as a friend and neighbor.

Mr. Speaker, we will miss hearing "Bob Hallmark, KLTV News" at the end of every story, but we are grateful for the many years that we did hear those words.

May Bob enjoy the well-earned next chapter of his life.

I congratulate Bob. I thank him for telling the story of east Texas so well for so long.

HONORING HERB BUIE OF JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GREATER TYLER AREA

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Herb Buie. The Junior Achievement of the Greater Tyler Area announced Mr. Buie will be their 2026 Business Hall of Fame Laureate.

At 95 years young, Mr. Buie continues to set the bar for what leadership, service, and lasting impact mean. For decades, he has been a pillar of the Tyler business community, in both professional success and his deep commitment to giving back to the community.

This award is not just about his career. It is about his legacy, a legacy built on hard work, generosity, and an unwavering belief in the next generation.

As Mr. Buie said himself: "Junior Achievement is standing at the top of the place to let these young people know what it is to be entrepreneurs, to be workers, businesspeople, how to handle finances, how to be a good community leader."

These values have been lived out by Mr. Buie for decades.

This year alone, Junior Achievement of Tyler will reach more than 8,300 students, inspiring young minds to dream bigger and to plan wiser.

This mission aligns perfectly with the life and leadership of Herb Buie. He is not just a role model. He is a real-life example of what happens when a person leads with a heart of purpose.

I thank Herb Buie for his leadership, his vision, and the powerful example that he continues to set for all of us. I congratulate him on this well-deserved honor. East Texas is better with him in the community.

HONORING ROUNDUP DAY

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Roundup Day. This day celebrates the East Texas State Fair and Rodeo.

The fair and rodeo bring about countless memories for east Texans. Through the fair, we are able to come together in the community and enjoy games, rides, and incredible fair food.

We must not lose sight of the true mission of the weekend, though: bringing together agricultural heritage, families, and the community. This happens in so many locations nationwide.

The weekend also centers around youth development and education. Since 1992, the fair has awarded over \$2.1 million to east Texas youth in scholarships and premiums.

In total, the East Texas State Fair brings an estimated economic impact of \$10 million to the Tyler and Smith County communities. That is simply remarkable.

We receive visitors of all types, including local families, concertgoers, exhibitors, vendors, contest participants, school groups, entertainers, workers, sponsors, and volunteers. Everyone who attends these events creates an exciting atmosphere where the community can thrive.

I hope everyone enjoys another incredible year at the East Texas State Fair and Rodeo, and I can't wait for my next corn dog.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING BEAR CREEK SMOKEHOUSE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Bear Creek Smokehouse of Marshall, Texas,

which has been named the Small Business Administration's Family-Owned Business of the Year for the Dallas-Fort Worth district.

Since its founding in 1943, Bear Creek Smokehouse has stood as a true east Texas success story. For more than 80 years, the Shoults family has poured their time, energy, and faith into building not just a business but a legacy.

What began as a small family operation has grown into a nationally recognized name, while never losing its deep roots in our community.

The success of Bear Creek Smokehouse is built on the values that never go out of style: hard work, integrity, and unwavering commitment to excellence.

Guided by the family's motto, Food, Faith and Family, this fourth-generation business continues to embody the very best of the American entrepreneurial spirit. Their products reflect quality. Their service reflects care. Their impact on east Texas reflects generations of dedication.

This recognition is not only a celebration of Bear Creek Smokehouse's accomplishments but also a testament to the importance of family-owned businesses across America. They remind us that when families work together, they can build enterprises that nourish both body and soul, while strengthening the communities they serve.

I congratulate the entire staff at Bear Creek Smokehouse and Robbie, Brenda, and Hunter Shoults on this well-deserved honor. I am confident that they will continue to inspire, serve, and succeed for generations to come.

□ 1140

HONORING GILMER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Gilmer Independent School District.

We recently received some fantastic news from the Texas Education Agency. Gilmer Elementary School, Gilmer High School, Gilmer Intermediate School, and the Gilmer Early Childhood Center received an A rating for the 2024-2025 school year.

The TEA A through F accountability system evaluates schools and districts based on a range of performance indicators, including students' achievements, academic growth, college and career readiness, and how effectively schools support their most at-risk students.

An A rating means that Gilmer isn't just meeting the mark, they are exceeding expectations across the board. This kind of recognition sends a strong message: Great things are happening in our school systems in east Texas.

This is a great morale boost heading into the new school year, not just for those inside the school walls but across the community.

I am grateful for the strong leadership across Gilmer ISD, including the

teachers, the faculty, staff, parents, and students. Together, they work tirelessly to ensure excellence in all of their programs. Gilmer ISD looks to their core principles in all that they do: excellence, achievement, character, and commitment.

I look forward to seeing the incredible work that they do this year and the great successes that lie ahead. Go, Buckeyes.

HONORING CHARLIE CANO

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Charlie Cano.

As CEO of Etex, Charlie leads his team to great successes. Charlie is a leader whose work has truly changed lives across rural Texas. I am proud to congratulate him on receiving the Neville Haynes Award, the highest honor from the Texas Telephone Association.

For more than a decade, Charlie has led Etex with vision, integrity, and a deep commitment to connecting the unconnected. Under his leadership, Etex hasn't just expanded broadband, it has brought real opportunity to rural east Texas.

This award encapsulates a career dedicated to service, advocacy, and the belief that every community, no matter how small or how remote, deserves access to the digital future.

Charlie's impact goes far beyond technology. He has raised the standard for what it means to serve customers, neighbors, and friends.

I congratulate Charlie on this well-deserved recognition and thank him for providing that leadership that is rooted in community. We know that because of his leadership, anything is possible.

HONORING TEXARKANA COLLEGE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Texarkana College. Earlier this month, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board released its 2024 accountability measures, and I am proud to share that Texarkana College has earned the number one ranking in the entire State of Texas for 3-year and 6-year student completion rates. This is among all 50 public colleges in the entire State of Texas.

Even more impressive, Texarkana College's 3-year completion rate is nearly double the State average. This is truly extraordinary.

These are more than numbers. This represents the lives that are changed and our future that is strengthened. When a student completes their education, it opens doors for themselves, for their children, and for generations to come. The effect of this success is felt throughout our workforce, our local economy, and our entire region.

This accomplishment did not happen by chance. It is the direct result of years of strategic efforts, innovation, and hard work by President Dr. Jason Smith, Vice President Dr. Dixon Boyles, and every faculty member, support staff, and adviser at Texarkana College, as well as the Texarkana community.

They have not only done this once, Texarkana College has ranked number

one three times in the past decade and in the top five nine times. This consistency speaks volumes about the leadership, the systems in place, and a heart behind the work being done.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the entire Texarkana community and the Texarkana College. They are making a difference and building the right future for east Texas.

HONORING FOUR OUTSTANDING MEMBERS OF MOUNT PLEASANT FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Deputy Chief Aristeo Rodriguez, Captain Adam Decker, driver Phil Fry, and firefighter Aaron Williams of the Mount Pleasant Fire Department.

Four outstanding members of the Mount Pleasant Fire Department were awarded the Life Saving Medal. This is a distinction reserved for those whose actions directly result in saving lives. These brave men and women exemplify the highest ideals of public service. In moments of danger when every second counts and hesitation can cost lives, they acted with clarity, courage, and incredible skill.

Because of these individuals, someone's child, spouse, friend, or loved one is alive today. We often speak about public safety in terms of equipment, training, or response times, and those things are certainly critical, but at the heart of it all is character.

These four men embodied the spirit of selfless service. They do not act courageously for recognition. They act because it is who they are. It is what they are called to do day in and day out. They act quietly and humbly with steadiness and steadfastness.

On behalf of a grateful city and community and on behalf of a grateful State and Nation, we thank them for their commitment, for their bravery, and for their service. Their extraordinary service has made a true difference in the community.

To the four honorees, they are our protectors. They are our heroes. I congratulate them on this incredible award and Godspeed and God's blessings and God's protection for each of them moving forward.

HONORING 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 75th anniversary of St. John's Episcopal Church located in Carthage, Texas.

On July 29, 1950, a handful of Episcopalians met with Reverend John Fritts in the abandoned theater on the square. This marked the first Episcopal service in Carthage. This marked the birth of St. John's Episcopal Church in Carthage.

Within a year, there were enough members to form a mission with the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese of Texas, the Right Reverend Clinton Quin. The congregation was originally meeting in a garage apartment on Sycamore Street, but that didn't last long.

When the church was originally being built, a fire destroyed part of the build-

ing right before Christmas. The community did not waver. It began meeting in people's homes and continued the work of Christ. This is a true testament of the resilience of the Carthage community.

The church has expanded throughout the years to include a parish hall and an education wing, but the congregation outshines the four walls they meet in. St. John's Episcopal Church has remained a pillar of the Carthage community for 75 years and has made a difference in countless lives during that time.

As we look to the future, we trust God will continue to guide and strengthen this faithful congregation. We ask over the next 75 years St. John's Episcopal Church be filled with greater service, unity, and spiritual growth in Carthage and beyond; just as they have seen over the past 75 years.

HONORING LIFE OF CHARLIE KIRK

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of Charlie Kirk. Charlie was a faithful servant, not only to the cause of liberty, but more importantly, to the kingdom of God.

His voice was strong in the public square, but his true mission was always to direct people to Jesus Christ our Savior and our only hope through His truth.

We also lift up his beloved wife, Erika, and their children. May the Lord wrap them in his arms of comfort and peace during this time of personal and national grief.

Political violence has no place in America. We are all first and foremost children of God and citizens of one Nation under Him. Before we are Democrats or Republicans, we are Americans, neighbors called to love one another. We each have equal and eternal value in the sight of our creator, and we should each treat each other with that equal and eternal value.

Charlie treated others this way as he engaged in debate on tough topics in the public square. He did so in a civil, respectful, and dignified manner, just the way it is supposed to be done. He did so from a heart of love, not one of hate.

We should follow his example as we engage in our debates moving forward in this Nation. We should look to how he treated others, how he saw others, and how he sought to preserve liberty and our Republic.

May Charlie's witness inspire us to walk humbly, to speak truth boldly, and to fix our eyes upon the eternal promises of God. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with Erika, their family, and all who mourn his passing.

□ 1150

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. ONDER).

HONORING CHARLIE KIRK

Mr. ONDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, Charlie Kirk died yesterday at age 31, his neck ripped open

by an assassin's bullet. He survived by his wife, Erika, and their two young children, who will never see their dad at a T-ball game, a high school graduation, or a wedding.

Make no mistake about it: Charlie Kirk was assassinated. He was an incredibly effective force in American politics. He was beloved for his Socratic style of going to college campuses and gently and charitably asking questions and engaging in respectful dialogue with those whom he disagreed.

Most of all, he was a very convincing advocate for the love of God, family, and country, the hatred of which is a sacred creed of the left. They could not have it. They killed him.

In April of this year, Charlie prophetically said on social media:

"Assassination culture is spreading on the left. Forty-eight percent of liberals say it would be at least somewhat justified to murder Elon Musk. Fifty-five percent said the same thing about Donald Trump."

"The left is being whipped into a violent frenzy. Any setback, whether losing an election or losing a court case, justifies a maximally violent response."

"This is the natural outgrowth of leftwing protest culture tolerating violence and mayhem for years on end. The cowardice of local prosecutors and school officials have turned the left into a ticking time bomb."

That was Charlie Kirk in April.

Yesterday, a social media post of mine hit a nerve when I called Charlie a martyr. Without question, he was.

The Athenians put Socrates to death for the simple crime of asking questions about culture and society and the meaning of life itself. Socrates was, in that sense, a martyr to the truth, and so was Charlie Kirk, but Charlie was also a martyr for Jesus Christ.

A priest friend of mine sent me this short passage from St. Bede, referring to John the Baptist:

"There is no doubt that blessed John suffered imprisonment and chains as a witness to our Redeemer, whose forerunner he was, and gave his life for him. His persecutor demanded not that he should deny Christ, but only that he should keep silent about the truth. Nevertheless, he died for Christ. Does Christ not say: I am the truth? Therefore, because John shed his blood for the truth, he surely died for Christ."

Charlie also died as he was answering a question about the transgender cult that has gripped so much of our society and destroyed the life and health of so many of our young people.

They couldn't stand for that, so they killed Charlie, martyr for the truth and to Christ.

What for us? Well, everything has changed. If we didn't know it already, there is no longer any middle ground. Some on the American left are, undoubtedly, well-meaning people, but their ideology is pure evil.

They hate the good, the truth, and the beautiful and embrace the evil, the

false, and the ugly. They literally will kill those with whom they disagree, just as their predecessor leftists Marx, Stalin, Lenin, Pol Pot, and Fidel Castro did. We must know that. We must stand firm, and we must win this twilight struggle.

They killed Charlie, but as Tertullian wrote in the second century when the church was very much persecuted: "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church."

May God raise up thousands of Charlie Kirks to take his place.

To my fellow warriors in this fight: Hold your families tight. Be safe. Pray even for those who persecute you. Yes, most of all, pray.

Charlie Kirk, martyr for the truth, pray for us.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 3944, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2026

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair appoints the following conferees on H.R. 3944:

Messrs. COLE, ADERHOLT, CARTER of Texas, HARRIS of Maryland, VALADAO, NEWHOUSE, MOOLENAAR, RUTHERFORD, CLINE, Mrs. HINSON, Ms. LETLOW, Messrs. GUEST, ZINKE, Mrs. BICE, Messrs. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, LALOTA, STRONG, Ms. MALOY, Mr. MOORE of West Virginia, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. HOYER, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. BISHOP, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. PINGREE, Messrs. QUIGLEY, ESPAILLAT, Ms. UNDERWOOD, Mr. LEVIN, Meses. ESCOBAR, PEREZ.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE REMAINING QUESTIONS SURROUNDING JANUARY 6, 2021

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to House Resolution 605, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, of the following Members to the Select Committee to Investigate the Remaining Questions Surrounding January 6, 2021:

Mr. LOUDERMILK, Chair,
Mr. GRIFFITH,
Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana,
Mr. NEHLS,
Ms. HAGEMAN,
Mr. SWALWELL,
Ms. CROCKETT, and
Mr. MOSKOWITZ.

DARK DAYS

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. GREEN of Texas was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, still I rise.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, as a liberated Democrat.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, unbought, unbosomed, unafraid.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, as the only Member of the House of Representatives to be removed from a joint session of Congress and, thereafter, to be censured. I have been censured, Mr. Speaker, but I have not been silenced. Censured, but not silenced.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in agreement with the President. This is, indeed, a dark day. Yesterday was a dark day—dark days because of lives that have been lost. This day, the USA Today has published an article styled: "24 years after 9/11, alliances fractured," referring to what happened on 9/11, the lives that were lost to terrorism.

Then, Mr. Speaker, there is another article that I would call to your attention in *The Washington Times*. It is styled: Growing leftwing violence blamed for deadly shooting.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to address violence. I wish to address violence, and I wish to start by indicating that, yesterday, I published a tweet. This tweet, Mr. Speaker, indicated, in essence, that this is the time for all persons of good will to take a stand against violence and that persons should do this because Dr. King was right, and his words are right today:

"We must all learn to live together as brothers," he said. I would add: and sisters.

We must all learn to live together as brothers and sisters, or we will perish together as fools.

I did not know Mr. Kirk. I don't believe I have ever met him. I meet a lot of people, so I may have, but I don't believe that I have.

Here is what I know about him: He was a human being. He was a child of the same creator who created me. He had every right to express his views. He had every right to differ with me and anybody else as much as he wanted to. He had every right to be where he was and to speak on the issues of importance to him in ways that I might not agree with, but he had a right to do this.

He had a right to life. He had a right to say these things in venues across the length and breadth of this country and, I would say, across the globe. These were his rights.

He had the right to be where he was and to do what he was doing.

I don't know him as a person who has said things that I would always agree with, but I want his wife and his children to know that I am saddened by his demise.

□ 1200

I am saddened by the fact that he was assassinated. I am saddened by it. It is painful. I regret that it happened, and if I could have prevented it, I would have.

I don't believe that we should have a country that somehow would have peo-

ple lose their lives, be assassinated, and then people gloat and celebrate an assassination.

I ask today: What did Mr. Kirk and the victims of 9/11 and the persons who have died in churches while praying, persons who were killed as they were praying in various religious institutions, children who have been murdered in schools, what did they all have in common? The one thing that they all had in common, and there may be others, is that they were innocent people. They were innocent people. They were innocent people going about their business. None of them were breaking the law.

This is bigger than any one of us or any group of us. It is bigger than any person's religiosity. It is bigger than where you happen to be at a given time. This is about the right to life and the right to speak freely. It is about what the Constitution affords all of us in this country and about the necessity for every one of us to protect these constitutional rights.

This is about people who have been fortunate enough to have been born in the United States of America or people who have come to the United States of America. It is about people who just happen to be passing through.

It is about the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and especially life, because without life, you cannot have the liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

All of these people have in common the fact that they were innocent and the fact that they have lost their lives, some to terrorism, persons who came to this country to impose and inflict terrorism upon people, and some from terrorists within the country, some from people who were just crazed, some from people who were persons who should not have had the opportunity to have the type of weaponry that they had. But they were all persons who were innocent. They were all persons who had this right to life that I stand for.

Today, I believe it appropriate that I first say a prayer, and then after the prayer, I will make some comments about current circumstances.

I don't ask everyone to pray with me. You pray with me if you desire. If you choose to do other things, then do those other things, but I pray this prayer for my country.

Most Gracious Creator, we know You by many names, but we also know that by any name You are the creator of all that was, is, and ever shall be. By any name, You created air, the breath of life. By any name, You created water, the elixir of life. By any name, You created the star that we call Sun, the light and warmth of life. By any name, You created the terra firma that we call Earth, the foundation and the home of life. And by any name, I beg that You would understand and pray that You would give me the courage to not only speak truth to power, to speak it in a righteous way, to have the courage to do all that I can to protect all of