

Good the massacre at el mozote essay example

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The United States government bears almost complete responsibility for the Massacre at El Mozote, as the U. S. President, Congress, and military encouraged the policies that led to the massacre, trained and armed the soldiers responsible, and covered it up. Apparently, the government of the United States played a key role in the massacre since its military trained the Atlactl Battalion, a unit of the Salvadorian armed forces, in order to combat the Salvadorian guerilla. The Atlactl Battalion was an elite unit and the government of the United States was extremely proud of having taken part in its creation. Therefore, the government of the United States together with its officials bears responsibility for the El Mozote Massacre.

The massacre at El Mozote that took place in El Salvador on December, 1981, was one of the most egregious massacres in the history of Latin America. Approximately over one thousand civilians were brutally murdered. In fact, this was almost the entire population of El Mozote. Children, men and women, were tortured, shot and slaughtered. The young women were mercilessly raped by the soldiers and then slaughtered. Within three days of the massacre, approximately 146 children were murdered. The children were between of 4 days to 15 years of age. The soldiers decapitated the older children and smashed the small babies' skulls. They shot pregnant women and dropped large rocks on their stomachs to destroy their unborn babies. The villages of El Mozote were also set ablaze. Indeed, almost everything in El Mozote was destroyed (Danner). The massacre was extremely a breach of human rights, and its major participant was the government of the United States since it made policies that led to it. Therefore, the U. S government bears responsibility for the massacre.

The history of the human rights policy of the U. S. in El Salvador is one of denying or downplaying the war crimes that were committed by the Salvadorian armed forces. The officials of the United States often asserted that the Atlactl Battalion's behavior was professional and commendable in its relation to the civilian population. The Atlactl Battalion that was fully responsible for the massacre in El Mozote was formed, trained and funded by the advisers of the United States who were primarily drawn from the U. S. Special Forces. The formation of the Atlactl Battalion was mainly in an effort to reorganize the military of El Salvador to wage a full-blown counterinsurgency war. About 1200 soldiers operated as a rapid reaction battalion, by mid-1981, in the zones that were extremely conflictive. The operations of the battalion spearheaded the major military operations in the divisions of Morazón, Cabañas and Chalatenango. The officials of the U. S. have long been grossly proud of the performance of the Atlactl Battalion and have extremely acclaimed it throughout the war's history (Danner). This acclamation is a clear indication that the U. S. officials were responsible for the massacre.

On 8th February, 1982, the Human Rights Assistant Secretary of State, Elliot Abrams, lauded the Atlactl Battalion. He did so during the hearings of the Senate on the presidential accreditation on El Salvador. He asserted that the Atlactl Battalion had been complimented, many a time, in the past due to its professionalism, its command structure as well as the close control under which the soldiers were held whenever they went into battle. A few months after the Senate hearings, a senior official in the Department of Defense of the U. S. said that the Atlactl Battalion had accomplished an estimable

combat record for its pre-emptive capability as well as for its compassionate treatment of the civilians. He said this in a congressional testimony. The statements of the two officials of the United States portrayed an intended blindness to the gruesome activities of the Atlactl Battalion at best. The statements also reveal a calculated blindness to the battalion's horrific activities at worst a conscious endeavor to mislead the Americans. The Atlactl Battalion would later kill the Jesuits in the mid-1989. The government of the United States was totally aware of the gruesome killings during the massacre at El Mozote. It also knew that the atrocities were carried out by the unit it had created, trained and funded. However, instead of being sorry for the loss of many innocent lives and the destruction of property at El Mozote, it mainly focused on the operation of the Atlactl Battalion. Indeed, it was proud of the operation of the battalion. According to the officials of the United States, the unit had achieved its main objectives; this shows that the U. S. government bears responsibility for the massacre that was carried out by the Atlactl Battalion.

Although the main aim of the Atlactl Battalion was to combat the guerrilla in El Salvador, it ended up killing many innocent civilians and destroying property worth fortunes. These gruesome activities were not accidental. Their actions were pre-determined and well calculated since they brutally murdered babies. They slit the throats of the babies using machetes, raped and murdered young women, hit the stomachs of pregnant women with large rocks and crashed the skulls of babies. The government of the United States, therefore, takes full responsibility for the inhumane activities of the Atlactl Battalion since it formed, trained and funded it, yet it did not prevent

it from performing social injustice (Danner). It, however, commended its activities. Therefore, the U. S. government was fully responsible for the massacre at El Mozote.

Beyond simply supporting and training the Atlactl Battalion, it can be concluded that the government of the United States had foreknowledge of the El Mozote massacre since it had its military advisers in El Salvador throughout the civil war. According to Mark Danner, there were high chances that the advisers of the United States were on the excursion of the Atlactl Battalion into Mozote. Surely, how had the officers of Military Advisory Group at the U. S. Embassy heard very quickly that a military operation had been carried out in Mozote? Though the U. S government advisers claimed that the guerrillas were responsible for conveying the information to the U. S. Embassy, some prominent Salvadorian politicians claimed that some American advisers actually observed the operation from the Osicala base camp. Indeed, the charge is not exclusively implausible. The American advisers were fond of violating the prohibition against escorting their charges into the battlefield. Colonel Moody Hayes, the then commander of the Military Advisory Group, never agreed to talk about the massacre at Mozote at all. He explained that he had no idea of what might be classified. Conversely, the officers from the Department of Defense of the U. S. dismissed the charge, claiming that it was unfounded. However, the officials at the State Department were undoubtedly worried about the likelihood. This clearly shows that the United States government had a hand in the massacre at El Mozote since its officials were not willing to talk about it. Moreover, the speed with which they got the information about the massacre was alarming.

It can be concluded that they knew about the operation and probably orchestrated it. Therefore, the government of the U. S. together with its officials played a key role in the massacre. Indeed, the U. S. government bears responsibility for the massacre that led to loss of many lives.

Throughout the Salvadorian civil war, the United States military aid entered El Salvador. Therefore, it is evident that the U. S. government took part in the operation of the Atlactl Battalion at El Mozote. Besides, a forensic investigation that was carried out after the massacre at El Mozote revealed that the weapons the Atlactl Battalion used to kill the innocent civilians of El Mozote were from the United States. The depth and size of the imprint of the firing pin and other distinguishing features, for instance, bolt face marks were used to determine the types of weapons used during the massacre. According to the forensic report, the cases were fired in NATO-caliber firearms. It was evident that the cases were fired in the U. S military rifles. Cartridge Head stamps were used during the forensic investigation too. The head stamps on the cartridge cases show the commercial or government manufacturer and the date the cases were produced. Out of the 245 cases that were used during the investigation, 184 cases had visible head stamps. They had been manufactured for the government of the U. S at Lake City Ordnance Factory. The findings of the investigation also showed that most of the cases were manufactured between 1978 and 1981. Indeed, the armed forces of El Salvador knew that extreme abuse of human rights would never interfere with the U. S military aid. Apparently, the influence that the United States government had as the primary funder of the war was never used to prevent the massacre at El Mozote (Danner). This makes the government of

the United States to bear full responsibility of the massacre.

According to George Walker, a former member of the Special Forces of the U. S. in El Salvador, a senior advisor of the U. S. Special Forces was present at El Mozote during the massacre that was carried out by the Atlactl Battalion. George Walker asserted that the senior advisor made several attempts to dissuade Colonel Monterosa Domingo, the then commander of Atlactl Battalion, to spare the Mozeto victims. However, Colonel Domingo ignored him; therefore, he rushed to the American Embassy and made a full report of what the Atlactl Battalion was doing at El Mozote. It is also alleged that Domingo Monterosa was trained by the Panama School of the Americas. This was a U. S. school. Indeed, the massacre at El Mozote never diminished the standing of Colonel Domingo in the U. S. officials' eyes since the U. S. Ambassador attended his funeral after the Salvadorian guerilla killed him in 1984 (Danner). Colonel Domingo was trained by the United States, and he was never punished by this nation for violation of human rights. This shows that the U. S. had a hand in the massacre at El Mozote. Is is therefore, clear that it bears fukk responsibility for the massacre.

Stories about the El Mozote massacre were reported in the United States and stories about a key witness of the violations of human rights, Rufina, were told. However, the Republican Administration, led by the President of the United States of America denied that there was any credible evidence that a massacre had occurred in El Mozote. The administration completely covered up the story. Conversely, the Democratic Congress ultimately accepted the certification of the Republican Administration that the Salvadorian regime was trying so hard to comply with the human rights that were recognized

internationally. The U. S. military aid continued to flow into El Salvador. The cover up of the gruesome massacre clearly indicates that the U. S. government played a major role in the operations of the Atlactl Battalion at El Mozote. Indeed, it had a hand in the massacre at El Mozote. Therefore, it bears responsibility for the massacre.

Work Cited

Danner, Mark. *The Massacre at El Mozote* . New York: Vintage Publishers, 2010.