

as examples for children everywhere that anyone, no matter what age, can make a difference. I thank Brandon and Spencer for their contributions to the lives of hospital patients, and I wish them all the best in the years to come.

STATEMENT ON THE NAZI WAR CRIMES AND JAPANESE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT TO CONGRESS ON THE UNITED STATES KNOWLEDGE OF NAZI WAR CRIMES

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 2, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, on Friday, September 28th the Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Records Interagency Working Group presented to Congress its final report on the United States' knowledge of Nazi war crimes.

First, I want to thank the Archivist, Mr. Allen Weinstein, for serving as the chair of the Interagency Working Group. I would also like to thank his staff at the Archives for all of their hard work on this project throughout the years.

I am also grateful to the IWG's public members—Tom Baer, Richard Ben-Veniste and former Congresswoman Liz Holtzman. They have all performed a great service for our Nation. They undertook a 7-year, nearly \$30 million, government-wide effort to locate, declassify, and make publicly available U.S. records of Nazi and Japanese war crimes. We now have their final report.

This project really was an example of government working well. So many different agencies and branches came together to work on it. I want to thank all of the government agencies—the FBI, CIA, Defense Department, Treasury Department, and others. Without their help, we wouldn't have a report in hand. This part of the process wasn't always easy going—this I realize—but so many staff members throughout all of these important agencies worked hard on this project. It would be impossible to name them all, but they all deserve our thanks.

I—and indeed the whole world—was shocked to discover that Kurt Waldheim, one-time U.N. Secretary General, was a Nazi. The critical question that followed was how much information did the U.S. Government have about Waldheim's actions during the war and before he became head of the U.N.? And why wouldn't they reveal it? I introduced the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act back in 1994 to get to the bottom of important questions like these. From the start, there was great opposition to the bill from the intelligence community. But in 1996 we were able to pass a Sense of Congress in support of the bill. And, with the help of former Senator DeWine and former Congressman Horn, the bill finally passed in 1998. Former counsel to Mr. DeWine, Louis DuPart also deserves credit and thanks for helping to write the bill that finally passed. Peter Levitas, another DeWine staffer, deserves thanks for helping to shepherd the bill through its different iterations.

In 2005, we expanded the War Crimes Disclosure Act to cover the Japanese crime docu-

ments, and extended it an additional 2 years to give the IWG more time to do its work. As a result of it, more than 8 million pages of government documents have been declassified and opened to the public.

The declassified records include the entirety of the operational files of the Office of Strategic Services—the predecessor agency of the CIA—and more than 163,000 pages of CIA materials of a type never before opened to the public.

One of the IWG's aims was to uncover documentation that would shed light on the extent to which the U.S. Government had knowingly used and protected Nazi and Japanese war criminals for intelligence purposes. In fact, the IWG found that there was a closer relationship between the U.S. Government and war criminals than previously known. This revelation, while difficult to accept, is crucial to the understanding of our Nation's history.

Researchers, private citizens, in fact anyone who is interested, are now able to comb through the documents that will bring us closer to the truth of the Holocaust. Moreover, as the Archivist of the United States, the Honorable Allen Weinstein explained when presenting to Congress IWG's final report, "Perhaps more important even than the declassified records, this effort stands as a lasting testimony to the fact that declassifying significant documents such as these will not impede the operations of government. Indeed, the work of the IWG should set a new standard for declassification."

In today's world, our government faces enormous pressure—not only from our own agencies but also from foreign intelligence agencies—to keep all records out of the public realm. In the end, disclosure of these files and records is better for our intelligence agencies and better for history.

Madam Speaker, the best chapters of our history provide a model for great democracy and leadership. Our worst chapters show us the dark consequences of apathy and intolerance.

A TRIBUTE TO DANIEL
"PANADERO" OCHOA

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 2, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor one of the most successful participants in a U.S. sponsored program for former gang members, who was brutally murdered in the prime of his life. On September 17 in Guatemala City, Daniel de Jesus Ochoa Vasquez was shopping with his wife when unknown assailants came from behind and shot him in the head, killing him instantly.

Five years ago, Daniel Ochoa sought refuge at a home for at-risk youth run by the Alliance for the Prevention of Crime, an initiative begun with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development, USAID. He left his gang, and soon graduated to teaching other at-risk youth the baking skills he had learned there, thus gaining the nickname "Panadero," or "Baker". Like many of the estimated 14,000 youths involved in gangs in Guatemala, Daniel Ochoa grew up in poverty, and lacked family support and educational or economic opportu-

nities. He soon turned to gangs for social support, a source of livelihood, and protection. His father abandoned his family when his mother was pregnant with their third child; he grew up in a neighborhood without potable water or electricity; dropped out of school after the fourth grade to work full time as a bricklayer's assistant at age 11. By age 13 he joined the M18 gang. In the 5 years he spent in the gang, he landed in prison 12 times, turning 18 in a jail cell. He explained that his last time in jail scared him enough that he decided to leave the gang. Many gang members who decide to leave their past life behind take refuge in a church; Daniel left on his own accord, at considerable risk to himself.

Last year Daniel was selected as 1 of the 10 members of the "Desafio 10: Paz para los Ex" ("Challenge 10: Peace for Ex Gang Members") reality TV show, a program through which USAID and the Guatemalan private sector helped former gang members find new ways to make a living. With ongoing support from USAID's Youth Alliance program, "Panadero" established and ran a successful shoe repair and shine business in which he took great pride. He had gone back to school and planned to attend college with the money he earned from his shop. He impressed many people with his honesty, hard work, and courage. Daniel provided authentic testimony that it is possible for a young man to turn his life around if he has the will and is given an opportunity. He gladly shared his story with such visitors in the hope that other youths would continue to be given such opportunities for a new life, and that USAID and other donor agencies would continue to reach out to at-risk youth. As one of those who worked with him said, "Through his example 'Panadero' has confirmed the value of working with youths who have abandoned gangs and decided to take a new path in life."

Daniel's finest hour was his trip last May to Washington to address a group of business leaders and policymakers, including Guatemala's Vice President Eduardo Stein, at the Guatemalan Embassy. With the help of the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala, Daniel obtained a last minute Department of Homeland Security waiver to allow him a visa to travel. Daniel's talk motivated the Guatemalan Embassy to begin to raise funds for a tattoo removal project. Daniel may have been killed because he was mistaken for a gang member: a possibility, because of the tattoos on his hands and neck, which he had hoped to have removed.

Daniel once said that he did not want to be just "a former gang member," and he achieved that goal. A week before his death, Daniel volunteered as an election observer with Mirador Electoral, a Guatemalan civic coalition that monitors elections. Mirador Electoral has demanded an investigation into his death. He showed that an "ex" can be an active as well as law-abiding citizen. He sought a better life not just for himself and his family, but also for Guatemala. Daniel Ochoa was not only a rehabilitated ex-gang member; he was a rehabilitated human being.