

streamlining deportation proceedings, and overwhelming, rather than strengthening, our immigration courts?

My country owes a great deal to the hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans who have made the United States their home. They are great assets to our local communities, working hard, opening small businesses, investing in their neighborhoods, and all the while continuing to invest in their families and former communities here in El Salvador. It reminds me a lot of my own Irish-Polish immigrant heritage.

I learned a great deal about El Salvador from refugees in 1983 who told my former boss, Congressman Joe Moakley, their stories. I believe that Salvadoran children and families telling similar stories about why they are trying to escape gang violence and criminal networks can make a difference today. Policymakers need to understand this reality. It also requires a commitment to invest in new policies, new ideas, new approaches—both here in El Salvador and in the United States.

When we deal with criminal and gang violence in the United States, we know we need to deal with education, social services and prevention programs, and with jobs and opportunities for young people. I don't know why anyone believes it's any different here.

The Government of El Salvador has made great progress. When I first traveled to El Salvador, the FMLN was in the mountains, settling differences through the barrel of a gun. Today, the Salvadoran people have just elected its second president from the FMLN political party. Peace has made a tremendous difference. The Salvadoran people's commitment to peace has made a tremendous difference. And today, political disputes are settled in the political and public arena.

I am grateful to be able to honor the lives of the Jesuit martyrs, and to know that their memory and their example continue to influence so many people, even now, 25 years after their murders.

I am also proud that we will be presenting later today a gift from the Moakley Foundation in Massachusetts for the UCA. I still believe that one of the best investments we can make in El Salvador is to support this university. Future leaders of El Salvador are being educated here today—maybe one of you sitting in the audience will be president of El Salvador one day, or a financial leader, or a teacher whose students will change the world, or a social worker who will work with communities and design the model that lifts thousands of Salvadorans out of poverty and into a dignified life. It is all possible, here at the UCA.

Education is the great liberator. The history of the UCA—and the lives and work of the Jesuit community—have long stood for an engaged and educated society, able to transform itself for the good of all people. This is why universities throughout Central America and around the world have created partnerships with the UCA. The UCA is the place where new ideas, new visions, and new leadership come to be nurtured and to flourish. And the UCA has always been where the voices of the poor were amplified—not just during the war, but in the hard work of advancing and consolidating the peace.

We all know there is no quick fix to the problems facing El Salvador. But many of the solutions to those problems are ones that the Jesuits and the UCA have advocated for as long as I can remember. All people deserve to be treated with dignity. Investing in the poor means listening to those who live in marginal communities and letting them decide how best to address the many problems that affect their daily lives. Certainly, confronting violent gangs and criminal networks requires strong police and judicial sys-

tems. But it also requires that those institutions be free of corruption, transparent, respectful of basic human rights, able to carry out their duties at a decent living wage, and in harmony with the communities that rely on their protection.

The good news is that there are solutions, and we basically know what they are. I believe with the commitment to act and press policymakers to do the right thing for the majority of Salvadorans, especially the poor, we can all make a difference. And I rely on the UCA and the Jesuits in El Salvador and the United States to remain committed and engaged, and to help show us the way.

In 1982, in a speech at Santa Clara University, Father Ellacuría spoke eloquently about the role of the university. He began by saying:

“Our historical reality—the reality of El Salvador, the reality of the Third World, that is, the reality of the larger part of the world and the most universal—is characterized fundamentally by the dominance of falsehood over truth, of injustice over justice, of oppression over liberty, of scarcity over abundance, in short of evil over good. . . .”

He then went on to describe the role of the university this way:

“We ask ourselves what to do with the University. And we answer, above all, from the ethical point of view: transform it, do what is possible so that good wins over evil, liberty over oppression, justice over injustice, truth over falsehood and love over hate. . . .”

“A Christian university must take into account the gospel preference for the poor. This does not mean that only the poor study at the university; it does not mean that the university should abdicate its mission of academic excellence—excellence needed to solve complex social problems. It does mean that the university should be present intellectually where it is needed: to provide science for those who have no science; to provide skills for the unskilled; to be a voice for those who have no voice; to give intellectual support for those who do not possess the academic qualifications to promote and legitimize their truth and their rights.

I do not mean to be presumptuous by quoting Fr. Ellacuría to all of you who work and study at the UCA, but for me, those words resonate as strongly today as they did three decades ago. How can we look at the agony and desperation of so many Salvadorans and Central Americans and not feel called upon to respond generously and in solidarity with them, their families and their communities? I strongly believe—and it is one of the most important legacies of the Jesuit martyrs—that we are here to help the least among us. For me, this is the most important mission—for governments, for churches, for universities, for all of us. As Professor Emeritus Dave O'Brien, at the College of the Holy Cross, a Jesuit college in my home town of Worcester, wrote earlier this week, the challenge for all of us is in “creating the next chapter.”

When I think of the lives and the deaths of those who we honor and who bring us together for this reflection, I believe that if they were still here with us, experiencing El Salvador's current reality, they would be calling us to the same commitment, built on the same ideals.

These eight individuals—six priests, two women—they died for a reason. What they stood for is very powerful. As long as I live I will be inspired by their words and by their example.

It is a powerful legacy. Let us build upon it together. Let us create the next chapter. Thank you.

HONORING JACKSON REXFORD

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jackson Rexford. Jackson is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 206, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jackson has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jackson has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jackson has led his troop as the Patrol Leader and also became a Brave in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and a Brotherhood Member of the Order of the Arrow. Jackson has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jackson constructed four raised planters for Susquehanna Baptist Church in Independence, Missouri. All of the food produced in these planters will be provided to the church's food pantry.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in commending Jackson Rexford for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 4, 2014

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, the National Defense Authorization Act provides critical authorities for our men and women in uniform. It provides for their pay, addresses issues of mental health and suicide, protects victims of sexual assault and ensures they are well equipped and trained to conduct the missions that the country asks of them. I am proud that my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee and in the House could come to bipartisan agreement on this legislation to ensure that our Armed Forces remain the best in the world. It is not perfect, but this year's NDAA is an example of how we can work together to keep the American people safe, save tax payer dollars and make sure our men and women in uniform get the support they deserve.

However, I remain concerned about the provision included in the NDAA to provide for authorization through 2016 for the equipping and training of Syrian rebels.

There still remain too many questions about the long term implications of arming and equipping rebel forces and how this action fits into our broader strategy of destroying ISIS. I believe, without a detailed discussion on what supporting the Syrian rebels entails, that this kind of authorization will lead to a much longer and costly level of engagement. Congress has failed to properly discuss and weigh the long