

IN MEMORY OF BETTY DESANTO

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 16, 1999*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of one of Cleveland's greatest softball players, Betty DeSanto.

Betty DeSanto has been a dedicated sports-woman all her life. She has been a part of many softball teams and has won countless city titles. She was even inducted into the Greater Cleveland Sports Hall of Fame in 1984 and the Greater Cleveland Slow Pitch Hall of Fame in 1991.

Betty DeSanto was a person who not only played the sport well, she exemplified great sportsmanship. As the assistant manager and later as the manager of the Cudell Recreation Center, she organized various sports teams and encouraged both boys and girls in their athletic pursuits. She is an inspiration to all who participate in sports and with a little dedication, love and heart you can go on to achieve greatness.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in honoring this great sportswoman, Betty DeSanto. She was a very talented athlete and she will be greatly missed.

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**HONORING DR. GARY SCHNEIDER  
UPON HIS RETIREMENT**
**HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 16, 1999*

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Gary Schneider, one of the foremost experts on forestry at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is retiring this year.

Dr. Schneider has been an asset to the University for many years, having served as a Professor and Head of the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries. Currently, he serves as the Associate Dean of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at UT.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Schneider has also served as a consultant for many organizations including, the U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Agency for International Development and many others. Additionally, he has published several academic articles.

Dr. Schneider has advanced the study of forestry and related fields during his tenure at the University of Tennessee, and I know that his leadership and expertise will be missed.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I join with his friends, family and colleagues in congratulating Dr. Gary Schneider for an outstanding career at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO THE TEMPLE PATROL OF THE TUSCAN MORNING STAR LODGE NO. 48

**HON. ROBERT A. BRADY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 16, 1999*

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Temple Patrol of the Tuscan Morning Star Lodge No. 48, located in Philadelphia. The Temple Patrol was originally formed in 1990 to provide a communal protective service for members attending meetings at the Prince Hall Masonic Complex. Since its formation, the Temple Patrol committee has grown to over 30 members and has received many accolades for its valuable safety services.

The Temple Patrol has been so successful that only one criminal incident has been recorded in its area of operations since its inception. The Tuscan Morning Star Lodge No. 48 has received high praise due to the success of the Temple Patrol; it was awarded Ex-Large Lodge of the Month on several occasions and even Ex-Large Lodge of the Year. In addition to these past recognitions, I would also like to commend these gentlemen who bring peace to the streets through their self-sacrifice.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the efforts of the members of the Tuscan Morning Star No. 48 Temple Patrol committee. I wish them luck in the future and thank them for all their hard work that has made the streets of Philadelphia safer.

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**HUMAN RIGHTS LEADERS SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHT INFORMATION ACT, H.R. 1625**
**HON. TOM LANTOS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 16, 1999*

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, recently I introduced in the House The Human Rights Information Act (H.R. 1625). This legislation has already found strong bipartisan support with over 50 of our distinguished colleagues joining as original cosponsors of this bill.

When our legislation was introduced, prominent human rights leaders and victims of human rights abuses joined us at a press conference announcing the legislation. Their comments about the Human Rights Information Act and their personal and professional insights regarding this legislation are particularly helpful.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the statements these human rights leaders made regarding the Human Rights Information Act be placed in the RECORD. These outstanding statements are by Dr. William F. Schultz, Executive Director of Amnesty International USA; Adriana Portillo-Bartow, a Guatemalan mother whose eldest two daughters were kidnapped and disappeared and have not been seen for the past 17 years; Sister Dianna Ortiz, a Roman Catholic nun who was abducted, tortured and repeatedly raped by members of the Guate-

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malan security forces; and Carlos M. Salinas, the Advocacy Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of Amnesty International.

STATEMENT OF DR. WILLIAM F. SCHULTZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA

Good afternoon. I'm Dr. William F. Schultz, Executive Director of Amnesty International USA. I join my esteemed colleagues today to support legislation that addresses the tragic legacy of political violence: torture, assassinations, "disappearances," and massacres. This legislation will put criminals behind bars and help families heal from their devastating losses at the hands of brutal torturers and thugs.

Over the past few decades, we witnessed immense suffering in Guatemala and Honduras. The fierce counterinsurgency campaign by Guatemalan military governments beginning in the 1960s left 200,000 dead or "disappeared" according to the Guatemalan Truth Commission. The campaign became one of a "scorched earth strategy" in which hundreds of villages were wiped out in what the Trust Commission called acts of genocide. Thousands of men, women and children were killed—often after brutal torture or in more than 600 wholesale massacres, according to the Commission. Thousands more were "disappeared"—never to be seen again.

The politically-driven violence in Honduras during the 1980s resulted from a deliberate strategy by the government and military to treat non-combatant civilians as military targets. This "dirty war" meant torture, assassination and "disappearance" for student activists, teachers, journalists, trade unionists, human rights lawyers and leftist politicians.

Out of the ashes of this bloody history has risen legislation vital to the promotion and protection of human rights—not only in Honduras and Guatemala but in every country in the world. The Human Rights Information Act orders the declassification or release of U.S. government documents about human rights violations when the U.S. receives a request from a bona fide truth commission or judicial authority. It will give survivors of torture and "disappearances" information about who was responsible for their abuse and the reasons why they were targeted. It also will allow family members to recover the remains of their "disappeared" loved ones.

Amnesty International is proud to support the Human Rights Information Act and our activists are ready to mobilize for its passage. Last year, we brought over 100,000 petitions and letters to Congress—and we will bring 100,000 more this year, if need be. I believe that every American watching the Kosovo crisis unfold would support this Act as a means to ensure justice for the thousands of refugees we see on our television screens each day.

There are three compelling reasons why Congress must pass this Act.

First, the Human Rights Information Act is profoundly pro-family. The Act will help families torn apart by torture, assassination or "disappearances" heal and find some measure of closure in the wake of brutality.

Second, the Human Rights Information Act will fight crime. The perpetrators of human rights violations are responsible not for dozens or even hundreds of brutalities but for tens of thousands of crimes against humanity. As a great forensic anthropologist Dr. Clyde Snow said, "[t]he great mass murderers of our time have accounted for no more than a few hundred victims. In contrast, states that have chosen to murder

their own citizens can usually count their victims by the carload lot. As for motive, the state has no peers, for it will kill its victim for a careless word, a fleeting thought, or even a poem." Assassins, torturers, those who order the brutalities and those who cover them up, however, are rarely punished, sometimes amnestied and often never prosecuted. Successful prosecutions will punish and put behind bars human rights violators who may still be involved in criminal activity. And it will send an unequivocal message that human rights violations will not be tolerated.

Third, the Human Rights Information Act will strengthen democracy. It will deter future violators and strengthen the rule of law. It will tell the world that no one is above the law and it will restore citizens' confidence in their legal institutions.

The wounds from atrocities committed in Guatemala, Honduras and many other countries cannot heal until the whole truth about human rights violations is revealed. Families and survivors need to know—and have the right to know—who ordered the killings, why their loved ones were tortured and killed, and where to find their "disappeared" loved ones. If simply telling the whole truth, as the Human Rights Information Act will do, helps thousands of families heal from some of the worst crimes known to humanity, how can we not reveal it?

STATEMENT OF MS. ADRIANA PORTILLO-BARTOW, A GUATEMALAN MOTHER

My name is Adriana Portillo-Bartow and I am a survivor of the war in Guatemala. I am also a mother who for the last 17 years has had to live without knowing the truth about the whereabouts of her two oldest daughters, kidnapped and disappeared by Guatemalan security forces in 1981.

My daughters Rosaura and Glenda, 10 and 9 years old at the time of their disappearance, were detained, together with my 70 year old father, my step-mother, one of my sisters-in-law, and my 18 month old sister, on September 11, 1981, by a large group of military and police forces. They have never been seen or heard from since.

I waited 15 years for the appropriate political conditions to exist in Guatemala so I could begin the search for the truth about the whereabouts of my disappeared family. I have been back to Guatemala eight times since December 1996, when the Final Peace Accord for a Firm and Lasting Peace was signed.

Eight trips to Guatemala I have made in my pursuing of the truth, without any results. On each of my trips I have met with the Guatemalan Presidential Human Rights Commission, I have met with the Guatemalan Human Rights Ombudsman Office, I have met with many non governmental human rights organizations. I have met with U.S. Embassy officials. I have even tried pursuing the truth through the Guatemalan judicial system, which everybody knows does not work. The case of my disappeared family is illustrative case #87 in the Historical Clarification Commission's report "Guatemala: Memory of Silence". And no one has been able to help me, or has wanted to help me.

Because of that, now, more than ever, I am hunted by the memories of my disappeared father, of my little daughters, and of my other relatives. For the past seventeen years I have not slept, unless through the use of artificial means, because I am afraid of waking up to a nightmare of my disappeared children being eaten by dogs and vultures. Some days I am hunted by images of their bodies abandoned in shallow graves in a clan-

destine cemetery, somewhere in Guatemala. Other days I am hunted by the possibility of my little daughters and sister having been given up for adoption—illegally—to a family in a foreign country.

When will I be able to leave my torment behind? When will I be free from the ongoing torture it means for me not knowing what became of my daughters? When will I be able to be at peace with myself? Only the day I find out the truth about what happened to my disappeared family. Only the day I am able to recover their remains for a proper and dignified burial.

The passing of the Human Rights Information Act by Congress is of critical importance to the relatives of the disappeared in Guatemala. It can offer people who find themselves in the position I am now the real possibility of learning the truth about the whereabouts of their disappeared relatives. It can offer mothers like me an end to the painful and everlasting effects of the most sophisticated form of torture; the disappearance of our children. Furthermore, it can offer mothers like me the possibility of family reunification if our children survived—and if they didn't, the opportunity to bury them and mourn their loss in a healthy and dignified manner.

President Clinton acknowledged on March 10 of this year, while in Guatemala, that the involvement of the United States in the horrors that took place during the war was wrong, and that it had been a mistake that must not be repeated again. He said that the United States must and will continue to support the peace and reconciliation process in Guatemala. Truth and Justice are the foundation of Peace. The passing of the Human Rights Information Act by Congress is a very concrete step that can be taken, for the United States to truly play a historical role in the process towards reconciliation and an everlasting peace in Guatemala.

As a Guatemalan, and as the mother and sister of three little girls that disappeared during the long war in Guatemala I feel that the contribution of the United States to the suffering of the Guatemalan people constitute a moral obligation to assist all of us, relatives of the disappeared, in our search for the truth about the whereabouts of our loved ones. Only the day the full truth of what happened is known, and dealt with, will we be able to say that the suffering the Guatemalan people has endured for so many years is finally a tragedy of the past. Only the day we know the full truth will we be sure that the "mistake" President Clinton referred to will not be repeated again—in Guatemala or in any other country of the world.

STATEMENT OF SISTER DIANNA ORTIZ, A ROMAN CATHOLIC NUN

Let me begin by thanking Representatives LANTOS and MORELLA for inviting me to share my thoughts on the importance of the Human Rights Information Act. Two days ago it became all the more evident to me that we must do everything in our means to make certain this bill is enacted. Let me share with you some of my story.

In November of 1989, I was abducted, tortured and repeatedly raped by members of the Guatemalan security forces. During my detention, just as my torturers were readying themselves to rape me yet again, a man came into the clandestine cell, a man my torturers referred to as Alejandro, and their boss [jefe]. He was tall; he was fair-skinned; and he spoke poor Spanish with a heavy North American accent. He gave explicit orders to his torturers, which they obeyed, and

he warned me not to say anything about my torture—telling me—in American English—that if I did, there would be consequences.

For nearly a decade, I have spent the majority of my waking hours trying to learn the truth of what happened on November 2, 1989. I have spoken openly of what I witnessed and experienced at the hands of the three Guatemalans and Alejandro. In turn, I have been told that I must be mistaken: The U.S. Government would never conspire with human rights violators, let alone provide them leadership. It has even been suggested to me that I am "obsessed" with Alejandro. I have been advised to concentrate on my Guatemalan abusers alone, instead of tainting the reputation of the U.S. Government. But no one will answer my two single questions: Why was there an American in a Guatemalan secret prison, giving orders to torturers? Who authorized him to be there?

No one in Guatemala will tell me the truth. And no one in the United States will tell me the truth. For nearly ten years, I have gone from one battlefield to another—asking for the truth for myself and for the people of Guatemala. Following the advice of so many people, I went through all the proper channels. I filed charges in Guatemala and cooperated with Guatemalan government investigators, traveling to Guatemala on numerous occasions to testify and participate in judicial reconstructions. I soon learned that justice in Guatemala is a mirage. The judicial system did not work then—and does not work now. The investigation of the murder of Monsenor Gerardi is a clear example of how impunity continues to reign.

The next battlefield was in my homeland—the United States. Even in my country of origin, government officials refused to provide me with information, and so I thought—file a FOIA request—you're sure to get answers. Documents were released—but they contained no information of substance. In August of 1995, I was told that the Justice Department had begun a serious and impartial investigation of my case. Putting aside my feelings of mistrust, I took the risk of working closely with the investigators. This entailed being interviewed by investigators for more than forty hours; having to relate every detail of the humiliation and cruelty I suffered at the hands of my torturers; going into dangerous and painful flashbacks brought on by the detailed questions. Under such prolonged stress, I lost a portion of the ground that I had gained in my recovery.

But I steeled myself and did all I could for as long as I could to help the investigation along. I hoped that, this time, I might be told the truth. There were warning signs, however—signs that I was wrong. One of the DOJ attorneys openly yelled at me and accused me of lying. And as I heard about the investigators' interviews with my family and friends, it became clear that I was being cast as the culprit, that I was the one being investigated, not those responsible for the crimes against me. After giving almost all of my testimony, I made the decision to disengage myself from direct participation in the DOJ investigation.

Perhaps I am a coward—but I could no longer subject myself to the retraumatization brought on by the investigators' questions and their abusive treatment. They had my testimony in detail and the sketches I had made with the help of a forensic artist. The responsibility for finding the truth lay with them.

Shortly after taking this step, I learned that the Justice Department had concluded its investigation. What did the Justice Department officials conclude after a year of

investigating my case? What did they glean from the countless hours I and my friends and family spent pouring out our hearts to them? I don't know. I'm not allowed to know. Investigators made a report of more than 284 pages—and classified it. They cited a need to protect "sources and methods"—and MY privacy. How thoughtful of them. Investigators assured me that this report would be kept so secret that it would be seen only by the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General and the official in charge of the investigation. Four copies of this report exist, they told me, and they are under lock and key.

I have since learned that the classified report was made available to few privileged people, including former ambassador Thomas Stroock, who is not even associated any longer with the U.S. Government. This is how the DOJ protected my privacy.

The investigation has not helped me one iota and has not helped the American people. The report is about the event that shattered my life, about the event that tore my past from me. The report is about the event that destroyed my sense of myself, my relationships with others and my relationship with God. The report was about the event that has stolen my ability to sleep and to feel safe in the world. I am the one who is tormented by all the questions surrounding that event. And now I have even more. Why is it that the Justice Department refuses to answer my questions? Who are they protecting? What are they covering up?

On June 26th, 1998, I filed a FOIA request, asking the U.S. Government to declassify the report. Again, I allowed myself to hope. During President's Clinton visit to Guatemala, I allowed that hope to grow. Mr. Clinton publicly acknowledged U.S. complicity in human rights violations. Finally, I thought, our government has owned up. The need for secrecy is obsolete. I'll get the report.

Two days ago, I learned from my attorney that the FOIA officer for the U.S. Attorney General's Office denied my FOIA request in full. Why? To protect their sources and methods? What sorts of methods? Torture? To protect the identities of my Guatemalan torturers and the American, Alejandro? Why is it that those who commit human rights violations merit protection while those of us who suffer these abuses at their hands receive none?

Perhaps only another survivor who has been betrayed again and again by her government can know what I feel standing here. I'm tried and all I want to do is close my eyes and not wake up. I literally had to force myself to come here today. The feelings of disillusionment and aloneness are enough to overwhelm me. But I am here.

The words that resound in my head over and over again are: "The truth will set you free." Those words are found in scripture. Ironically enough, these same words are etched on the entrance to that cathedral of secrecy, the CIA. I believe the truth would set me free. I will never feel safe in my own country until I know exactly what the role of my government was in my abduction and torture. How can I feel safe? How can anyone feel safe, if the truth is being concealed? If this is a country concerned with righting the wrongs of the past and the wrongs of our world, our government has nothing to lose by disclosing the truth. It owes that much to the survivors of the political violence we sponsored in Guatemala, Honduras and countless other countries. It owes that much to those of us who paid the taxes. The secret

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

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prison was in Guatemala. The prison of secrecy is here. The Human Rights Information Act could be the key.

STATEMENT OF CARLOS M. SALINAS, THE ADVOCACY DIRECTOR FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL  
I think it's clear that there is real momentum for passage of the Human Rights Information Act—and why shouldn't it be this way?

In the last Congress, the bill went from introduction to mark-up in less than a year even though most observers were surprised that it even got a hearing! But what most observers did not count with the perseverance of Congressman Lantos, Congresswoman Morella, Chairman Horn, then-ranking member Kucinich, and all of their incredibly dedicated and hard-working staffs. The observers did not count on the fact that there were many others ready and willing to add their names and prestige to this effort for truth and justice—so many more than 100 House members became co-sponsors in less than a year! Many observers underestimated the tenacity and perseverance of amazing people like Adriana Portillo-Bartow, Jennifer Harbury, Sister Dianna Ortiz, Meredith Larson, Dr. Leo Valladares Lanza, and so many others.

Washington conventional wisdom, continuing to insist that true intelligence reform is destined to oblivion, did not count on the fact that the yearning for truth and justice is a million times greater than the strongest bureaucratic inertia, that the search for truth will always overpower obfuscation and stonewalling, and that the American people and its elected representatives know and are committed to truly putting people first, to truly strengthening families, to truly fighting crime.

And so, thanks to tens of thousands of voices from Hawaii to Florida, and Maine to Alaska, we hear the message: pass the Human Rights Information Act. This message is supported by organizations like the Latin America Working Group, the Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, the Washington Office on Latin America, the Religious Task Force on Central America and Mexico. I could go on and on!

So we begin anew our quest for the truth, our quest for justice, with the knowledge that both republicans and Democrats, Chairs and Ranking members, have shown and are showing their support for a bill that could rend the web of secrecy and lies that keep the public from finding out what it is entitled to know, that keep family members from healing and reaching closure, that keep criminals, mass murderers, torturers, and assorted thugs on the streets, well, we gotta stop that and we will change the law. This law is for you, Dianna. This law is for you, Jennifer. This law is for you, Adriana. This law is for you, Anne [Larson, mother of human rights worker Meredith Larson who survived a stabbing attack in Guatemala City in 1989]. Indeed, this law is for all of us, for a better tomorrow, for a more just today.

### IN HONOR OF FRANK VICKERS

#### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of the USWA's most respected

leaders, Frank Vickers. Over the past 30 years, Frank Vickers has dedicated his life to work extremely hard for the Steel Workers of Ohio. He joined the USWA in 1957, and since that time he has served as Local 5684 President, District 30 Organizing Coordinator, Ohio Legislative Coordinator and the Ohio Legislative Representative.

Frank has chaired USWA negotiations with LTV Steel, Timken, American Steel Foundries, Amsted Industries, Armco, Inc. and Republic Engineered Steels. Frank has also served as Vice President of the Cincinnati AFL-CIO Central Labor Council.

Frank Vickers has been a dedicated USWA worker for the last 30 years. In that time he has made tremendous strides in improving the productivity of the USWA. Through his efforts the USWA has expanded their influence all over the country in order to benefit the steel workers.

Frank has not only been a successful advocate for steelworkers but has also been a dedicated family man. His efforts are greatly appreciated by all the members of the USWA. He is not only a hard worker, but a good friend to all.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in honoring this dedicated man, Frank Vickers, for 30 years of serving the Steelworkers. I would like to wish Frank the best of luck and good fortune in the future.

### A FAVORITE SON GOES TO WASHINGTON

#### HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I commend to my colleagues the following article about one of our very own, Congressman GEORGE MILLER of California, who this year marks his 25th year of service in Congress.

This article poignantly captures GEORGE's commitment to public service and his unwavering belief in our system of government. As GEORGE says in this article, being a Member of Congress "is a privilege. It's what makes me get up in the morning and go to work, knowing in one fashion or another you're going to get to be a participant in our Democratic system. It sounds really corny, except it's really energizing."

This article also presents comments from the people who do not share GEORGE's views but who bestow upon him their respect for his integrity, his candor, and his unrelenting pursuit of what he believes to be right for this country.

[From the Contra Costa Times, June 6, 1999];

### A FAVORITE SON GOES TO WASHINGTON— REPEATEDLY

By Daniel Borenstein

WASHINGTON—Despite George Miller's limp from his surgery, the 6-foot-4-inch congressman sets the brisk pace as he and fellow liberal Rep. John Tierney of Massachusetts cross the Capitol grounds.

The pair lament the high prescription drug prices Americans without health insurance are forced to pay. To Miller, it's a political