

one we do not like so we are anticipating that by suggesting that they better get their act together, meaning let anybody win except the opposition because that obviously would be undemocratic.

Mr. Speaker, there has to be a reason why Latin America went from military dictatorships to so-called democracies to again electing leftist leaders. Either something is in the water of Latin America or people are fed up with conditions. So what do we do? Instead of saying they are electing leftist governments and we should find out why and support the elected leaders in their desire to bring up the poor, we say beware Chavez, beware Bolivia, beware Peru, beware Chile, beware everybody, and especially beware Nicaragua: we did it to you once; we can do it to you again. If you do not elect the kind of government we want, you are in deep trouble with us and you are not democratic. That is not democracy.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER), vice chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana for bringing this resolution to the floor. I am a strong supporter of this resolution.

Democracy in Nicaragua has been and continues to be under threat from something known as "the pact." The pact is an agreement based on corruption and desire for power between two men: former President Aleman and former dictator Ortega, known locally as the party caudillos, strongmen, party bosses; and they are both corrupt.

Let us be clear: the pact today controls the Supreme Court of Nicaragua, the pact controls the Supreme Electoral Council, the pact controls the National Controllers Board, and the public prosecutor's office. These two corrupt caudillos have divided up power so they control it for themselves.

□ 2130

The Pact is alive and well. A side agreement to weaken President Bolanos failed largely because of civil society, but control of the country's institutions, those I named, still continue. So democracy continues to be threatened in Nicaragua. What is the goal of the Pact? To manipulate the 2006 elections for their benefit, for the benefit of former dictator Ortega and former President Aleman, to feed their corruption. The Pact wants to stay in power, including through controlling the supreme electoral council. Now, what type of people make up the supreme electoral council? I would note that two out of seven of the members have had their visas permanently revoked by the United States. And according to a survey published September 19 of this year by La Prensa, the leading newspaper, three-fourths, 74 percent of Nicaraguans believe that the supreme electoral council is capa-

ble of fraud. Evidence points to possible fraud by the supreme electoral council in the most recent election, the 2004 municipal election. Now the supreme court, controlled by Roberto Rivas, is extremely corrupt and influenced by the Ortega side of the Pact. Fully three members of the supreme court of Nicaragua have had their U.S. visas permanently revoked. And the court recently suffered the embezzlement of over \$600,000 in confiscated narco-trafficking funds allegedly by Sandinista officials of the court.

Democracy is indeed in danger in Nicaragua, but I am pleased to see that efforts of civil society, groups like the Movimiento de Democracia and other groups, particularly the government of Nicaragua under President Bolanos to create free and fair and transparent elections continues to push for true democracy. The United States must actively support democracy. The United States must actively support the rule of law and human rights in Nicaragua and to work with international organizations, especially the Organization of American States, to ensure the conditions exist for democracy and to ensure the integrity of the election process. I am particularly pleased that the International Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute are both involved, and I hope the Organization of American States becomes fully engaged now, sooner rather than later, in ensuring a transparent and fair election process.

Mr. Chairman, I commend you for bringing this important resolution to the floor before us today. Democracy has had a good start in Nicaragua. It is under threat because of the Ortega-Aleman Pact. We must do everything we can to support true democracy and ensure free, fair and transparent elections, and that is why I strongly support this resolution and urge bipartisan support.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California.

I want to say that I was greatly concerned hearing the comments of my colleague from New York who raises some valid points about the United States' interventions in Latin America. Now, I think that, you know, on one hand, the sponsors of the legislation have already achieved their ends, and I just wonder if the gentleman from Indiana would yield to a question.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to yield to my colleague.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, you have sponsored a resolution here that, as I indicated earlier, the sponsorship moved some policy change. In light of that, would you have any interest in withdrawing the resolution and declaring victory?

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I do not think so at this time. I think this reso-

lution sends a very strong message, and I think we need to pass it.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker we have no additional requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just end by saying, thank you to Mr. LANTOS, my very good friend, for his leadership and his hard work on this and a lot of other legislation. Let me just say that Mr. LANTOS and I were both here back in the 1980s when the war took place in Nicaragua and El Salvador, and we saw the horrible result of dictatorships. We saw the horrible result of civil war, and democracy has changed that whole region down there. And we think it is extremely important that we do everything we can to support democratic institutions so that we do not have the bloodshed that we saw back in the 1980s and we do not see the massive flight of people leaving that region to get to the United States and elsewhere to get away from those wars. So I think this resolution sends a strong message. Once again, I thank Mr. LANTOS.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 252, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: "Expressing the sense of Congress that the Government of the United States should support democracy, the rule of law, and human rights in the Republic of Nicaragua and work cooperatively with regional and international organizations to bolster Nicaraguan efforts to establish the requisite conditions for free, fair, transparent, and inclusive presidential and legislative elections in 2006."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMEMBERING AND COMMEMORATING THE LIVES AND WORK OF UNITED STATES CHURCH-WOMEN EXECUTED IN EL SALVADOR IN 1980

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 458) remembering and commemorating the lives and work of Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan, who were executed by members of the armed forces of El Salvador on December 2, 1980, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 458

Whereas on December 2, 1980, four United States churchwomen, Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan, were violated and executed by members of the National Guard of El Salvador;

Whereas in 1980 Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford were working in the parish of the Church of San Juan Bautista in Chalatenango, El Salvador, providing food, transportation, and other assistance to refugees and Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan were working in the parish of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in La Libertad, El Salvador, providing assistance and support to refugees and other victims of violence;

Whereas these four United States churchwomen dedicated their lives to working with the poor of El Salvador, especially women and children left homeless, displaced and destitute by the Salvadoran war;

Whereas these four United States churchwomen joined the more than 70,000 civilians who were murdered during the course of the Salvadoran war;

Whereas on May 23 and May 24, 1984, five members of the National Guard of El Salvador—Subsergeant Luis Antonio Colindres Aleman, Daniel Canales Ramirez, Carlos Joaquin Contreras Palacios, Francisco Orlando Contreras Recinos, and Jose Roberto Moreno Canjura—were found guilty by the Salvadoran courts of the executions of the churchwomen and were sentenced to thirty years in prison, marking the first case in the history of El Salvador where a member of the Salvadoran Armed Forces was convicted of murder by a Salvadoran judge;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador was established under the terms of the historic January 1992 Peace Accords that ended El Salvador's twelve years of war and was charged to investigate and report to the Salvadoran people on human rights crimes committed by all sides during the course of the war;

Whereas in March 1993 the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador found that the execution of the four United States churchwomen was planned and that Subsergeant Luis Antonio Colindres Aleman carried out orders from a superior to execute them, and that then Colonel Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova, then Director-General of the National Guard and his cousin Lieutenant Colonel Oscar Edgardo Casanova Vejar, then Commander of the Zacatecoluca military detachment where the murders were committed, and other military personnel knew that members of the National Guard had committed the murders pursuant to orders of a superior and that the subsequent cover-up of the facts adversely affected the judicial investigation into the murders of the four United States churchwomen;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador determined that General Jose Guillermo Garcia, then Minister of Defense, made no serious effort to conduct a thorough investigation of responsibility for the murders of the churchwomen;

Whereas the families of the four United States churchwomen continue their efforts to determine the full truth surrounding the murders of their loved ones, appreciate the cooperation of United States Government agencies in disclosing and providing documents relevant to the churchwomen's murders, and pursue requests to release to the family members the few remaining undisclosed documents and reports pertaining to this case;

Whereas the families of the four United States churchwomen appreciate the ability of those harmed by violence to bring suit against Salvadoran military officers in United States courts under the Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991 (28 U.S.C. 1350 note);

Whereas the lives of these four United States churchwomen have, for the past 25 years, served as inspiration and continue to inspire Salvadorans, Americans, and people throughout the world to answer the call to service and to pursue lives dedicated to addressing the needs and aspirations of the poor, the vulnerable, and the disadvantaged, especially among women and children;

Whereas the lives of the four United States churchwomen have also inspired numerous books, plays, films, music, religious, and cultural events;

Whereas schools, libraries, research centers, spiritual centers, health clinics, women's and children's programs in the United States and in El Salvador have been named after or dedicated to Sisters Maura Clarke, Ita Ford and Dorothy Kazel and lay missionary Jean Donovan;

Whereas the Maryknoll Sisters, headquartered in Ossining, New York, the Ursuline Sisters, headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, numerous Religious Task Forces in the United States, and the Salvadoran and international religious communities based in El Salvador annually commemorate the lives and martyrdom of the four United States churchwomen;

Whereas the historic January 1992 Peace Accords allowed the Government and the people of El Salvador to achieve significant progress in creating and strengthening democratic political, economic, and social institutions; and

Whereas December 2, 2005, marks the 25th anniversary of the deaths of these four spiritual, courageous, and generous United States churchwomen: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) remembers and commemorates the lives and work of Sisters Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, and Dorothy Kazel and lay missionary Jean Donovan;

(2) extends sympathy and support for the families, friends, and religious communities of the four United States churchwomen;

(3) continues to find inspiration in the lives and work of these four United States churchwomen;

(4) calls upon the people of the United States and religious congregations to participate in local, national, and international events commemorating the 25th anniversary of the martyrdom of the four United States churchwomen;

(5) recognizes that while progress has been made during the post-war period, the work begun by the four United States churchwomen remains unfinished and social and economic hardships persist among many sectors of Salvadoran society; and

(6) calls upon the President, the Secretary of State, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and the heads of other United States Government departments and agencies to continue to support and collaborate with the Government of El Salvador and with private sector, nongovernmental, and religious organizations in their efforts to reduce poverty and hunger and to promote educational opportunity, health care, and social equity for the people of El Salvador.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on December 2, 1980, 25 years ago this month, four American church women were murdered in El Salvador by members of the El Salvadoran military. In 1984, five national guardsmen were tried, convicted and sent to prison for these murders.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of their deaths, the resolution before us commemorates the lives and work of the Maryknoll Sisters, Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel and lay missionary Jean Donovan. It extends our most profound sympathy and support to the families, friends and religious communities of these four women. It encourages us to find inspiration in their lives and work and calls upon the American people and religious congregations to participate in local, national and international events marking the 25th anniversary of their deaths.

The resolution also recognizes that progress has been made in El Salvador following the war, but reminds us that the work of these missionaries on behalf of the poor remains unfinished. Therefore, it calls on us as a Congress to engage ourselves and relevant U.S. agencies to continue to support and collaborate with the Salvadoran government and other private nonprofit and religious groups working to reduce poverty and hunger in El Salvador and to promote educational opportunity, health care and social equity.

I would like to commend Mr. McGovern for bringing this resolution to the floor. It is a fitting tribute to four inspiring American church women who worked on behalf of some of the poorest Salvadorans, including refugees and children left homeless during El Salvador's internal struggles. I think we could all learn a lesson from the events of 25 years ago and work even harder to ensure that democracy remains strong in Central America and elsewhere so that such events can never be repeated. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of this important resolution. Mr. Speaker, El Salvador has progressed much since the 1980s when a horrific civil war tore through the country, consuming some 75,000 lives.

In the last decade, the country has held numerous free and fair elections. Power was transferred peacefully from one political party to another, and the military has withdrawn from the political and economic affairs of the country and returned to its barracks.

Standards of living have also improved. According to the World Bank, fewer infants are dying at birth; more children are attending primary school; and more families have access to safe drinking water today than they did 10 years ago.

El Salvador has also become one of our most trusted and unwavering allies and has taken principled and brave stances on such issues as Iraq and the defense of Israel.

Mr. Speaker, despite these extraordinary accomplishments, El Salvador, like many post-conflict countries, still struggles with a host of social, economic and environmental problems.

Public investments in health, education, sanitation and other social programs are low. As a consequence, the health of the population is generally poorer than that of most of El Salvador's regional neighbors. Also, violence, much of it gang related, is crippling El Salvadoran society. And El Salvador's preparedness to respond and mitigate natural disasters remains lacking.

Today's resolution reminds us to draw strength and inspiration from the lives of four admirable women who were killed for dedicating their lives to trying to bring hope to those who are desperately poor in El Salvador.

Working together with our El Salvadoran friends, I am confident that we can overcome the remaining challenges that confront them and strengthen the already close ties that bind our two great nations.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us today takes another step towards fortifying these bonds. I want to applaud my friend and colleague, Chairman HYDE, for expediting this body's consideration of the resolution, and I commend the efforts of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for authoring it.

I strongly urge all of my colleagues to support H. Res. 458.

Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he might consume to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), the author of this legislation.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to the leadership on both sides of the aisle for bringing this resolution to the House floor before we adjourn for the year. I especially want to thank Western Hemisphere Subcommittee Chairman BURTON, Subcommittee Ranking Member MENENDEZ, House International Relations Committee Chairman HYDE, Ranking Member LANTOS, Majority Leader BLUNT, Democratic Leader PELOSI, Speaker HASTERT, Rules Committee Chairman DREIER and all of their staffs.

Mr. Speaker, on December 2, 1980, Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clark and Ita

Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel and Cleveland lay missionary Jean Donovan were brutally violated and murdered by members of the Salvadoran national guard. The guardsmen who pulled the triggers and their immediate superior, a sub-sergeant, were tried, convicted and imprisoned in 1984 for these heinous crimes, although they were later released in 1997 and 1998. But I am not here today to recall these tragic events. I am here to remember and honor their lives.

These four courageous American women dedicated their lives to the safety and welfare of others, to the poor and the desperate of El Salvador, especially the women and children left homeless and destitute by the violence and the war of that era. It is the way that they lived their lives and the work that they carried out that has proven to be so inspirational to so many people in the 25 years since their death and especially the young people who are looking for role models, both secular and spiritual, to guide their own futures.

I had the privilege to spend December 1 through December 6 in El Salvador and to participate in the many 25th anniversary events organized by the Maryknoll Sisters and other Salvadoran and American religious leaders honoring the lives of these four wonderful women. I was a member of a delegation coordinated by the Washington office on Latin America and the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities. Our delegation joined over 200 other Americans and an equal number of religious representatives from throughout Central and South America and elsewhere. During our 5 days in El Salvador, we walked in the footsteps of these women. We visited small rural communities where they lived and worked. We met with the campesinos, the priests and the sisters with whom they labored. We attended mass, and we worshipped at the site where their bodies were found.

□ 2145

And we listened to the members of their families and their religious orders tell stories of their lost loved ones that brought these women vividly and joyously to life for all of us.

While it was a time of sorrow and remembered grief, it was also a time of celebration, for these four American women are remembered with great love and affection by the Salvadoran people and by so many Americans across our country. Their spirits burn bright and have served to inspire many others, including young people, to lives of service. Who now remembers those who brutalized and murdered them, unless it is with a shudder?

Several 25th anniversary events were held here in the United States during the December 2 weekend in cities as diverse as Kansas City, Boston, Cleveland, Seattle, Detroit, and Milwaukee. Across our country we will also find community centers, neighborhood

health clinics, and groups that provide counseling for young women and mothers dedicated to these four women. We will find libraries, schools, and scholarly centers named in their honor and books, films, plays and music created to celebrate their lives.

In El Salvador, throughout Latin America, and even around the world, it is common to come across communities and humanitarian projects named after Maura Clarke, Jean Donovan, Ita Ford, and Dorothy Kazel.

I have been very privileged to get to know some of the family members of these women, and I have long been a friend of the Maryknoll Sisters. A finer group of people one simply cannot find. It is for them, the families, friends, and colleagues of these four church women that I am proud the House is acting on this special remembrance of their loved ones who have been lost to them these past 25 years but who always remain, as they say in Spanish, "presente" in their hearts, minds, and souls.

I believe these four American women represent the very best our country has to offer. They represent the best values and ideals, not only of the American people but of all people. My recent time in El Salvador inspired me. It reenergized me. It reminded me that we must remain committed to continuing the church women's legacy by helping the poor and disadvantaged of El Salvador develop their communities and create a more hopeful future for all.

I urge my colleagues to approve of H. Res. 458 and to remember the very special lives dedicated to service of Maura Clarke, Jean Donovan, Ita Ford, and Dorothy Kazel.

STATEMENT ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUR MISSIONARY WOMEN—BISHOP THOMAS G. WENSKI, BISHOP OF ORLANDO, CHAIRMAN, USCCB COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL POLICY, NOVEMBER 21, 2005.

Twenty-five years ago, many throughout the world were shocked by the news of the abduction, rape and murder on December 2nd 1980 of four American missionary women in El Salvador. That same year saw the intensification of the civil war in that country that was dramatically marked first by the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero on March 24th and, nearly a decade later, by the slaughter of six Jesuit priests and their two aides at the Central American University on December 16th 1989.

There can be little doubt that the sacrificial deaths—the martyrdoms—of these exemplary Christians, representing the episcopate, the life of vowed religious men and women, and the Catholic laity. Nor is there doubt that the findings of those guilty for these crimes served to hasten the end of that fratricidal war that was finally concluded with the January 1992 Peace Accords.

Sister Maura Clarke, MM, Sister Ita Ford, MM, both of the Maryknoll Sisters, Sister Dorothy Kazel, OSU of the Sisters of St. Ursula, and lay missionary Jean Donovan of the Cleveland Diocesan Mission team were all young, dynamic, deeply committed missionaries. They saw the face of Christ in the poorest and most vulnerable of the people of El Salvador and sought to offer what aid and consolation they could provide. In the poisonous political atmosphere of the time, their concern for "the least of these" was seen by some as a challenge to an unjust status quo.

May we today rededicate ourselves, together with the bishops and faithful of El Salvador and all of Central America, to the task of peace, justice and reconciliation throughout the Americas for which these exemplary women gave their lives.

DECEMBER 7, 2005.

To: Hon. Dennis Hastert, Speaker.

Hon. Roy Blunt, Majority Leader.

Hon. Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES HASTERT, BLUNT, AND PELOSI: As people of faith and leaders of our Nation's religious communities, we write to urge you to move H. Res. 458 expeditiously to the House floor for consideration under suspension before the 109th Congress adjourns for the year. The resolution, which currently has 88 bipartisan cosponsors, was approved unanimously by the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee and unanimously by the House International Relations Committee. It was reported out of the HIRC on November 16, with recommendations that it be placed on the suspension calendar.

H. Res. 458 remembers and commemorates the lives and work of Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan, who were executed by members of the armed forces of El Salvador on December 2, 1980.

Through their dedicated witness and untimely deaths in El Salvador, these four women remind us of the powerful gifts of humility, community and faith.

During the early years of El Salvador's tragic civil war, in which over 70,000 civilians eventually lost their lives, Maura Clarke and Ita Ford worked in Chalatenango, providing food, transportation, and other assistance to refugees; Dorothy Kazel and Jean Donovan worked in La Libertad, providing assistance and support to refugees and other victims of violence.

Based on their commitment to Jesus' call to service in the gospel, these four U.S. churchwomen dedicated their lives to working with the impoverished people of El Salvador, especially women and children left homeless, displaced and destitute by the civil war.

Now, 25 years after their kidnapping, rape and murder at the hands of Salvadoran National Guardsmen, it is fitting for Congress to recognize the women and their sacrifice and how their example has inspired so many others to answer the call to service. We strongly encourage your support of H. Res. 458, and again urge you to make every effort to move this resolution through the International Relations Committee in a timely fashion.

Sincerely,
Congregational Leadership Team,
Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic.

General Council, Maryknoll, Fathers & Brothers.

Leadership Team, Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland.

Leadership Team, Maryknoll Lay Missioners.

Leadership Conference of Women, Religious (LCWR).

Rita Ann Teichman, SSI, Region VII, Leadership Conf. of Women Religious.

Raya Hanlon, OP, Chair Region XIV, Leadership Conf. of Women Religious.

Rev. T. Michael McNulty, SJ, Justice and Peace Director, Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM).

Rev. Charles L. Currie, S.J., President, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities.

Rev. James Hug, S.J., President, Center of Concern.

Dave Robinson, Exec. Director, Pax Christi USA.

Rev. Louis Lougen, Provincial, Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Sister Janet Yurkanin, IHM, Director, Migration and Refugee Services Diocese of Trenton, NJ.

Franciscan Mission Service.

NETWORK, a National Catholic Social Justice Lobby.

Office of Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation, Columban Missionaries.

Leadership Team of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

Institute Justice Team of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Vermont Regional Leadership Team.

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Cincinnati Regional Leadership Team.

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Auburn Regional Community.

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Burlingame Regional Leadership Team.

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Baltimore Regional Community.

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Detroit Regional Leadership Team.

Karen M. Donahue, RSM, Justice Coordinator, Sisters of Mercy Regional Community of Detroit.

Benedictine Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Lisle, IL.

Benedictines for Peace in Pittsburgh.

Benedictine Sisters, Mt. Angel, OR.

Benedictine Sisters of Chicago.

Sisters of St. Benedict, Rock Island, Illinois.

Sister Christine Vladimiroff, Prioress Benedictine Sisters of Erie, PA.

Sister Merle Nolde, OSB, Benedictine Sisters.

Dominican Sisters of Oxford, Leadership Team, Sister Teresita Lipar, OP, Prioress, Sister Susan McMahon, OP, Vicarress, Sister Gene Poore, OP, Councilor.

Adrian Dominican Sisters, Global Mission, Justice and Peace, Adrian Dominican Sisters, Midwest Chapter.

Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena, Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Leadership Team, Tacoma, Dominican Community, Sister Sharon Casey, Sister Patricia Morisset, Sister Mary Patricia Murphy.

Congregation Justice Committee, Sisters of the Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Indiana.

Ann Oestreich IHM, Congregation Justice Coordinator, Sisters of the Holy Cross.

Office of Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Mankato, MN.

School Sisters of Notre Dame, Office of Global Justice & Peace.

Sisters of the Living Word, Leadership Team.

Catherine M. Holtkamp, CDP, Director, Office of Peace & Justice, Congregation of Sisters of Divine Providence of Kentucky.

Sister Anne Shepard, Prioress, Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, KS.

Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, Oregon Province.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange.

Sister Mary Quinn, President, Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield.

Leadership Team, Sisters of St. Joseph, Nazareth, MI.

Sister Patricia Kelly, SSJ, President, Sisters of Saint Joseph, Philadelphia.

Sister Kathleen Coll, SSJ, Coordinator, Sisters of Saint Joseph, Philadelphia.

Sister Ricarda Vincent, SSJ, President, Sisters of St. Joseph, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Sister Rosemarie Lorenz, SSJ.

Sister Maureen P. Kelly, SSJ, Sister Barbara L. Reuben, SSJ, Sister Dorothy Winner, SSJ, Sister Linda M. Larsen, SSJ, Sister Mary Jane Daily, SSJ, Sisters of St. Joseph.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace, Our Lady Province.

Sister Joellen Sbrissa, CSJ, Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation.

Sisters of St. Joseph of La Grange, IL and Wheeling, WV.

Sister Kathleen Lucs, CSJ, Sisters of St. Joseph, of La Grange.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Los Angeles Province.

Rosemary Lynch, IBVM, Provincial, Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Union of Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes.

Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco.

Sisters of St. Francis, Sylvania, Ohio.

Sisters of St. Francis, Little Falls, MN.

Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa.

Leadership Team, Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross.

Leadership Council of the Wheaton, IL Franciscans.

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Office, Wheaton, IL Franciscans.

Sisters of St. Francis, Millvale, PA.

Sister Betty Kane, OSF, Director, Evangelical Life Services, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

Sister Nancy Celaschi, OSF, School Sisters of St. Francis, Pittsburgh.

Sister Virginia Welsh, OSF, Community Minister, Sisters of St. Francis of Tiffin, Ohio.

Sister Mary Elizabeth Imler, General Community Leader, Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Frankfort, Illinois.

U.S. Provincial Team, School, Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Barbara Kraemer, OSF, Sister Elizabeth Heese, OSF, Sister Maureen McCarthy, OSF.

Sister Dominica Lo Bianco, OSF, Our Lady of Angels Convent, Aston, PA.

International Team, School Sisters of St. Francis.

Sister Janet Gardner, OSF, General Minister, Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God, Pittsburgh PA.

Sister Rose Marie Surwilo, OSF, Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet, IL.

Daughters of Charity of the East Central Province Leadership Team.

Sister Irene Fortier DHS, Justice Coordinator for Province, Daughters of the Holy Spirit.

Sister Mary Jo Anderson, CHS, General Coordinator, Community of the Holy Spirit.

Sister Margaret O'Rourke, dmj, Social Justice Coordinator, Daughters of Mary and Joseph, Long Beach, CA.

Leadership Team, Servants of Mary, Ladysmith, WI.

Sister Louise Akers, SC, Sisters of Charity.

Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dubuque, Iowa.

Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Congregational Leadership.

Sisters of Divine Providence of San Antonio, TX.

Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, New York Area Peace and Justice Group.

Sister Regina E. Flanagan, IHM, Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Immaculata, PA.

The Leadership Council Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Monroe, Michigan.

Sister Susan Hadzima, IHM.

Sisters of the Holy Names, California Province.

The Provincial Leadership, Sisters of the Divine Savior—USA Province.

Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary, Oakland, CA.

Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union, Eastern Province.

Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union, Eastern Province.

Sister Joy Peterson, Leadership Team Srs. of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dubuque, Iowa.

Sister Imelda Gonzalez, cdp, Congregation of Divine Providence.

Sister Gertrude Myrick, RSM, Sisters of Mercy.

Sister Florence Magnan, CSA, Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes.

Sister Mary Doretta Cornell, RDC, Sisters of the Divine Compassion.

Sister Eileen White, GNSH, Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart.

Prof. Rowshan Nemazee, Department of Religious Studies, McGill University Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Susan Fitzpatrick.

SOLIDARITY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY REMEMBERING THE MARTYRS OF EL SALVADOR

We are here to honor the memory of four women martyred 25 years ago and of 75,000 others, including Archbishop Romero, who gave their lives for social justice and for human dignity. When corpses were piled high in the public garbage dumps outside this city—when bishops, generals, the nuncio and government officials demanded neutrality from the Church—these four chose to accompany a people made profoundly vulnerable by war and by repression. They lived the virtue of solidarity, not neutrality. Poor people, they believed, were one place of God's revelation in history—an opening where the God of hope and possibility was discovered in the midst of suffering and fear.

When they were killed, for people of faith in the United States and elsewhere in the North, they put a familiar, human face on the thousands of Salvadoran lay people, religious and priests who also were martyred here in those years and they gave great energy to a whole movement learning to act in solidarity with the people of Central America.

Solidarity—not (according to Joe Donders) a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of others, but a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good.

Maura, Ita, Dorothy and Jean lived a solidarity that, even in these very different times would serve us. The Maryknoll Sisters, in the reflection paper they prepared for this conversation, described solidarity as a posture that is rooted in the identity of each person as a creature of God, a creature endowed with immense dignity, a treasure—who is created for interdependence within our human and earth community. They called us to a spirituality of family solidarity, which sets us free to transform our broken world.

In *Like Grains of Wheat*, Margie Swedish and I describe solidarity as the practice of accompanying people and the rest of creation marginalized by institutionalized violence, and of engaging in a process of social, economic and environmental transformation that is rooted in right relationships. We talked about a spirituality of solidarity shaped by a process that included several steps or stages:

Moving across boundaries to see with new eyes the reality of the world in which we live.

Having our hearts broken by the injustice we see, by ecological destruction—and broken open by new relationships

Finding life and joy and faithfulness at the margins, even in the midst of great suffering

Going home, reinserting in our own society as people who were changed, challenged—and are there committed to challenging the status quo

Becoming people of hope who believe that a better world is possible—and making or renewing a commitment to work for that better world.

These are times very different from the “era of the martyrs in El Salvador, Latin

America.” These are times defined by globalization with that phenomenon implies; by excessive wealth concentrated in the hands of a small minority in almost every country of the world and intransigent poverty lived by a global majority; by increasingly evident ecological catastrophe; and by a growing awareness of the intrinsic interconnectedness of humans with each other and with the rest of creation.

What might solidarity look like now and toward what might such a process lead us? That is the question we will all reflect upon this afternoon, but let me offer a few examples around the theme of security, which is becoming the “communist threat” of the 21st century.

Three months ago we watched a painful drama unfold in New Orleans that brought to the surface deep frustration and anger—and spectacular beauty. Immediately, there arose across the country—around the world—a gut level sense that life was precious and that everyone had a right to a dignified rescue from that dreadful situation. When it became evident that some people were much more vulnerable to the ravages of nature than others—that poverty (with its roots in racism) was the determining factor in how one fared, people across the country—around the world—were outraged.

Four years earlier, in the midst of the horrific aftermath of the terrorist attacks in the U.S., the same intuition was evident—to honor the sacredness of every life, to save lives—every life possible. Period. Nothing else mattered—color of skin, language spoken, legal status in the U.S., level of income. Everyone asked immediately how they could help.

We saw with new eyes and our hearts were broken—the beginning of solidarity.

Deep in the human heart, I believe, is an indelible sense of the value of each human life and an instinct for solidarity that accompanies, responds to, needs to shape our conversation around a topic that is too often manipulated for political gain or ideological reasons, yet will be central in many ways to the future of the human community and the integrity of creation.

According to Franciscan theologian Bryan Massingale, “Security in the biblical worldview is an outcome of pursuing [a] more comprehensive vision of shalom. When shalom is established through the pursuit of justice, then true security is found . . . Security is a state of being that flows from the inclusion of all in the bounty of the earth.” Inclusive human security, as opposed to national security or personal financial security, guarantees access to food, clean water, healthcare, education and employment for all. It recognizes the right of people to deep democracy—to participate in important political, economic and environmental decisions that affect their lives and it respects the integrity of creation.

This kind of security—inclusive human security—would emerge from a “globalization of solidarity,” international cooperation to meet the basic needs of all people in a manner that nurtures right relationships within the community of all life—human and beyond.

The experience of solidarity between U.S. people and the people of Central America in the 1970s and 80s and 90s taught us about interdependence and about security rooted in transnational community. That rich and deep experience of solidarity exposed the lie that the security of a wealthy and powerful few is threatened by the majority's desire for and right to a dignified life. In fact, we learned what the poor of Central America already knew—that the security—the very survival—of the majority of people and of the earth herself is profoundly threatened by the

desire of the wealthy and powerful to maintain wasteful and destructive lifestyles.

It is clear now that true, inclusive security has to be rooted in global community—in the globalization of solidarity.

At issue is how we define security, from whose perspective and through what lens.

And it seems to me that the global groaning we are now experiencing is about shifting (especially in the global North) from one definition to the other:

. . . from pursuing security by building higher walls and stronger fences, hiring fiercer guards, inventing more powerful weapons systems, or dominating the global economy

. . . to pursuing security through the adoption of a new—or perhaps a very old—cosmopolitanism that sees and values the whole community of life—and through collaborative attention to ensuring that the basic needs of all human beings everywhere are met. I believe that the role of the Church—of faith communities and of educational institutions is key in facilitating such a shift.

Religious leaders, pastors, educators and the media have to help us—

Grapple with our own fear and insecurity, enabling us to live with vulnerability—even see it as necessary for faithful living in solidarity with the majority of people who are always vulnerable;

Rework our value system from the ground up—reclaiming the positive (exhibited on 9/11 and in response to recent hurricanes) and eliminating rather than orchestrating the violent and destructive;

Reset our priorities from the accumulation of power, wealth and consumer goods to nurturing right relationships with other people and the rest of creation;

Move from individualism to emphasize community—ultimately the global community;

Learn to be present, to listen, to wait—to relinquish our need for instant gratification;

Develop our skills for social, political and economic analysis and historical consciousness that might help us move beyond sound bytes to understand root causes;

Deal with our collective fear of aging and death; and

Reexamine our symbols and myths to strip them of their ability to isolate and blind us—helping us as a people to rethink our way of being in the world, our relationship with the rest of creation.

“Unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.” (John 12:23-26)

Unless a seed falls to the ground and dies . . . the last words of Archbishop Oscar Romero were about the price of liberation—the cost of global solidarity, of inclusive human security. His witness and that of Ita, Maura, Dorothy and Jean can give us courage to move in that direction—courage to birth a solidarity fitting for the intensely integrated and bitterly divided world of the 21st century.

Let me end with a little story:

In 1986, with about 20 other internationals, I accompanied a group of about 500 Salvadorans back to their own land near Suchitoto, which was then still under intense conflict. Many of them had been living at Calle Real refugee camp in San Salvador for 7 years and they were bone tired of being unable to plant crops and care for their families. After a few very difficult days we were arrested—forced by the Salvadoran military to leave the returning families a few heavily mined kilometers from their destination. We and they were not sure they would survive. But they did. They planted their crops and when they reaped their first harvest of beans and corn a few months later, they sent each of us a little packet of black beans and corn

kernels. I have treasured them since as powerful symbols of courage and life—and solidarity.

I lost my first cousin in the World Trade Center—he worked at Cantor Fitzgerald and left his wife and two very young children. About a week after the attack, I wound my way down to the site of the devastation and planted a few of those seeds from El Salvador in a small park as close as I could get to the destruction. In some ways it was a futile gesture—indicative of my inability to imagine a more practical gesture of support for his family. On the other hand, those seeds carry great weight—the weight of what might blossom were we to open our hearts as a nation to a way of life given to global solidarity.

Over a year later, I returned to Ground Zero with my family. After they went on their way, I found my way back to that little park just to see it after the debris had been cleared—there was a tall stalk of corn where I had planted the seed. It was unbelievable, but a powerful sign of hope to me. The seeds of the solidarity that nourished us—North Americans and Central Americans together will bear rich fruit personally, nationally and globally—if we are willing to risk planting them again.

MARIE DENNIS,
El Salvador, December 3, 2005.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I commend my friend from Massachusetts for his singularly moving statement.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I rise in support of this resolution to honor the four United States churchwomen who were murdered in El Salvador 25 years ago this month: Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Maryknoll Lay Missioner Jean Donovan. Sisters Dorothy Kazel and Jean Donovan were both from my hometown of Cleveland. I was present at a neighborhood church during a reception for Sister Dorothy before she left on her last trip to El Salvador and have shared many moments with the Kazel family since then.

These churchwomen, along with other martyrs, dedicated their lives to working with El Salvador's poor during the incredibly dangerous and devastating period of the Salvadoran civil war. What their lives were about was bringing the social Gospel to those most in need. More than 70,000 civilians were murdered during the 12 years of that war.

The legacies of a history ripe with violence have lingered. Perhaps the best way to honor the four churchwomen is to do what they would do, to acknowledge the human rights offenses that have continued to this day. I would like to address such offenses: the continued operation of the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia, under the new name of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation; and the ongoing threats to the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman in El Salvador.

I would like to urge support for Dr. Beatrice Alamanni de Carrillo, the

Human Rights Ombudswoman of El Salvador. A crucial component of the 1992 Peace Accords that put an end to the Salvadoran civil war was the establishment of the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, the principal human rights investigative and monitoring body in El Salvador. Dr. de Carrillo has received numerous accolades for her work strengthening human rights in El Salvador.

Yet 25 years after the murders of the four U.S. churchwomen, threats against defenders of human rights continue. Over the course of the past year, the Ombudswoman has been the target of ongoing intimidation and harassment. The United States has the responsibility not only to recognize the work of the four churchwomen who we memorialize today but also to support those who are continuing to defend human rights in El Salvador.

The murders of the churchwomen and countless others were executed by members of the armed forces of El Salvador. Three of the five officers involved in the 1980 rape and murder of four churchwomen were graduates of the School of the Americas. Other notorious graduates involved in human rights offenses in El Salvador have included: El Salvador death squad leader Roberto D'Abuisson; 19 Salvadoran soldiers linked to the 1989 murder of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter; two of the three killers of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador; and 10 of the 12 officers responsible for the murder of 900 civilians in the Salvadoran village, El Mozote.

In supporting the resolution honoring the 4 churchwomen, I would like to urge for floor consideration of another bill offered by Congressman MCGOVERN, H.R. 1217, the Latin America Military Training Review Act of 2005, which closes the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation.

Additionally, I would like to urge support for Dr. Beatrice Alamanni de Carrillo, the Human Rights Ombudswoman of El Salvador. A crucial component of the 1992 Peace Accords that put an end to the Salvadoran civil war was the establishment of the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, the principal human rights investigative and monitoring body in El Salvador. Dr. de Carrillo has received numerous accolades for her work strengthening human rights in El Salvador. Yet 25 years after the murders of the four U.S. churchwomen, threats against defenders of human rights continue. Over the course of the past year, the Ombudswoman has been the target of ongoing intimidation and harassment, including anonymous death and other threats and public slander, at times even by high-ranking State officials. The United States has the responsibility to support the work of human rights defenders in El Salvador whenever we have the opportunity to do so. In memory of the four churchwomen murdered 25 years ago, I urge my colleagues to publicly support the work of Dr. de Carrillo and to pressure the State Department and the Embassy of El Salvador to also publicly support her work.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for House Resolution 458, a resolution honoring the lives of four American churchwomen who were murdered just over 25 years ago in El Salvador. I am a cosponsor

of the resolution and am gratified that the House has chosen to bring it to the floor under suspension of the rules.

In late 1980, four American churchwomen were serving communities in El Salvador that were wracked by the violence of that country's civil war. They were murdered by members of the National Guard of El Salvador, horrifying the world and bringing home the impact of that war to the American public. These four lives were but a fraction of the 70,000 civilians who perished in that conflict, and those numbers are dwarfed by the toll of the misery inflicted by the violence that raged up and down Central America in the 1970s and 80s.

Locked in the struggle of the cold war, the U.S. turned a blind eye to much of the suffering in the region, focusing its efforts on the geopolitical ends of thwarting potential communist movements through military means, whether supporting the contras in Nicaragua or right-wing governments in places like El Salvador. We look back on this period today with a mixture of relief that democracy prevailed and disgust at the tactics that were used.

Brave action by these churchwomen carried the flag of democracy and human rights into that region, and helped freedom prevail. Our reliance on institutions like the School of the Americas to train the soldiers of leaders whose primary attractiveness to us was being "not a communist" rather than sharing our ideals of human rights hamstrung our efforts. Sadly, our military's reluctance to track those that we have trained makes it impossible for us to look beyond the anecdotal record of those who were the worst, or the best, to assess the true measure of what we did. However, that record was enough for those of us concerned about U.S. training of foreign militaries to push for closure of the School of the Americas and ensuring that the training that the U.S. military conducts here in the U.S. and around the world ensures respect for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. People like Joe Moakley and Tip O'Neill, who I wish were here to see this. As chairman of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee in the 1980s, I led the fight with them to restrict U.S. military assistance to despotic regimes, and to conduct better oversight of foreign military training programs.

Today, as much of our foreign assistance seems to be focused on the military front, in places like Colombia and elsewhere, we should remember that humanitarian assistance, development assistance, and people-to-people contact foster stronger bonds and better allies than military assistance alone. Ensuring clean water, education and stronger civil society provide a better life for everyday people do more to further our goals of fighting terror than another shipment of the weapons of war.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 458, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOMMENDING INTEGRATION OF CROATIA INTO NATO

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 529) recommending the integration of the Republic of Croatia into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 529

Whereas the United States recognized the Republic of Croatia on April 7, 1992, acknowledging the decision of the people of Croatia to live in an independent, democratic, and sovereign country;

Whereas since achieving their independence, the people of Croatia have built a democratic society, based on the rule of law, respect for human rights, and a free market economy;

Whereas Croatia is a functioning democracy, with stable institutions guaranteeing the rule of law, human rights, and market economy;

Whereas Croatia has previously cooperated with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) by allowing NATO free access to its air space during NATO's 1999 military action against Serbia;

Whereas the United States has shown support for Croatia in many ways since its independence, including by providing Croatia with economic and military assistance that has contributed significantly to the continued success;

Whereas Croatia is a reliable partner of the United States, actively contributing to the stabilization of South Central Europe;

Whereas NATO's Membership Action Plan, which was launched in April 1999, is a program of assistance that provides both goals and a roadmap for countries aspiring to NATO membership;

Whereas Croatia was invited into the Membership Action Plan in May 2002 and has made substantial progress in attaining the necessary level of reforms required for receiving an invitation to start accession talks with NATO;

Whereas the United States, Croatia, Albania, and Macedonia are signatories to the United States-Adriatic Charter, which promotes Euro-Atlantic integration and commits the signatory nations to the values and principles of NATO and to joining the Alliance at the earliest possible time;

Whereas Croatia significantly improved its cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY);

Whereas on October 3, 2005, the European Union decided to open accession negotiations with Croatia based on the assessment of its Council of Ministers that Croatia met the political and economic criteria for candidacy in the European Union, including that Croatia was fully cooperating with the ICTY;

Whereas Croatia has sent troops to Afghanistan as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in support of the war against terrorism and has endorsed and is participating in the Proliferation Security Initiative with like-minded nations across the world to prevent the flow of weapons of mass destruction, missile systems, and related material; and

Whereas Croatia shares the common interests and values of the free and democratic world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the Republic of Croatia has made significant progress since its independence in strengthening its democratic institutions and respect for human rights and the rule of law;

(2) Croatia should be commended for its progress in meeting the political, economic, military, and other requirements of NATO's Membership Action Plan, its contribution to the global war on terrorism, and for its constructive participation in the United States-Adriatic Charter;

(3) the Government of Croatia should be commended for its ongoing cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia;

(4) Croatia would make a significant contribution to NATO; and

(5) with complete satisfaction of NATO guidelines and criteria for membership, Croatia should be invited to be a full member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization at the earliest possible date.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 529, a resolution introduced that supports the accession of Croatia into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Since achieving their independence in 1992, the people of Croatia have built a democratic society based on the rule of law, respect for human rights, and a free market economy. In addition, they have sent troops to Afghanistan as part of the NATO-led security force in support of the war on terrorism and have provided strong support to the U.S. nonproliferation efforts.

Mr. Speaker, just last week the one remaining impediment to Croatia's entry into NATO was removed when General Ante Gotovina, the alleged Croatian war criminal, was arrested in Spain. General Gotovina has been transferred to The Hague to stand trial before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. His arrest last Thursday in the Canary Islands confirms the truthfulness of the statements by the Croatian Government that Gotovina was not hiding in Croatian territory.

House Resolution 529 commends Croatia's significant progress in strengthening its democratic institutions, its support for the global war on terrorism, and its ability to make significant contributions to NATO. It also ap-

plauds their ongoing cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal.

Finally, the resolution states that once it meets NATO's guidelines and criteria for membership, Croatia should be invited to join NATO at the earliest possible date.

Mr. Speaker, Croatia is not only a strong ally of the United States. The American and Croatian people share a love of freedom and democracy. Croatia has been a steadfast friend, and it will make an important contribution to security and peace in Europe and throughout the world as a member of NATO. Both the Europe and Emerging Threats Subcommittee and the House International Relations Committee unanimously approved House Resolution 529, and I urge its adoption in the full House.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution and urge all of my colleagues to do so.

At the outset, I want to commend my good friend and fellow Californian (Mr. GALLEGLY) for introducing this important piece of legislation.

Since dissolution of Yugoslavia, the Balkans have gone through a period of profound instability, a deadly civil war, and the worst atrocities seen in Europe since the end of the Second World War.

It would be entirely understandable in this context if Croatia had given in to the authoritarian impulses of its past and remained a state where the prospect for democracy remained a hope rather than a reality. And, indeed, the first Croatian Government after independence had elements of extreme nationalism that helped contribute to the atrocities of the 1990s.

Fortunately, the Croatian people rose above their history and have embarked on fashioning democratic institutions that are mandatory for a pluralistic society. There have been two peaceful transfers of power in Croatia since 1991, and the parliamentary elections of 2003 were generally judged by the international community to be free and fair.

Recently, the Government of Croatia has also adopted a more cooperative approach to working with the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, providing key materials and documents that assist the work of this vital international institution. In fact, Mr. Speaker, just this past week, the last remaining key Croatian indictee, Ante Gotovina, was apprehended by Spanish authorities in the Canary Islands and transferred to The Hague to stand trial. We congratulate all those who had a part in bringing this infamous war criminal to justice, and we urge Croatia to continue its vital cooperation with the court. No civilized country can do less.

In response to this increased cooperation, the European Union has decided