

moment in history an occurrence took place that would forever changed Dr. Garcia's life and thrust him into the national spotlight.

When a funeral home in Three Rivers, Texas, refused burial services for a Mexican-American Army Private Felix Longoria, who had died fighting for his country in the Philippines, Dr. Garcia organized the outraged Latino community in protest against this treatment of a fellow American and soldier. The protests were noticed by Senator Lyndon B. Johnson. The Senator's intervention brought an end to the travesty and the Army private was buried with full honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

The incident preceded the founding of the American GI Forum of the United States by Dr. Garcia. Created to assist individuals with their VA benefits, the organization soon took on a deeper meaning and a more vital cause. The American GI Forum became the rallying organization for equal rights in housing, jobs, education, and voting. It also sought to eradicate discrimination and to desegregate the schools, the churches, the theaters, and restaurants—any place that a human being should be allowed the dignity and freedom that he deserved.

Dr. Garcia's life was filled with so many noteworthy and honorable distinctions. In 1968, President Johnson made him the first Mexican American to serve on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. And, in 1984, President Ronald Reagan conferred upon him one of our country's highest and most prestigious honors—the Medal of Freedom. The Medal of Freedom is the highest civilian award given to those who have made humanitarian contributions to their fellow man and who have a deep belief in the traditional American ideals.

Today, Dr. Hector Garcia's vision lives on. The American GI Forum now has the veterans of the Vietnam War and the Gulf War carrying on the fight for human dignity. The traditions and the message that Garcia believed in are perhaps expressed best in the "Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi," the official prayer of the American GI Forum: "Lord, Make me an instrument of Thy Peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love . . ." Dr. Garcia lived this prayer. Please join me today in paying tribute to this great humanitarian.

#### TRIBUTE TO CROATIAN HERITAGE

##### HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 16, 1998*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I pay tribute to my Croatian heritage. On Sunday, March 15, 1998, the Duquesne University Tamburitzans performed at Merrillville High School in Merrillville, Indiana. Following this event, there was a reception at Croatian Fraternal Union Lodge #170 in Merrillville, Indiana hosted by Lodge President Mrs. Elizabeth Morgavan.

Croatian Americans have played an integral role in the development and continued success of the United States of America. Beginning in early part of this century, thousands of Croatian people emigrated to the United States to seek a better and more prosperous life. Many Croatian immigrants came to major industrial centers such as Gary, East Chicago,

Youngstown, Pittsburgh, and Detroit. The jobs that awaited them were not easy and the working conditions not always safe. Nonetheless, these brave people endured and succeeded to build better lives for themselves and their children.

I grew up in an ethnic neighborhood in Gary, Indiana. It was a neighborhood where names like Roganovich, Mudrovich, and Milosovich were more common than Smith, Baker, and Wilson. It was a well tended neighborhood where everyone knew the names of the people on their block. It was a neighborhood where hard work and mutual respect ruled the day.

On 38th and Madison, I learned the values which are so prominent in many of my Croatian brothers and sisters. I have seen first hand how faith, family, humility, determination, courage, concern, and appreciation of our shared heritage can build good character. Croatian immigrants did not have it easy in America. They had to fight to overcome language and cultural differences—but overcome they did. They made the steel that made the cars, machines, and engines that today has made America a beacon of hope to the rest of the world. For that, I am very proud. Croatian-Americans have played by the rules despite the heavy obstacles placed in front of them. For that, I am very proud. They have put God, family, and country at the top of the list. For that, I am very proud. Yes, I am proud to be a part of an ethnic group that has brought so much to the United States of America. Croatian Americans have truly lived the American dream. I will continue to fight to ensure that we continue to dream.

#### TRIBUTE TO MARY ESSIE UNDERWOOD

##### HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 16, 1998*

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, the community of Religious Sisters of Mercy, Catholic school system in Guam, and the people of Guam, particularly the Underwood and Martinez families are in mourning today over the passing of Sister Mary Inez at the age of 91. Though she was frail in her final days, she will always be remembered for her energy and vitality with which she undertook the establishment of both a Mercy convent and a Catholic school system in Guam in 1946 and 1947, respectively.

At the request of Guam's newly-appointed American Catholic bishop, Apollinaris William Baumgartner, Sister Inez returned home to her war-ravaged island to help rebuild not only the island but also the Catholic Church in Guam. In the years prior to World War II, the predominantly Catholic population of Guam was ministered to by American Catholic priests under the direction of Bishop Miguel Olano, a Spaniard who continued the centuries old traditions of Spanish Catholicism. In rebuilding the church after the war, Bishop Baumgartner brought in many new American traditions. The bishop also wanted to formalize religious instruction and education. For this task, he called in Sister Mary Inez.

Born Mary Essie Underwood on October 25, 1906, Sister Mary Inez was the first Chamorro

woman to enter the Catholic religious life. She was accepted as a novice in Belmont, North Carolina in 1926, and until her death on March 9 of this year, she remained firmly committed to her vocation and dedicated to her calling. So much so that in 1946, she sought and secured permission to establish the Religious Sisters of Mercy Order in Guam. In addition to recruiting students for the Diocese of Agaña's new Catholic elementary school, Sister Inez also encouraged and inspired other women to join the convent. Today, the Mercy Convent in Guam is a robust community of well respected teaching professionals, most of whom are Chamorro. In the years since the opening of the original convent in Agaña, Mercy Convents are now established in Tai Mangilao, Oka Tamuning, Dededo, and Inarajan.

Sister Inez founded the Catholic Grade School and the academy of Our Lady of Guam, an all-girls school which continues to produce many of the most successful and accomplished women in Guam today. From humble beginnings in the devastation of Guam in the aftermath of World War II, these two schools were the first of what has grown into a system of seven Catholic grade schools, four nursery/child care centers, an all-male high school and a co-ed high school, attesting to the growth and success of Sister Inez's early efforts.

As a Catholic nun, Sister Inez chose a life of celibacy, and though she had no children of her own, there are thousands of children and adults on Guam who are proud inheritors of her educational legacy. Sister Inez was the daughter of James Holland and Ana Martinez Underwood. She now joins them and her brothers and sisters, Eugenia Salvano, my father John Underwood, James, Raymond, Nancy Shoffner, Rosie Duenas, and Carmen Underwood. In addition to her many convent sisters, Sister Inez leaves behind many nieces, nephews, and grandnieces and nephews who have had the loving privilege of calling her Aunt Mary. I am among them and proud to say, "Adios, Aunt Mary. Si Yu'os un benendisi."

#### SWINGLE AWARD GIVEN TO BRIAN F. KELLY

##### HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 16, 1998*

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Brian F. Kelly, a community leader from my district in Pennsylvania. The Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick will bestow the W. Francis Swingle "Irishman of the Year" award on Brian F. Kelly at their 84th annual St. Patrick's Day Banquet. I am honored and pleased to have been asked to join this tribute.

Commander Brian F. Kelly, Chaplain, United States Navy is a priest of the Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania. Father Kelly attended St. Joseph's Oblate Seminary and St. Pius X Seminary. He is a 1973 graduate of the University of Scranton. In 1977, he earned his Masters in Pastoral Theology from St. John's in Boston. In 1990, the U.S. Navy assigned him to post-graduate study at the University of San Diego, where he earned a masters in Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling. In