

His teaching career began in 1966 while working on his doctoral degree, and since then, he has taught at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Dr. McFarland has published books, reviews and numerous articles dealing with twentieth century military history, and has also made professional presentations dealing with his discipline and graduate studies.

In 1969, Dr. McFarland became an Assistant Professor of History at East Texas State University. This position would pave the way for him to become President of the institution, which in 1996 became part of The Texas A&M University System as Texas A&M University-Commerce.

During Dr. McFarland's tenure, he was able to take Texas A&M University-Commerce to new academic heights—twenty new programs were introduced at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. With enrollment at its highest point in 25 years, the university remains one of Texas' top producers of teachers, principals, superintendents, school counselors and educational diagnosticians. The MBA program is considered the number three best buy in the Nation.

In the past 4 years, administrative costs have dropped from 11½ percent to 9½ percent, while external gifts and research funding has increased by over 200 percent.

Passionate about improving a deteriorating physical plant, Dr. McFarland pushed for the first new Campus Master Plan in 40 years. In 2001, he began the first campus construction project since 1977. This project led to the demolition of forty-one defunct buildings, replacing them with modern and efficient classrooms and support facilities. Under construction today is the Sam Rayburn Student Center, named for one of my personal heroes.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to join the many graduates of Texas A&M University-Commerce, including my wife Mary Ellen, in congratulating Dr. McFarland upon his retirement. I can't think of a better testament to public service than educating tomorrow's leaders, and Dr. McFarland is to be commended for his commitment to the field of higher education. Please join me in honoring him on this prestigious occasion.

HONORING COMMANDER DANIEL K. BRIGGS FOR HIS CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE SONS OF AMVETS OF OHIO

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I am honored to commend to the House the distinguished service of Mr. Daniel K. Briggs to the Ohio Department of the Sons of AMVETS. A resident of Findlay, he will be recognized at a testimonial dinner this weekend for his outstanding work as Commander of the Ohio Department.

Born in Bucyrus, Ohio, Commander Briggs is a 1970 graduate of Bucyrus High School. His dedication to veterans' causes was evident from the start through his service to Bucyrus's Sons of the American Legion chapter.

Upon moving to Findlay in 1998, Commander Briggs continued this commitment to

our nation's veterans, joining Findlay's Sons of AMVETS squadron. He has held many offices in Findlay's Squadron 21—and continues in the position of First Vice Commander of the Findlay squadron even as he leads the state organization.

During his time as First Vice Commander of Ohio, six new squadrons were established in the state and Ohio membership increased to more than 8,000 sons, grandsons, brothers, and husbands of veterans.

Commander Briggs is a longtime employee of the General Electric plant in Bucyrus. Combining his work with his passion to give back to veterans, he started a program to donate light bulbs to veterans' homes and other veterans' organizations in Ohio. So many have benefited from the thousands of light bulbs donated through this program and the money saved as a result.

Commander Briggs has received numerous honors from his peers in the organization, including the 2006 Lifetime Achievement Award and the Gil Garza Award: the highest award bestowed by the Sons of AMVETS. His commitment to fulfilling needs at the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky garnered him the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services Leadership Award two years ago.

I am honored to join the chorus of well-wishers as the State of Ohio again recognizes his distinguished service to Ohio's veterans. He is a shining example of our mutual responsibility to serve those who devoted their lives to protecting the freedoms we enjoy.

SÖDERTÄLJE, SWEDEN ACCEPTS
5,000 IRAQI REFUGEES

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, as Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Helsinki Commission, I rise today to recognize the generosity of the people of Södertälje, Sweden, who have opened their doors to more than 5,000 Iraqi refugees. This small city has a population of 83,000 and has accepted more Iraqi refugees than the United States and Canada combined.

On April 10, the Mayor of Södertälje. Mr. Anders Lago, testified at a Helsinki Commission hearing entitled, "OSCE Partner States and Neighbors Overwhelmed by Iraqi Refugees: Band-aid Solutions to Implosion in the Middle East?" In his testimony, Mayor Lago noted, "The millions of refugees in the world must be a concern for us all, not just for those areas bordering on the breeding grounds of war, or for a small number of countries and cities such as Södertälje." In addition, he said, "Despite the fact that we need immigrants, Södertälje has become a town that must now say—STOP, STOP, STOP. Do not misunderstand me. We will always help others when we can. We must act when the lives of our brothers and sisters are in danger. It is imperative that we have a humane refugee policy world wide. Our common agreement that all people are equal, no matter what color, religion or gender, must become a reality."

Madam Speaker, the country of Sweden has accepted more than 30,000 Iraqi refugees

since 2003. This is no doubt a commendable act of humanitarian kindness. I offer my heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to the government of Sweden which is truly committed to assisting Iraqi refugees.

It must also be noted that, while Mayor Lago has opened the doors of his small city to so many Iraqi refugees, the strains on its infrastructure have been tremendous. Nonetheless, his generosity, and that of the people of Södertälje, put the United States to shame. The Mayor has clearly gone above and beyond the call of duty to help refugees from Iraq and he is nothing short of a "humanitarian ambassador."

Madam Speaker. I thank Mayor Anders Lago and the people of Södertälje, Sweden for their kindness and generosity, and I submit the Mayor's statement for inclusion in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

TESTIMONY OF ANDERS LAGO—MAYOR OF SÖDERTÄLJE MUNICIPALITY AND CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BEFORE HELSINKI COMMISSION, APRIL 10, 2008

Chairman Hastings, Members of the Congressional Commission, Distinguished Speakers and Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost I would like to thank the Commission for your invitation. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you about the difficult situation regarding the people now fleeing from Iraq.

Allow me to be totally frank. I am not the President, a Cabinet Minister, an Ambassador or even a Member of the Swedish Parliament. I am the Mayor of Södertälje, a small town with slightly more than eighty thousand inhabitants. I am here today as the representative from a small country on the northern edge of the European Union, but I can say with both pride and disappointment, that when it comes to refugees, I come from a great nation. The United States is the country in the western world that accepts the largest number of refugees. Directly thereafter comes Sweden, and according to census statistics, it is my hometown that receives most refugees in Sweden.

Many Iraqi refugees have sought shelter in Södertälje since the start of the war in Iraq. Almost all belong to the Christian minority. Södertälje accepts approximately five percent of all the Iraqi refugees who come to Europe. To illustrate this even more dramatically, my little town alone, receives more Iraqi refugees than the United States and Canada together.

We did not start the war in Iraq, however we assume a huge responsibility for those people who are affected.

Last week I met with seven Iraqi pupils at a local school. Meena, a girl in fifth grade, had a tear in her eye when she said "It is nice here in Sweden, but I miss my father." Her father is still in Iraq. Another little girl, Meryem, said with an edge to her voice, "If the war continues, the doors must be open for the refugees." All the children I met have relatives left in Iraq. And those children live in homes tormented with fear.

When I asked these children what they wanted to be when they are older, they brightened up and competed with one another to tell me. Renza wanted to become an artist. Steve wanted to become a policeman. Meena said shyly that she wanted to be a doctor. These children, in spite of all they have been through, have not let circumstances diminish their ability to dream of the future.

In Södertälje we face three problems. Firstly our schools and preschools are full; of the town's eight thousand pupils, five hundred are enrolled in the special preparation