

THANK YOU VERY MUCH. I AM FLATTERED AND DEEPLY TOUCHED BY YOUR RECOGNITION HERE TONIGHT. I HAVE LONG ADMIRERD THE SALVADORAN REFUGEE COMMITTEE AND I HAVE LONG ADMIRERD THE WORK OF EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM. IT IS YOU -- MORE THAN I -- WHO HAS KEPT THE ISSUE OF EL SALVADOR ALIVE. AND IT IS I WHO SHOULD THANK YOU FOR YOUR FINE WORK.

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN, -- AND WILL ALWAYS BE, -- A BREAD AND BUTTER, DOMESTIC POLITICIAN. MY POLITICAL CAREER HAS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY REVOLVED AROUND BRINGING JOBS AND FEDERAL PROJECTS HOME TO MASSACHUSETTS. I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CONTENT TO LET OTHERS, -- MORE SCHOOLED IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, -- BE THE LEADERS ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES.

IN FACT, BEFORE I GOT INVOLVED WITH EL SALVADOR, -- MY IDEA OF A FOREIGN POLICY ISSUE, WAS TRAVELING FROM MY HOMETOWN IN SOUTH BOSTON TO EAST BOSTON FOR AN ITALIAN SANDWICH.

I NEVER IN A MILLION YEARS WOULD HAVE PREDICTED THAT I WOULD GET SO INVOLVED WITH EL SALVADOR. AND I NEVER WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT THIS ISSUE WOULD HAVE SUCH A PROFOUND IMPACT ON ME, -- PERSONALLY.

I WANT TO TELL YOU A TRUE STORY

I GREW UP IN SOUTH BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS AND I RECALL ONE DAY, MANY YEARS AGO WHEN I WAS A YOUNG BOY GOING FOR A DRIVE IN THE CAR WITH MY FATHER

PHYSICAL MAN.

MY FATHER WAS A REAL ~~TOUGH GUY~~ BUT HE WAS ALSO A VERY COMPASSIONATE MAN -- WHO BELIEVED IN FAIR PLAY.

ANYWAY, THIS ONE DAY, WE APPROACHED THESE TWO KIDS WHO WERE IN A STREET FIGHT ONE OF THE KIDS WAS PRETTY BIG AND THE OTHER WAS FAIRLY SMALL THE BIG KID, IT APPEARED, WAS BEATING THE HELL OUT OF THE SMALLER KID.

MY FATHER STOPS THE CAR AND SAYS, "JOE, WHAT DO YOU SEE?" AND I SAY, "I SEE A BIG KID BEATING UP A LITTLE KID."

MY FATHER THEN SAYS, "JOE, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?" AND I REPLIED, "NOTHING...IT'S NOT MY FIGHT."

MY FATHER THEN SAYS, "JOE GET OUT OF THE CAR AND TEACH THAT BIG BULLY A LESSON."

SO, WITH THAT, I GOT OUT OF THE CAR AND PROCEEDED TO FIGHT THE BIG KID, -- A KID, I SHOULD ADD, I HAD NEVER SEEN BEFORE IN MY LIFE

I WON THE FIGHT.

IN ANY EVENT, I GUESS EVER SINCE THEN I HAVE HATED BULLIES. I HAVE ALWAYS HATED THE BIG GUY WHO PICKS ON THE LITTLE GUY. I HAVE ALWAYS DISPISED IT WHEN THE VERY POWERFUL EXPLOIT THOSE WITH LESS POWER, WHEN THE STRONG TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE WEAK, AND WHEN THOSE IN POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE USE IT TO PREVENT OTHERS FROM IMPROVING THEIR LIVES.

AND I SUPPOSE THAT STORY FROM MY YOUTH WAS IN THE BACK OF MY MIND, -- PERHAPS TUCKED AWAY IN MY SUBCONSCIOUS, -- WHEN I FIRST BECAME INVOLVED WITH EL SALVADOR BACK IN 1983.

AS SOME OF YOU MAY KNOW, ABOUT 8 YEARS AGO, A GROUP OF MY CONSTITUENTS IN BOSTON CAME TO VISIT ME -- QUITE UNEXPECTEDLY -- WITH A GROUP OF SALVADORAN REFUGEES. THE SALVADORANS TOLD ME OF THE DIFFICULT SITUATION IN THEIR HOMELAND -- THE WAR, THE VIOLENCE, AND THE DESTRUCTION. THEY TOLD ME OF HOW THEY FLED FROM EL SALVADOR AND HOW MUCH THEY FEARED RETURNING.

THEY WANTED ASYLUM IN THE UNITED STATES, -- BUT SAID THEY WERE DENIED THAT PROTECTION. THEY WERE TOLD THAT THEY DID NOT QUALIFY.

THEY NOW FEARED FORCIBLE DEPORTATION.

I WAS TRULY MOVED BY WHAT I HEARD -- AND WAS GENUINELY SHOCKED BY WHAT I HEARD.

IF WHAT THESE PEOPLE TOLD ME WAS TRUE, THEY DESERVED ASYLUM. HOW COULD OUR GOVERNMENT -- THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT -- FORCE THESE PEOPLE BACK TO A COUNTRY AT WAR?

So, I CHECKED IT OUT. I SENT MY STAFF TO EL SALVADOR. I CONTINUED TO MEET WITH MORE AND MORE SALVADORANS. I STARTED TO READ ABOUT EL SALVADOR. I MET WITH SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND MET WITH U.S. OFFICIALS.

ONE THING BECAME CLEAR -- IT WAS WRONG TO DEPORT SALVADORANS BACK TO WHAT -- AT A MINIMUM -- WAS AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE IN THEIR HOMELAND.

THAT WAS THE BEGINNING. IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF AN EFFORT TO WIN SALVADORANS TEMPORARY PROTECTION. AND IT WAS A BATTLE WE EVENTUALLY WON -- SEVEN YEARS LATER.

I DIDN'T WIN THIS FIGHT ALONE. IT WAS WON -- IN LARGE PART -- AS A RESULT OF THE EFFORTS OF PEOPLE IN THIS VERY ROOM. IT WAS WON BECAUSE WE BUILT COALITIONS THAT DEFIED STEREOTYPES. WE HAD SUPPORTERS FROM THE LEFT AND FROM THE RIGHT; FROM THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT AND FROM THOSE IN EXILE; FROM LIBERAL U.S. POLITICIANS AND FROM CONSERVATIVE U.S. POLITICIANS.

WE WON - DESPITE THE ODDS / WE WON DESPITE
STRONG OPPOSITION FROM THE REAGAN-BUSH
ADMINISTRATIONS /

WE WON, I BELIEVE, BECAUSE WE WERE DOING THE
RIGHT THING. /

DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS IS A NOBLE CAUSE. / AND I
HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT IF THE UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT IS GOING TO STAND FOR ANYTHING, IT NEEDS
TO STAND OUT-LOUD AND FOUR-SQUARE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. /

I AM PROUD OF WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED WITH
T.P.S. 7- AND I BELIEVE YOU SHOULD BE, AS WELL. /

AND IT IS MY SINCERE HOPE THAT THE BUSH
ADMINISTRATION WILL EXTEND T.P.S. / BEYOND JUNE OF
1992 / I CANNOT THINK OF ANYTHING MORE
DESTABILIZING TO EL SALVADOR OR ANYTHING MORE
DAMAGING TO THE FRAGILE PEACE PROCESS THAN FORCIBLY
RETURNING THOSE SALVADORANS CURRENTLY IN THE U.S.
BACK TO THE UNCERTAINTY IN EL SALVADOR. /

SO LET US START TODAY TO REBUILD OUR OLD COALITIONS / -- LET US REACH OUT TO ALL POLITICAL SPECTRUMS, AND LET US PUSH FOR A SECOND MIRACLE. /

BEFORE I CLOSE, I HOPE YOU WILL PERMIT ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAY A FEW WORDS ABOUT ANOTHER ISSUE THAT HAS BEEN CLOSE TO MY HEART / - THE JESUITS' CASE. /

JUSTICE IN THIS CASE REMAINS AN IMPORTANT GOAL, -- A GOAL THAT HAS NOT YET BEEN ACHIEVED. /

FOR IF EL SALVADOR, WITH ALL THE INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE, CANNOT BRING THOSE WHO MURDERED THE JESUITS TO JUSTICE, HOW CAN ANYONE EXPECT JUSTICE THE NEXT TIME A LABOR LEADER OR A TEACHER OR A CAMPESINO IS KILLED? / HOW CAN WE EXPECT THOSE WHO HAVE SEEN THEIR RELATIVES AND NEIGHBORS KIDNAPPED AND TORTURED AND MURDERED TO LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS, UNLESS THEY CAN DO SO IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF JUSTICE AND LAW? / HOW CAN WE EXPECT AN END TO THE VIOLENCE OF THE LEFT UNLESS THERE IS AN END TO THE IMPUNITY FROM PROSECUTION OF THE RIGHT? /

**NOTWITHSTANDING AN UNSATISFACTORY TRIAL --
THIS CASE IS NOT OVER.**

**So, I URGE EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM TO NOT FORGET,
-- AND TO CONTINUE TO DEMAND THE TRUTH IN THIS
CASE, AS WELL AS IN SO MANY OTHER CASES.**

**AND LET US CONTINUE TO FIGHT AGAINST THE
"BULLIES." BULLIES HAVE NO ONE POLITICAL IDEOLOGY
--THERE ARE BULLIES ON THE RIGHT AND BULLIES ON THE
LEFT. THE TIME HAS COME FOR THEM TO GO AWAY. AND
THE TIME HAS COME FOR THERE TO BE PEACE IN EL
SALVADOR.**

**LET US DEVOTE OUR ENERGIES TO THAT IMPORTANT
GOAL.**

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR THIS GREAT HONOR.

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