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Congressman Joe Moakley and El Salvador: A Research Guide

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Moakley and El Salvador: a research guide

Introduction

The Moakley Archive at Suffolk University has many resources that help illustrate U.S. foreign relations with El Salvador during the 1980s and 1990s and in particular, Congressman Joe Moakley’s work related to El Salvador’s civil war, the investigation of the murders of Jesuit priests in 1989, human rights and immigration.

The list below is a compilation of primary sources available at the Moakley Archive and secondary sources such as books, journal articles and Websites about El Salvador, including U.S. legislation, some of which, Congressman Joe Moakley was instrumental in creating. Many of the books and articles are available at Suffolk’s Sawyer Library or Moakley Law Library. Please contact the Archives for more information.

Research Guide Sections

1. Background information	1
2. Primary Sources	2
a. Sources available at the Moakley Archive	2
b. Other Archival Collections	5
3. Secondary Sources	6
a. Books	6
b. Journal Articles	7
c. Films and Documentaries	7
d. U.S. Legislative Materials	7
e. United Nations Materials	10

Background information on Congressman Joe Moakley and El Salvador

From 1980 until 1992, El Salvador was ripped apart by a civil war that left more than 75,000 people dead. During this time, the United States, fearing that El Salvador would succumb to a leftist takeover, poured funds into Salvadoran military operations. Although Moakley had been urging the Reagan administration to cut El Salvador’s military funding since the early 1980s, his commitment to El Salvador was cemented after meetings with constituents that included refugees of the Salvadoran civil war and a group of community activists, the Jamaica Plain Committee on Central America.



As a result of these encounters Moakley spent the next six years working to ease immigration restrictions on Salvadorans, and was later chosen to lead a congressional investigation into the 1989 murders of six Jesuit priests and two women at the University of Central America in San Salvador. This congressional investigation, also known as the Moakley Commission, revealed that the murders had been directed from the upper levels of the Salvadoran armed forces. The findings also resulted in reduced military funding to El Salvador, led to the successful prosecution of members of the Salvadoran military and helped pave the way for U.N. Peace Accords in 1992 and democratic elections in El Salvador. After the civil war ended, Moakley focused on closing the School of the Americas (SOA) and providing relief aid to the country after a series of natural disasters in the late 1990s.

Primary Sources

Primary Sources available at the Moakley Archive & Institute

The list below is a compilation of primary sources available at the Moakley Archive, including links to digitized materials where applicable, and lists of other archival collections available at outside institutions, and secondary sources such as books, journal articles and web resources about busing in Boston and the public's reaction, including U.S. legislation, some of which Congressman Joe Moakley was instrumental in creating.

Congressman John Joseph Moakley Papers (MS100)

The Moakley Papers document Congressman Moakley's efforts on behalf of El Salvador including immigration/asylum issues, human rights, attempts to reduce U.S. military aid to El Salvador, the signing of the 1992 Peace Accords, attempts to close the School of the Americas (SOA) and relief efforts after a series of natural disasters in the late 1990s.

[Browse digitized content](#)

Legislative Correspondence Files: General Files (MS100/02.02)

- Folders 2, 200, 555-557, 1108, 1519
- Includes correspondence between Moakley and his constituents regarding legislative efforts to provide asylum for Salvadorans fleeing the civil war, the investigation files of the Moakley Commission, and case files related to human rights cases in El Salvador.

Legislative Assistants' Files: James P. McGovern (MS100/03.04)

- Boxes 1-35 focus on Moakley's legislative efforts to provide asylum for Salvadorans fleeing the civil war, the investigation files of the Moakley Commission and case files related to human rights cases in El Salvador.
- [Digitized documents from this series](#)

Legislative Assistants' Files: Stephen LaRose (MS100/03.06)

- Boxes 11-14



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Moakley Archive and Institute

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- Contains documents regarding Moakley's efforts to close the School of the Americas and investigations of human rights cases in Central America in the 1990s.

District Issues (MS100/04)

- Folders 139-141, 291
- [Digitized documents from this series](#)

News clippings (MS100/07.01): stored off-site; advanced notice required

- Folder 293
- Numerous news clippings regarding many aspects of U.S. foreign policy toward El Salvador, El Salvador's civil war, asylum for Salvadorans fleeing the civil war, the Jesuit murder case and other politically-motivated killings.
- Many of the clippings have been digitized, however, due to copyright restrictions they are not publicly available on our digital collections site. Contact the archives to inquire about access.

Press Releases (MS100/07.03)

- Folders 108, 134, 149, 174, 452, 477, 625
- Includes press releases issued by Moakley's office regarding aspects of U.S. foreign policy toward El Salvador.

Congressional Speeches (MS100/08.01)

- Folders 65, 274, 351
- Includes speeches made by Congressman Moakley to the House of Representatives regarding different aspects of U.S. foreign policy toward El Salvador.

Non- Congressional Speeches (MS100/08.02)

- Folders 222, 267, 287, 293, 301, 316-318, 438, 452, 485, 494
- Includes speeches made by Congressman Moakley at public events regarding different aspects of U.S. foreign policy toward El Salvador.

Video Files (MS100/09.02)

- Items 21, 25, 27, 32, 36, 109, 110, 115, 162-163
- Includes recordings of documentaries and news coverage regarding aspects of U.S. foreign policy toward El Salvador during the 1980s and 1990s. It also includes, versions of the documentary Enemies of War that featured Congressmen Joe Moakley and Jim McGovern.

Congressional Photographs (MS100/10.02)

- Folders 75, 77, 86-87, 98-99, 103, 112-128, 131-132
- Contains photographs of Moakley's trips to El Salvador and related to the Jesuit murder investigation.
- [Digitized images from this series](#)

People Photographs (MS100/10.05)

- Folders 49 and 98



Congressman Joe Moakley and El Salvador: A Research Guide

Moakley Archive and Institute

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- Contains photographs of a Salvadoran asylum seeker who visited Moakley's office and Salvadoran President Jose Napoléon Duarte.
- [Digitized images from this series](#)

From the Jamaica Plain Committee on Central America Collection (MS103)

The Jamaica Plain Committee on Central America (JPCOCA), a grassroots organization from Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts lobbied Congressman Joe Moakley in the 1980s to help Salvadoran refugees gain legal status in the United States. The collection, which spans from 1982-2001, includes correspondence, news clippings and office files that document the committee's involvement in raising awareness of the Salvadoran refugee issue, their interactions with Congressman Moakley and how they achieved their goal of helping Salvadoran refugees in America.

- [Finding aid available](#) (.pdf)
- [Digitized items from this collection](#)

Oral History Interviews

The [Moakley Oral History Project](#) includes interviews with family, friends, and Moakley staffers regarding Congressman Moakley's efforts on behalf of El Salvador. They discuss immigration/asylum issues, human rights, attempts to reduce U.S. military aid to El Salvador, the signing of the 1992 Peace Accords, attempts to close the School of the Americas (SOA) and relief efforts after a series of natural disasters in the late 1990s.

[Digitized recordings and transcripts of interviews are available](#)

Interviews:

- Walter Cabanas (OH-072)
- Edmund Crotty (OH-006)
- Benjamin Cuellar (OH-038)
- Congressman David Dreier (OH-029)
- Leonel Gomez (OH-021)
- Steve LaRose (OH-002)
- Congressman John Joseph Moakley (OH-001)
- Congressman James McGovern (OH-013)
- Fran Price (OH-007)
- Carol Pryor (OH-008)
- Virginia Zanger (OH-005)



From the Enemies of War Collection (MS104)

Esther Cassidy, producer of *Enemies of War*, a documentary on the Salvadoran civil war and the investigation into the murders of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter, donated her records, audio and video tapes, and transcriptions to the Moakley Archive in 2008.

- [Finding aid available](#) (.pdf)
- [Digitized items from this collection](#)

Other Archival Collections

DePaul University, Chicago, IL

- Brockman-Romero Papers, 1961-1998; for more information visit http://www.catholicresearch.net/data/ead/html/dep-dpu_ead_mss0055.html

Duke University, Durham, NC

- Central American Solidarity Committee Records, 1980-1985; for more information visit <http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/rbmscl/uacasc/inv/>
- Center for International Policy Records, 1971-2006; for more information visit <http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/rbmscl/centerforinternationalpolicy/inv/>

George Washington University, Washington, DC

- El Salvador: War, Peace, and Human Rights, 1980-1994; for more information visit <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/publications/elsalvador2/>
- El Salvador: The Making of US. Policy, 1977-1984, for more information visit <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/publications/elsalvador/elsalvador.html>

Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA

- Ignacio Ellacuría Collection, 1959-1989; for more information visit [http://library.gtu.edu/\(fix\)](http://library.gtu.edu/(fix))

Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA

- Philadelphia Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador Records, 1985- ; for more information visit <http://www.swarthmore.edu/Library/peace/>

University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

- Dennis DeConcini Papers, 1944-2003; for more information visit http://www.library.arizona.edu/speccoll/findingaid/deconcini_papers/



Congressman Joe Moakley and El Salvador: A Research Guide

Moakley Archive and Institute

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University of Colorado at Boulder, Boulder, CO

- United States Community in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador Office Files, 1980-1988; for more information visit http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/archives/collections/peace_list.htm

University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

- Extensive collection of materials related to civil rights and politics in El Salvador, located in the Wilcox Collection for Contemporary Political Movements; for more information visit <https://spencer.lib.ku.edu/collections/wilcox-collection>

Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Madison, WI

- Center for Democracy in the Americas Records, 1970-1994; for more information visit <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi/f/findaid/findaid-idx?c=wiarchives;view=reslist;subview=standard;didno=uw-whs-m97145>

Secondary Sources

Many of the books and articles are available at Suffolk's Sawyer Library or Moakley Law Library. Please contact the Archives for more information.

Books

** indicates title is available at the Suffolk University Libraries*

- Armstrong, Robert and Shenk, Janet, *El Salvador: The Face of Revolution*. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1982.
- Arnson, Cynthia J., *Crossroads: Congress, The President, and Central America, 1976-1993*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1989. [Sawyer Library F1436.8.U6 A76 1989]
- Arnson, Cynthia J., *El Salvador Accountability and Human Rights: The Report of the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador*. New York: Americas Watch, August 10, 1993.
- Arnson, Cynthia J., *El Salvador: A Revolution Confronts the United States*. Institute for Policy Studies and Transnational Institute, 1982. [Sawyer Library F1488.A76]
- Doggett, Martha. *Death foretold: the Jesuit murders in El Salvador*. Washington, D.C. : Georgetown University Press, c1993 [Moakley Archives HV6535.S2 D64 1993]
- LeoGrande, William. *Our own backyard: the United States in Central America, 1977-1992*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. [Sawyer Library F1436.8.U6 L453 1998]
- Lungo, Mario Uclés. *El Salvador in the Eighties: Counterinsurgency and Revolution*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996. [Sawyer Library F1488.3 .L8713 1996]



Congressman Joe Moakley and El Salvador: A Research Guide

Moakley Archive and Institute

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- Rose, Lance. *El Salvador's Decade of Terror: Human Rights Since the Assassination of Archbishop Romero* / Americas Watch. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991. [Sawyer Library JC599.S2 E42 1991]
- Schneider, Mark Robert. *Joe Moakley's Journey from South Boston to El Salvador. Boston*": Northeastern University Press, 2013. [Sawyer Library E840.8.M63 S36 2013]
- Stephen, Lynn. *Hear My Testimony: The Story of María Teresa Tula, Human Rights Activist of El Salvador*. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1994. [Sawyer Library JC599.S22 TB5 1994]
- Whitfield, Theresa. *Paying the Price: Ignacio Ellacuria and the Murdered Jesuits of El Salvador*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994. [Moakley Archives F1488.3.W48 1994]

Journal articles

Citations to articles about El Salvador can be found by searching on, among others, Westlaw, Lexis, Legaltrac and Wilson's Index to Legal Periodical databases.

- Alexander, Barbara Cochrane, *Legislative Focus: Attempts to Close the United States Army School of the Americas*. 7 Hum. Rts. Br. 26 Fall, 1999.
- Buergethal, Thomas, *The United Nations Truth Commission for El Salvador*. 27 Vand. J. Transnat'l L. 497, October, 1994.
- Romig, Jeffrey L., *Salvadoran Illegal Aliens: A Struggle to Obtain Refuge in the United States*. 47 U. Pitt. L. Rev. 295, Fall 1985.
- Weiner, Robert, *The Agony and the Exodus: Deporting Salvadorans in Violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention*. 18 N.Y.U. J. Int'l. L. & Politics 703, 1986.

Films and Documentaries

(Many in this list are available in Suffolk's Sawyer Library and Moakley Law Library.)

- *Enemies of War*, Esther Cassidy. [Moakley Archives F1488.3E54 1999]
- *Romero*, [Sawyer Library PN1997.R664 2002]
- *El Salvador in Crisis*, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. [Moakley Archives F1488.3.E58 1989]
- *I am not Afraid: Rufina Amaya's Testimony*, Alfalfa Graphics. [Moakley Archives F1488.3.A5 2007]

U.S. Legislative Materials

Citations to a selection of legislative materials on El Salvador, many are available in the Moakley Law Library or accessible online at Congress.Gov (<https://www.congress.gov/>)



Congressman Joe Moakley and El Salvador: A Research Guide

Moakley Archive and Institute

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- **Temporary Suspension of Deportation of Certain Aliens, Hearings on H.R. 4447:** Before the Subcommittee on the Judiciary House of Representatives, 98th Cong. 2d Sess. 42 (1984).
Law Microforms: CIS 84 H521-45
- **H.R. 4447 Moakley- DeConcini Bill:** 98th Congress (introduced Nov. 17, 1983) linked with S. 2131 (introduced by Sen. DeConcini) Title: A bill to provide for the temporary suspension of deportation for certain aliens who are nationals of El Salvador, and to provide for Presidential and Congressional review of conditions in El Salvador and for other purposes.
- **Extended Voluntary Departure Issues Hearings on § 377** Before the Subcommittee on Immigration Refugee Policy of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 99th Cong., 1st Sess. 111 (1985).
- **Temporary Suspension of Deportation for Nationals of Certain Countries: Hearing on H.R. 822:** Before the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law of the Committee on the Judiciary, 99th Cong., 1st Sess., November 7, 1985.
Law Microforms: CIS 86 H521-20
- **H.R. 822 Moakley- DeConcini Bill:** 99th Congress (introduced Jan. 30, 1985) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph, linked with S. 377 (sponsored by Sen. DeConcini) Title: A bill to provide for a General Accounting Office investigation and report on conditions of displaced Salvadorans, to provide certain rules of the House of Representatives and of the Senate with respect to review of the report, to provide for the temporary stay of detention and deportation of certain Salvadorans. Status: Not passed
- Resolution of inquiry concerning the 1980 slayings of four American churchwomen in El Salvador adverse report (to accompany H. Res. 464)
Law Microforms: CIS 84 H383-3
- **H.R. 45 Moakley-DeConcini Bill:** 101st Congress (introduced January 3, 1989) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph. Title: To provide for a General Accounting Office investigation and report on conditions of displaced Nicaraguans and Salvadorans, to provide certain rules of the House of Representatives and of the Senate with respect to review of the report, to provide for the temporary stay of detention and deportation of certain Nicaraguans and Salvadorans, and for other purposes. Latest Major Action: 11/3/1989 Referred to Senate Subcommittee. Not passed. Immigration Act of 1990: Conference Report (to accompany S. 358).
Law Microforms: CIS 90 H523-39 also known as:
- **S. 358 Immigration Act of 1990:** 101st Congress (introduced Feb. 17, 1989) Sponsor: Sen. Kennedy, Edward M. Title: A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to change the level, and preference system for admission, of immigrants to the United States, and to provide for administrative naturalization, and for other purposes. Latest Major Action: 11/29/1990 Signed by President, Public Law 101-649



Congressman Joe Moakley and El Salvador: A Research Guide

Moakley Archive and Institute

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- **H.R. 3506 Moakley-DeConcini Bill:** 101st Congress (introduced October 23, 1989) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph. Title: To establish a statutory framework for the Attorney General to afford temporary protected status to nationals of countries subject to extraordinary and temporary conditions, including armed conflicts, to provide for certain studies and for congressional review of such studies, to provide temporary transition protection for nationals of certain countries, and for other purposes. Latest Major Action: 10/24/1989 Referred to House Subcommittee.
- **H. AMDT. 459 to H.R. 4636:** 101st Congress (introduced May 22, 1990) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph Amendment Description: Amendment provided for the withholding of 50% of the military assistance authorized for El Salvador; added conditions on aid to El Salvador including the elimination of assistance if military or security forces engaged in acts of violence against civilian targets; required the approval of the President of El Salvador before any military assistance could be delivered to the Armed Forces; and authorized \$2 million for the Support Democracy program for election voter registration and monitoring. Latest Major Action: 5/22/1990 House amendment agreed to. Status: On agreeing to Moakley amendment (A005). Agreed to by recorded vote: 250-163 (Roll no. 127). Not passed.
- **H. Res. 531:** 101st Congress (introduced October 25, 1990) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph. Waiving certain points of order against consideration of the conference report on the bill (S. 358) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to change the level, and preference system for admission, of immigrants to the United States, and to provide for administrative naturalization, and for other purposes, and against its consideration. Latest Major Action: 10/26/1990 Failed of passage/ not agreed to in House.
- **Extension of Application Deadline for Special Temporary Protected Status for Salvadorans:** Report Together with Dissenting Views (to accompany H.R. 2332) Law Microforms: CIS 91 H523-5
- **H. R. 2332:** 101st Congress (introduced October 25, 1990) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph. Title: To amend the Immigration Act of 1990 to extend for 4 months the application deadline for special temporary protected status for Salvadorans. Latest Major Action: Passed Public Law 102-65 on July 2, 1991
- **H. R. 3782:** 102nd Congress (introduced November 14, 1991) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph. Title: To promote peace and reconciliation in El Salvador. Latest Major Action: 11/20/1991 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Arms Control, International Security and Science.
- **H. R. 732:** 106th Congress (introduced February 11, 1999) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph. Title: To close the United States Army School of the Americas. Latest Major Action: 2/23/1999 House committee/subcommittee actions. Status: Executive Comment Requested from DOD.



Congressman Joe Moakley and El Salvador: A Research Guide

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- **H. AMDT.368 to H.R. 2606:** 106th Congress (introduced September 29, 1999) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph. Amendment Description: Amendment prohibits any funding for the United States Army School of the Americas located at Fort Benning, Georgia. Latest Major Action: 7/30/1999 House amendment agreed to by recorded vote: 230-197 (Roll no. 352)
- **H. AMDT.723 to H.R. 4205:** 106th Congress (introduced May 18, 2000) Sponsor: Rep. Moakley, John Joseph. Amendment Description: Amendment sought to require the Army to close the United States Army School of the Americas. Latest Major Action: 5/18/2000 House amendment not agreed to. Status: On agreeing to the Moakley amendment (A010) Failed by recorded vote: 204 -214

United Nations Materials

- From Madness to Hope: the 12-year war in El Salvador: Report of the Commission on the Truth for El Salvador, <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/ElSalvador-Report.pdf>
- Peace Agreements Digital Collection: El Salvador: <http://www.usip.org/publications/peace-agreements-el-salvador>
- United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/Home.aspx/> Search for treaties or charters involving El Salvador.