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Congressman Joe Moakley and El Salvador: A Research Guide

Moakley Archive and Institute

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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.

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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
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
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

Duke University, Durham, NC

George Washington University, Washington, DC

Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA
- Ignacio Ellacuría Collection, 1959-1989; for more information visit [http://library.gtu.edu/](http://library.gtu.edu/)

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/](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/](http://www.library.arizona.edu/speccoll/findingaid/deconcini_papers/)
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

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.

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 Grafics. [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/)

  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.


  Law Microforms: CIS 86 H521-20


- 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

  Law Microforms: CIS 90 H523-39 also known as:

• **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. Title: 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


**United Nations Materials**

