



# AMERICAN GI FORUM OF THE UNITED STATES

NATIONAL VETERANS FAMILY ORGANIZATION

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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CHRISTMAS DAY  
1984

Dr. Hector Garcia, Founder  
American GI Forum of the U.S.  
1315 Bright Street  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405

Dear Doctor:

My family spent this day huddled together in a small hospital room where my sixteen year old boy lay ill with childhood leukemia. It was detected in Mid-October and with it came the most profound changes in our lives. Within the span of less than a week we faced the reality that one of us may soon pass on. All the socio-familial problems we had experienced were meaningless by comparison. What pervaded our lives was the possibility that Evan might not survive the coming year. That was why we huddled as if round a fire fighting back the shadows and warming with the glow of a child. My wife and I were never believers and often resentful of Christmas commercialism. But this day was real as a mother held her son while his siblings and father gathered near. We felt as one that life and love were the most precious gifts of all. And I believe the true meaning of Christmas was felt not only today but in the trying days to come. My only regret is that it takes the threat of loss to make one realize the wonder of love and the joy of life.

In these final moments of Christmas Day my thoughts turn to you Doctor and the meaning of your life. I believe you feel great compassion for the ordinary man and that you have a vision of humanity as it will and should be. A human race in which people aspire not merely to things material but to a greater awareness and fulfillment of ones self and the enjoyment of the world and people in it. More than anything, you want to prevent and eliminate human suffering. That is why I thought of you tonight.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

Sincerely,

Gabriel Flores  
Chairman, International  
Affairs