

Day after day, week after week, our correctional officers work one of the most dangerous patrols in the country. They devote themselves to keeping violent felons behind bars, ensuring that our families can feel safe in our homes and on our streets. We know from the number of correctional officers who die in the line of duty each year that this is a dangerous profession that requires courage, hard work, and professionalism.

Our correctional officers are people like Bonnie Johnson, a mother of six, who works over 50 hours a week in a prison in Jackson, Michigan. For almost 20 years, Bonnie has put her heart and soul into her job. Or Rodney Olsson—a correctional officer with the Michigan prison system for roughly 14 years. Rodney drives over 60 miles to get to and from work. These fine men and women work holidays, weekends, and double shifts. They deserve our support.

We need to do our part in the weeks and months ahead to pass legislation that will protect the safety and working conditions of correctional officers. We should act to prevent further privatization of our prisons, which puts both our officers and inmate populations at risk. We need to ensure that our correctional officers receive meaningful, reliable pensions, good benefits, and decent wages. And we should invest adequate resources in prison programs that provide constructive activities for inmates that reduce recidivism and prevent violence. The work of our correctional officers gets more and more difficult with each passing day. In my home state of Michigan, the prison population has grown 38 times faster than our general population. And records show our inmate population is getting more violent. I commend Michigan's correctional officers for staying committed to the job despite these additional challenges.

I urge my colleagues to support the resolution offered by Representatives Strickland, Sweeney, Horn, and Holden that officially recognizes National Correctional Officers and Employees Week. This resolution also requests that our President issue a proclamation urging citizens to honor our correctional officers and the work they do to protect us. We should pass this resolution without delay and give our correctional officers the respect they deserve for their service.

CONGRATULATING COLONEL
DENNIS L. VIA

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a great Army officer and soldier, Colonel Dennis L. Via, and to thank him for his contributions to the United States Army and to our country. On Thursday, June 13, Colonel Via will relinquish command of the 3rd Signal Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas for assignment to the Department of the Army's Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Programs, here in Washington, DC.

Colonel Via began his career in 1980, graduating from Virginia State University as a Distinguished Military Graduate and earning a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Signal corps. He commanded troops as

a Signal Platoon Leader, Company Commander, and Battalion Commander before taking command of the 3rd Signal Brigade. Dennis has also served in staff positions from battalion level to the Department of the Army at numerous posts in the United States and Europe, and along the way found time to earn a Master's Degree at Boston University.

Dennis Via is a consummate professional whose performance personifies those traits of courage, competency and commitment that our nation expects and demands from its military leaders. It is with both regret and pride that we wish him Godspeed and good luck as he leaves Fort Hood for his new assignment.

It is important to note that every accolade to Dennis must also be considered a tribute to his family, his wife Linda and their two sons, Brian and Bradley. As a wife and mother, Linda has been a true partner in all of his accomplishments.

Dennis' career has reflected his deep commitment to our nation, and has been characterized by dedicated service, a profound respect for our soldiers and their families, and an absolute commitment to excellence. I ask Members to join me in offering our heartfelt appreciation for a job well done and best wishes for continued success to an outstanding soldier and a good friend—Colonel Dennis L. Via.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT S. KIEVE

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the achievements of San Jose broadcaster Robert S. Kieve. I would like to recognize his efforts as a radio pioneer deeply dedicated to the idea of the media providing a community service. He will be honored with the Spirit of San Jose Award on Monday, May 20, 2002.

Since 1967, Kieve had been one of the "mom and pop" owners holding out against large conglomerates, demonstrating the value of local ownership through his editorials, community involvement and loyalty to employees—who own 25 percent of his broadcasting company, Empire Broadcasting. In recently selling one of his radio stations, Kieve shared those profits with his employees in an usual and caring move for the business . . . but not for him.

Kieve, a former Eisenhower speechwriter, has been a pioneer in hiring women in an industry that women are dramatically underrepresented.

He has, for thirty years, been an outspoken, committed and vital force in San Jose, always willing to offer his opinions and provide a forum for others to share theirs.

Always willing to try something new, Kieve recently started three Internet radio stations featuring Beethoven, traditional country and big band.

Kieve will continue to operate two stations, KRTY-FM and KLIV-AM after his recent sale of KARA-FM, a San Jose institution, and will use a portion of the profits to help create a charitable foundation.

I am proud and grateful to thank Robert S. Kieve for reminding us all that one person can truly make a difference in the lives of many.

MONSIGNOR GEORGE C. HIGGINS:
AMERICA'S LABOR PRIEST

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, America lost its preeminent "labor priest" on May 1st when Monsignor George C. Higgins died at the age of 86 after a half-century career in the Nation's Capital devoted to the cause of social justice and the rights of labor. As head of the Catholic Bishop's Social Action Department for 35 years, Msgr. Higgins was an influential church figure and respected authority on the labor movement who dedicated his life to promoting the rights of workers around the world.

No one did more to advance the church's social teachings on a just economy and the rights of working people. Msgr. Higgins brought the church and labor closer together by showing working men and women that the church's social teaching was on their side—that work must be valued and workers honored, and that a just society demands that workers have the right to organize and bargain collectively.

Generations of American workers—who never knew his name—owe Monsignor Higgins a debt of gratitude for devoting his life to fighting injustice and defending their rights.

I would like to insert in the RECORD for the benefit of my colleagues the following statements by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and by AFL-CIO President John Sweeney on Msgr. Higgins death, and an essay by E.J. Dionne entitled "The Great Monsignor."

MSGR. GEORGE HIGGINS, DEAN OF CHURCH
SOCIAL ACTION MOVEMENT, DIES

WASHINGTON (May 1, 2002).—Msgr. George G. Higgins, the "labor priest" who was generally regarded as the dean of the U.S. Church's social action ministry for the last half century, died May 1 at the age of 86.

After a long illness, Msgr. Higgins died at the home of his sister, Bridget Doonan, in LaGrange, Illinois, his native city. He had returned to LaGrange in January to speak at St. Francis Xavier Church, the parish in which he was raised. After delivering the talk on January 19, he fell ill with a severe infection and was hospitalized for a period of three months.

"Msgr. George Higgins was without parallel the authority on the Church's social teaching and on labor-management issues," said Bishop Wilton D. Gregory, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). "He was a forceful and articulate figure in the Church and a major influence on the lives of several generations of Catholics dedicated to the cause of social justice. He was, above all, a good and dedicated priest. I pray for the repose of his soul and for the consolation of his family and the many persons in all walks of life to whom he will always be a vibrant and lasting inspiration."

A priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago, who spent 60 years of his life working in the nation's capital, Msgr. Higgins was probably the best known and most influential priest in the United States. He was widely admired within the Church and in the secular realm for his knowledge of the labor movement, ecumenism, Catholic-Jewish relations and many other fields, and for his talents as a skillful negotiator.

"The best informed priest in the United States," as U.S. Church historian John