

occasions, in the Upper Great Plains we are facing a crisis of staggering proportions, placing unprecedented stress on every aspect of economic and community life. This is a very serious matter for the entire country. The farms of the Dakotas and the surrounding states produce wheat, corn, and soybeans in abundance, but something much more important: good families and great kids. The rural way of life helps foster the values of hard work and fortitude that have made America great.

In my view, the ongoing crisis in agriculture represents as great a threat to our nation's future as any of the foreign threats we face today. As we work to combat this domestic national security threat and preserve the rural way of life, the NRDP is a truly vital asset. I hope all my colleagues will join the 27 of us on this bill in pressing for its passage and enactment at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

FATHER NICHOLAS MAESTRINI AND FATHER JOHN BORACCO CELEBRATE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRIESTHOOD TOGETHER

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Father Nicholas Maestrini and Father John Boracco, two men who have dedicated their lives in service to the Catholic Church, and who have often found their paths cross along the way. On October 22, 2000, the paths of these old friends will converge once again, as they will be honored together by the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME) in Detroit, Michigan, in recognition of their 70th Anniversary of Ordination.

Fr. Maestrini and Fr. Boracco began their long histories of dedicated service to the Catholic Church together as seminary classmates in Monza, Italy. Shortly after becoming ordained priests, both chose to enter into the PIME missionary. PIME is an international community of priests, lay missionaries and lay volunteers who have dedicated their lives to service in foreign lands. Founded in Italy in 1850, it is now a global organization that operates missions throughout the world. Its international headquarters are in Rome, Italy, while PIME U.S. Region is based out of Detroit.

Both Fr. Maestrini and Fr. Boracco joined missions in Asia, and both experienced struggle and hardship there during the chaotic period before, during and after World War II. Fr. Maestrini served as a missionary in Hong Kong from 1931-50. During this time, he suffered through the strife of the Great War and of being interned by the Japanese. Fr. Boracco had it no easier in China, where he was stationed from 1934-54, first in the northern

Henan Province and then at Kai Pheng. He was forced to persevere through imprisonment, the Japanese occupation, and the Communist revolution. In 1954, he was condemned to die at the hands of the Communists, but was instead expelled.

In 1951, Fr. Maestrini was named Superior of the PIME U.S. Region. Four years later, he was joined in Detroit by Fr. Boracco, who was assigned to help with the seminary expansion started by his friend. For the next 19 years, the two formed the perfect team. Fr. Maestrini focused his energy on external matters, such as public relations and fundraising, while Fr. Boracco served as rector and spiritual director of PIME's theological and high school seminars. With success, their roles expanded. Fr. Maestrini oversaw the establishment of three seminaries, two award-winning films, and many fund raising and public relations programs benefitting the foreign missions. Fr. Boracco became Director of the PIME residence for priests, brothers and seminaries. While Fr. Maestrini retired as Superior in 1974, Fr. Boracco retired just last year.

Both Fr. Boracco and Fr. Maestrini remain active within the Catholic community. Aside from assisting at his local parish, Fr. Maestrini publishes a mission newsletter, and continues correspondence with missionaries and benefactors. Fr. Boracco regularly assists several parishes in the Archdiocese of Detroit.

I applaud Fr. Maestrini and Fr. Boracco on their extraordinary legacies of service. For 70 years, they have tirelessly spread the message of faith and good will to others embodied by the Catholic Church, and they have done so while forming a friendship that is truly unique. On behalf of the entire United States Senate, I congratulate Father Nicholas Maestrini and Father John Boracco on 70 years of successful service, and wish them both continued success in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO MR. BENNIE THAYER

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, Senator BOND and I would like to submit for the RECORD a tribute to Mr. Bennie Thayer, a long-time business advocate and remarkable man who passed away Monday.

Mr. BOND. Yes, Mr. President, Senator KERRY and I would like to join in making the following statement recognizing Mr. Thayer's lifetime accomplishments.

The remarks follow:

Mr. Thayer earned the respect and admiration of the small business community. Until his passing, Mr. Thayer served as the eloquently outspoken President and CEO for the National Association for the Self-Employed. Representing more than 200,000 members nationwide, as head of NASE Mr. Thayer fought for relief from unfair government regulations and pushed for legislative

action on issues ranging from taxes to retirement plans. I think we will all remember him for his tireless work to get 100 percent deductibility for health insurance purchased by the self-employed. It wasn't easy. In fact, it was a long, long fight, but he managed to build bi-partisan support for 100 percent deductibility. How fitting it would be for Congress to pass such legislation before we adjourn.

In addition to Mr. Thayer's leadership at NASE, he has chaired and served on the board of many local and national business associations covering economic development, credit development, small-business enhancement, and general business growth. Of course, Mr. Thayer knew what he was doing. He could identify with the needs of small business owners and the self-employed because he himself was co-owner of the Board of Natural Health Options and A.W. Curtis Products, a manufacturer of natural health products. In his distinguished career, Mr. Thayer also was called upon at times to advise the past three Presidents—President Reagan, President Bush, and President Clinton.

But Mr. Thayer should be remembered for much more than his impressive resume or for being a champion of and advocate for small businesses and the self-employed. He served tirelessly in several capacities as a leader in his community. For the past seven years, Mr. Thayer was Senior Pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Redeemer in Temple Hills, Maryland. He also worked toward community development and youth mentoring as a board member of such organizations as REDEEM Inc. and the Board of Eagle Flight Inc.

In the most recent issue of "Self-Employed America," NASE's bi-monthly publication, there is an article entitled "Make Yourself Memorable." Mr. Thayer did. His first impression was a lasting impression—a warm, sincere handshake and an incredible, mesmerizing voice. Even if you didn't agree with something he said, you always liked how he said it. We will miss him.

Our condolences go out to his wife Bernice, his two daughters, his two grandchildren and his home community in Prince George's County Maryland, where he touched the lives of so many. May God bless his family and friends, and may the remarkable Bennie Thayer rest in peace.●

HONORING A COLUMBINE HERO, BOY SCOUT EVAN TODD

• Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I rise today to share with my colleagues a pair of statements I recently received from an exceptional young man in Colorado, Mr. Evan Todd of Littleton. Evan was one of the many unfortunate victims of the horrific shooting that took place at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Evan was the first student shot in the library at Columbine High School, and despite his injuries he assisted other students and administered first aid to a seriously wounded peer until emergency services could arrive. Evan, an active Boy Scout, was awarded the prestigious Boy Scouts of America Honor Medal for his inspiring actions. Still a Columbine student, Evan has dedicated a tremendous amount of time to speaking to other students and adults around

the nation concerning the problems of youth violence and the cultural influences on American youth. I am honored that Evan took the time to write to me and I ask that a copy of Evan Todd's letter to his fellow Scouts and a copy of a speech he delivered at "The Gathering," a meeting of victims of school violence, be included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The material follows:

Dear Fellow Scouts, I have been told that into each life some rain must fall. Some get rained on more than others. The rain that came down on us at Columbine High School was a cloudburst of epic proportions. This act was senseless, tragic and without justification, whatsoever. 13 murdered 25 wounded and 1,951 students youth destroyed. As a student who was shot and wounded in the library, it has changed my life, forever.

I believe that the children of a society are nothing more than the reflection of the society that they are brought into. The event here at Columbine in Littleton Colorado, and the events at Moses Lake Washington, Pearl Mississippi, Jonesboro Arkansas, Edinboro Pennsylvania, Fayetteville Tennessee, Springfield Oregon, Richmond Virginia, Conyers Georgia, Los Angeles California and elsewhere indicate to me that our nation has a serious character flaw. Since the Columbine tragedy, I have tried to stay abreast of the "adult society" debate as to the "why" and "how" of these terrible incidents. The adults debate and argue over what constitutes good and what constitutes evil; what is right and what is wrong. At the time of the Columbine tragedy, our national leader, the President, stated the youth of this nation need to learn to resolve our differences with words, not weapons. At the time this statement was made, we as a nation, were bombing Yugoslavia. They tell us that the youth of this nation need to be more tolerant, kinder, gentler, more understanding. Yet our entertainment, music, TV, movies, games (and actions of) the adult world provides for our consumption are all too often filled with violence, sex, death and destruction. If we were to take into our lives what is provided to us by our society, our actions would also violate the Scout Oath & Law. Other solutions to school violence have been nametags to be carried around our neck as millstones, metal detectors, increased video surveillance, etc. Our nation has always had guns. Our nation has always had children. What our nation hasn't always had is children murdering children and their parents, and parents murdering their children. The ingredient that has made America different is the last couple of 'adult generations', and their changes towards what is right & wrong, good & evil. It appears to me that our society is confused. The adult world seems as a ship with no rudder being cast around by the wind and storms of our times, with no control or understanding as to why. Many of these storms appear to have been caused by their own accord. It's as if our adult society has no compass, no bearing, no standards for our society. I have found them confused. Even at our age, we can discern the difference between what you say and what you do. . . .

In regard to the solution of watching what comes out of us by monitoring closely our world with surveillance cameras, what we say, how we look, etc., our society needs to watch carefully what goes into us. In my room is a picture of the Grand Teton mountain range in Wyoming. Below the picture is the following:

"THE ESSENCE OF DESTINY"

"Watch your thoughts, for they become words. Choose your words, for they become actions. Understand your actions, for they become habits. Study your habits, for they will become your character. Develop your character, for it becomes your destiny."

The good news for those of us that are Scouts is that we are privileged to be a part of an organization that provides us the tools and instructions to put into us that which builds a better person, a better nation. Those tools are called the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Robert Gates, former Director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and our current President of the National Eagle Scout Association (NESA) recently stated that there is a war going on for the souls of our boys and young men in this nation. He sees clearly. If you are to be a scout, don't be a scout in word only. Learn and practice the Oath & Law in everything you think, say and do. I understand well how hard that can be, but "Do Your Best." To the Boy Scouts of America, thank you for defending our 90-year record and not allowing the Oath & Law to be redefined. As you say, it has stood the test of time. The generation that wants to change the Oath & Law has not stood the test of time. To all the scouts across America that sent me & my troop cards, letters, posters, your thoughts and prayers, thank you from the bottom of my heart. To you here tonight, I bid you *vaya con Dios mi amigos*, God Bless you and God Bless the work you do. Thank you.

GLASTONBURY YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Glastonbury Youth and Family Services on its thirtieth anniversary. For a generation, this agency has provided a much needed service to the families of Glastonbury, Connecticut.

The children of Glastonbury are the future leaders of our state and nation, and it is critical to our continued success that they obtain the social and educational skills necessary to compete and succeed in the twenty-first century. The many programs offered by Glastonbury Youth and Family Services helps ensure that the town's children are exposed to the very best role models both inside and outside of the home. Because of the hard work and dedication of the parents, children, and workers in this program, the future of Glastonbury is very bright indeed.

Glastonbury Youth and Family Services has already helped open doors for countless young people, and I am confident that the children of the community will continue to benefit from its services far into the future.

Mr. President, I ask that you and all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Glastonbury Youth and Family Services on this very special anniversary. •

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORWEGIAN CLUB OF DETROIT

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Norwegian Club

of Detroit, which will celebrate its 75th Anniversary in Orchard Lake, Michigan, on October 14, 2000. Only Ireland has had a larger percentage of its population immigrate to the United States than has Norway. As Norwegians arrived in Michigan, the Norwegian Club of Detroit was there to help them adjust to their new homeland, while at the same time continue to celebrate the familiar traditions of home.

The Norwegian Club of Detroit was organized in 1925. Originally consisting of only engineers, it quickly expanded to include Norwegians from all walks of life, providing an important cultural, social and professional network for Michigan's Norwegian community.

An example of the Club's importance to the Norwegian community can clearly be seen during World War II, when members managed to mobilize and ultimately provide support to Norwegian military forces who escaped the Nazi invasion. Members also organized training in Canada to assist in the war effort of the Allies.

The Norwegian Club of Detroit remains an important factor in celebrating and promoting Norwegian and Scandinavian cultural, political and economic ties to the State of Michigan. One of the first groups to participate in the Ethnic Festivals in Detroit, the Club also has helped support performances by the Scandinavian Symphony, a visit by the Hjemkomst Viking ship reproduction, as well as various Norwegian performers and artists.

Mr. President, 2000 is an extremely important year in the Norwegian-American community. It is the 100th Anniversary of the founding of Oslo, Norway's capital city, as well as the 1000th Anniversary of the Viking discovery of North America. This year also marks 175 years of Norwegian immigration to the United States. Amidst all of this, and on behalf of the entire United States Senate, I wish the Norwegian Club of Detroit a Happy 75th Anniversary, and continued success in the future. •

HONORING SHIRLEY RAGSDALE

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to publicly commend Shirley Ragsdale, the editor for the Sioux Falls, South Dakota Argus Leader newspaper, on her receiving the national Casey Journalism Center Awards 2000 Casey Medals for her outstanding coverage of the plight of South Dakota's children in the Juvenile Corrections facilities.

The Casey Medals for Meritorious Journalism honor distinguished coverage of disadvantaged children and family, and the institutions and agencies charged with serving them. The Casey Journalism Center serves as an independent national resource center for professional journalists and it is operated by the University of Maryland