

The sad irony here is that Bennie himself died at the age of 61. When one heard Bennie speak those words, one didn't think that he was talking about himself. I think that everyone close to him assumed that he had come so far in life that he would beat the odds.

And indeed Reverend Thayer had come very far from his birthplace in Pickens County, South Carolina. He was fully 36 when he received his bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland, 54 when he received his master's in divinity, and 58 when he received his doctorate of divinity. His biography shows the mark of a man who was always striving, always working to create the next opportunity. But when you look carefully at the opportunities that he sought, they so frequently centered on creating new hopes for others—promoting economic opportunities with the National Association of the Self-Employed, spiritual guidance through his ministry, bequeathing wealth to our children and our grandchildren through reform of the Social Security system. This theme of striving to create a constructive and uplifting legacy ran throughout his life and throughout his work.

Dr. Thayer was an extraordinary man who led an extraordinary life. He is already deeply missed.●

HONORING THE WORK OF ANTHONY ROMOLO

● Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Tony Romolo, in whose honor the Anthony C. Romolo Training Center in Mt. Sterling, Illinois, is being dedicated this month.

Tony Romolo was the Center's founding administrator and is now the longest-serving training administrator within the Laborers' International Union of North America.

As administrator, Tony has been responsible for creating policies that have guided the procedures and management of the training center, including the development of training goals and priorities. His leadership has resulted in the training of thousands of laborers throughout Illinois.

The Laborers' Training Program was one of the first within the State of Illinois to receive accreditation from the Illinois Department of Public Health for teaching environmentally beneficial courses in asbestos abatement. Mr. Romolo also oversaw the creation of the Construction Craft Laborers' Apprenticeship Program that was approved February 3, 1997.

Tony Romolo's work has been diverse but unwavering in its commitment to improving the skills of our nation's workers. We are fortunate to have dedicated, hard-working men like Tony in our society today. Illinois is a better place because of his commitment to the working men and women of our state and country.●

TRIBUTE TO WORKERS AT THE PADUCAH GASEOUS DIFFUSION PLANT

● Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the thousands of workers, both past and present, at the Gaseous Diffusion Plants in Paducah, Portsmouth, and Oak Ridge for their patience and persistence through what has been, and continues to be, a challenging time.

When the reports of contamination broke in the August 8, 1999 edition of the Washington Post, my first thoughts were of the individuals and families who had suffered because of DOE's mistakes. I thought of the pain those workers must have endured from the illnesses and continue to endure in many cases, and the sense of loss families must have felt for those whose loved ones did not survive the harsh effects of contamination.

The story of the Harding Family, of Paducah, still haunts me. To think that a man suffered and died a painful death because of the carelessness of officials at the Department of Energy is incomprehensible. My heart goes out to the Harding Family for the loss of Mr. Joe Harding, and I hope that this dear family can take some solace in the knowledge that it was because of Joe's persistence that this story came to light. Because of Joe's willingness to speak in the face of high-powered opposition, at least 120 other workers who suffer effects of contamination will now be treated and compensated by the United States government. Joe paid the ultimate price in his death, and for that he deserves our sympathy, our respect, and our gratitude.

From that very first moment the story broke, I have been determined to make sure all current and former employees are tested for contamination and that sick employees receive the treatment they need and deserve. Of course, nothing can take the place of good health or life, but every effort should be made to provide compensation for DOE's wrongs.

I want the workers in Paducah, Portsmouth, and Oak Ridge to know that I am working here in the Senate to ensure that they are adequately tested and treated for any problems they experience as a result of contamination at the plant. I have continually sought funding, as a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and am pleased to have played a role in providing the funding to make health testing equipment, such as the vital lung screening van for Paducah, available to all of the dedicated workers who have served at the each of the Gaseous Diffusion Plants.

The mobile lung screening unit should serve as a symbol to each of the workers and their families that we will keep fighting for your health and safety, for your economic livelihood, and for the cleanup of the plant sites and surrounding neighborhoods.

On behalf of my colleagues in the Senate, I want to say thank you to the employees at the plants for their service to the United States. Your sacrifice to help us win the Cold War will never be forgotten.●

HONORING DR. ORLANDO EDREIRA

● Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the retirement of Dr. Orlando Edreira. Dr. Edreira's hard work and dedication as a Councilman in Elizabeth, New Jersey has had a lasting impact on communities throughout Union County and the State of New Jersey.

For more than four decades, Councilman Edreira has been contributing to the future of our children and the improvement of our communities as both an educator and a civil servant. He has contributed to hundreds of community projects and has been a member of numerous professional and community-based organizations in New Jersey. Councilman Edreira has also been a well-recognized and respected advocate for the Latino community of New Jersey throughout his career.

I salute Councilman Edreira's leadership in Elizabeth, which during his service has enjoyed a remarkable economic renaissance as new jobs and economic development have brought new life to one of New Jersey's historic cities. He is to be thanked for helping to sow these seeds of revitalization in the community.

Councilman Edreira's retirement from the Elizabeth City Council is a true loss for both the City of Elizabeth and the entire State of New Jersey. After a career marked by many accomplishments, I am pleased today to highlight his remarkable record of service on the occasion of his retirement. While we are losing one of our State's finest and most valuable leaders, we can take pride in the countless contributions that Councilman Edreira has made to one of New Jersey's most important communities.●

A TRIBUTE TO SPECIAL AGENT DAVID J. WILSON

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, during the 106th Congress, the Detroit Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation lost two of its most dedicated agents to battles with cancer. Both were respected not only for their professional accomplishments, but also for the manner in which they conducted themselves outside of their work, as each contributed considerably to the Detroit community. I rise today in honor and in memory of Special Agent David J. Wilson, one of these two men.

Before joining the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1980, Special Agent Wilson served the Nation as a military police officer, earning the National Defense, Marksman and Sharpshooter

service medals. Upon joining the FBI, he quickly earned top honors in his Academy Class for academics, physical fitness and marksmanship.

Special Agent Wilson spent the majority of his FBI career working in Detroit. He specialized in drug and white collar crime matters, and was highly regarded for his investigative skills. Indeed, he was a pioneer in the investigation of health care fraud, and his undercover work in the Detroit area yielded numerous successful prosecutions which saved and recovered millions of dollars for the State of Michigan in fraudulent medical billings. They also helped to prevent the illegal diversion of controlled substances by health care professionals.

Special Agent Wilson received many commendations, including two national awards, on account of his investigative prowess. In 1997, he was appointed to the position of Polygrapher for the Detroit Field Office, a position he held with great pride.

The City of Detroit was in many ways a perfect fit for Special Agent Wilson. He developed a unique interest in its history and architecture. An accomplished vocalist himself, he had a passion for music, and particularly for the "Motown" sound. He also had an appreciation for fine arts and for the theater, both of which were nurtured in Detroit. And, as an avid basketball player and fan, he was able to cheer on the Detroit Pistons during the greatest years that organization has known.

Special Agent Wilson passed away on August 29, 1999 at the age of 47. He is survived by his wife, Patricia, and two sons, Lerone and Paul.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation works hard to ensure that its agents set a strong moral example for the people they are entrusted to protect. There is no question that Special Agent Wilson was a leader in this regard. Dedicated to his Nation, his agency and his family, he was a role model in the Detroit community, and he will be deeply missed.●

HONORING SHERIFF JOHN T. PIERPONT

● Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I would like to honor John T. Pierpont for his outstanding service as Sheriff of Greene County, Missouri. I want to extend my personal appreciation and heartfelt thanks to John for his dedication and hard work.

There are few careers more noble than those spent in public service. Sheriff Pierpont's twenty years of service with the Greene County Sheriff's Office have meant a great deal to the people he has served. Prior to being elected Sheriff of Greene County, Mr. Pierpont served as U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Missouri for eight years. His service has extended well beyond the Sheriff's office and law en-

forcement to community and charitable organizations across Greene County and throughout our state.

Sheriff Pierpont has represented the state of Missouri and the Sheriff's Department with dignity, integrity, and professionalism. His commitment to the enforcement of Missouri law and the protection of our residents is to be commended. I am delighted to honor my friend and fellow Greene County resident, John Pierpont.

May God richly bless John and his family as they begin this next chapter in their lives.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL DAWSON

● Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Michael Dawson, who, over the past 11 years, has been my press secretary, one of my most trusted advisors, and a man whose judgement has been a key component to my success, from the campaign trail, to the Statehouse of Ohio and to the Capitol of the United States. But most of all, Mike Dawson has been, and will always be, my friend.

I first got to know Michael in 1989, when I was pursuing the governorship of Ohio and he was working as a top aide to then-Congressman Mike DeWine during his campaign for Lieutenant Governor. I was immediately struck by his work ethic and his tenacity. During that campaign, it was reported that if Mike saw the lights on in the offices of our opponent when he was leaving the office, no matter what time it was, Mike would turn around, go back inside and continue to work. Mike refused to allow them to get the upper hand by putting in more time or effort.

Once the election was over, and I was elected Governor, there was little doubt in my mind that one of the people I had to have on my executive team was Mike Dawson. Since then, Mike has been with me through thick and thin and through good times and bad. Whatever the situation, and no matter how rough things got, Mike was always there providing me sound advice.

I will never forget Mike's dedication and professionalism during the Lucasville prison riots in April of 1993—a period I consider to be the darkest days of my administration. For eleven days, Ohio held its breath as the Lucasville prison erupted in violence. As I worked to find a peaceful solution to the crisis, one of the people I depended upon most for assistance was Mike Dawson. Not only did Mike serve as press secretary at that time, but he was also my executive assistant in charge of emergency management operations. In that position, Mike had a strong hand in working with the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, the Ohio Highway Patrol, and several other agencies in helping to put an end to the siege at the prison and

restoring order. Mike initiated a task force to review what had gone wrong at Lucasville and to make recommendations on how to avoid similar Lucasville situations in the future. A special emphasis of the task force focused on the proper role of the media in covering prison situations.

Mike's service in emergency management operations was not limited just to the Lucasville riots. He was instrumental in Ohio's efforts to coordinate assistance to flood-ravaged areas of Ohio in 1997 and 1998, and was always right in the middle of things whenever Ohio was faced with an emergency situation during my two terms as Governor.

But no tribute to Mike would be complete without mentioning the work he has done as my press secretary. Mike has a relationship with Ohio's press corps and editorial writers that is legendary. All you would have to do, Mr. President, is ask any reporter who has covered my two terms as governor or my first two years in the Senate to find out what kind of a professional Mike really is.

Throughout the entire time that he has been my press secretary, Mike has always been accessible, always willing to go the extra mile to furnish the information that will make a reporter's job easier and he has made it a point to be able to provide an answer to whatever questions the press ask. If Mike does not know an answer, he will find it, and he will make sure that he understands the entire issue well-enough to be able to explain it. Mike has always been relentless in wanting to guarantee that the press gets the story right the first time.

Of course, the Ohio press corps could write volumes of examples of Mike's tenacity in wanting a story reported correctly. If Mike felt he was right, he would argue his point until that reporter understood what he was talking about and where he was coming from. If Mike knew he was right, he would be relentless in his effort to not only convince the reporter to see his point of view, but to agree with it as well.

Mike's style has earned him the respect of reporters from all across Ohio. In fact, when I left the Governor's office to come to the Senate, Mike was lauded in a column written by Joe Hallett in the Cleveland Plain Dealer for how diligently he served as press secretary during my administration: probably the highest compliment any press secretary can receive from his peers.

That column put in print what I already knew and what I told millions of Ohioans on the night I was elected to the Senate—that Mike Dawson was the best press secretary in America. It was true then, and it is true today. In all the years I have known him, and in the hundreds, if not thousands, of stories that Mike handled for my gubernatorial administration, as well as here