

repartee was always suburb. While different lights led them, both were equipped for friendly mental combat.

As you know, Bob enjoyed placing an occasional wager on some nag a tout or two would recommend as fast of hoof. But down the home stretch of Bob's own distance, his pace was slowed by sickness. Bob was thoroughbred fast until the evening of life when strokes struck, sight flexed and diabetes reaped its toll.

It's painful to witness a worker bee in health's gloaming. Disability plays treason to future hopes and dreams. In sickness, life's space became so confined that Bob could scarcely enjoy a view except from a wheelchair.

Bob had to count on family and friends who love him so, good friends like Bob Cronenwett and Maggie Patton and his dear, fond Brigade of Captain's Men, so loyal and true. They'll miss him, sure.

Time takes its toll. Why, what is inland in nature becomes ocean isle, with eddies swirling around what once was mountain peak. Why not time's toll on man?

Time levels snowy peaks to running brooks. No wonder time took its toll on Bob. Ah, but Bob used well the time God gave him. He enjoyed the blessings of today, every day, not wasting the joy of a moment on what was past or could be future.

Perhaps most importantly, Bob didn't entrust to time anything he would need forever. That is to say, he was not only kind but generous. He once said to me when I spoke of his personal generosity that he sometimes thought it scary, how when he gave away, God returned him twice or more. Of course God said it would be so. Bob teaches me, and you, to trust and give more.

Even now Bob's priesthood is not silenced but speaks through the beauty of this Cathedral he loved and served. The Cathedral he embellished marks the site of his priestly ordination and final funeral rite. How very fitting!

His priesthood speaks, too, at the airport chapel, his beloved Regina Caeli.

Looking back, Bob dusted our days with the pollen of cheerful conviction that there is plenty of work to do. He needn't be told "what" because Bob was a self starter who foiled challenges with wit. Challenge was invitation. The impossible intrigued him. And success was his hallmark, be it a parish festival or a million and more in renovation.

Who else would tackle an airport chapel and the ACLU? Others would say: "Why bother?" I think heaven gives a glimpse of vision, don't you, to those who risk the strength of God to do what they can't do?

Labors of love? The cathedral renovation and the airport chapel, while not the most of what he did in ministry, should install him into the diocese's Hall of Fame.

Bob Blair was a modest coin collector who knew how to option short gains into capital investment. His racer's instinct at the mutuals gave him an edge at the bank. Really, God was his broker and the Church was his escrow.

Bob retired, but never retired. He worked on.

Then, like a farmer at planting time, working, came the call that dinner is on the table! A feast and he's expected.

How leave off work with so much to do and time's light dimming? It's not easy to yield to the drift of age or illness, nor to bow and accept the end of labors love.

Yet the planter reluctantly thrusts his hoe into the ground and heads for home, the home from whence he came. The Master calls.

We hate to die. Only in faith do we deny the lie that dead is dead. In faith, the grave that draws the living avows new life beyond.

Then, again, Bob always liked fresh starts. I wonder now what new projects will rise in heaven?

I pray Bob up there continues to remember us whom he served so well in ministry and friendship. We all have projects that could use his vision, wit and wisdom. I pray he will strengthen our resolve and even excite fresh ideas of what can be done with gifts God gives us.

Soon enough, when we break through the pane of time and wade ashore on heaven's side, Bob will meet and greet us. No doubt introduce us to his new visions, this time benefic in size.

Tomorrow has come forever to Bob who breezes with Ted and Frank and even Solomon in all his glory.

Folks, in retirement, and from a wheelchair, Monsignor Robert Blair died with his boots on. Big boots to fill. Empty boots now that challenge us to fill.

When two roads diverge Bob, with wisdom and wit, often took the one less traveled by. That made a difference. He made a difference.

Sympathy aside, today. Quite frankly, we gratefully thank God that Monsignor Robert Blair made a difference in our lives. And now we pray, God rest his soul until we friends come the path he traveled by."

#### BEETLE ACTIVITY SPREADS, 892,831 ACRES INFESTED IN ONE YEAR

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to an eye-opening article that appeared in the July issue of Resource Review. It details the extent of the ongoing spruce beetle infestation in southcentral Alaska and reports that beetle activity increased 40 percent last year. Over 32,433 acres are infested in the Chugach National Forest alone, with mortality exceeding 60 percent in some stands. The current total for all of southcentral Alaska is a new record—892,831 acres of dead and dying trees. This is not a record we should be proud of.

The infested areas of southcentral Alaska are now far too large to permit wildfires to burn naturally. With so much dead wood lying on the forest floor a fire could burn hot enough to sterilize the soil and threaten the health of some of Alaska's priceless salmon stocks. Such a fire is a disaster waiting to happen. Unfortunately, waiting for disasters instead of preventing them seems to be the preferred policy of the current Secretary of Agriculture.

Every day the beetle infests more and more timber while those entrusted with our National Forests do less and less about it. Rather than taking necessary action under existing law, the Secretary of Agriculture has put up roadblocks every step of the way. He recently directed managers on the Chugach National Forest to cancel the few salvage operations they had planned. Some of these sales, it was reported to me, were in the planning process for years. Canceling them may be sound politics but it is irresponsible forestry. Playing politics with National Forests is playing with fire—I do not want to see Alaskans get burned.

Even without major fires Alaskans are suffering the effects of the beetle infestation:

property values are declining as the insect spreads from Federal to private lands; the visitor industry is losing business as once beautiful viewsheds turn brown and decay; and local residents are forced to sit by and watch their favorite recreation and hunting areas become wastelands. All this as Washington bureaucrats bicker and pass the buck.

Through responsible application of salvage logging the spreading sickness in southcentral Alaska can be cured, averting the risk of fire and creating jobs and a healthy forest to pass on to our children. I encourage my colleagues to read the article, the text of which follows my remarks, and hope that it will inspire them to join me in supporting sound forest management under the emergency timber salvage law as well as other long-term initiatives promoting forest health.

#### BEETLE ACTIVITY SPREADS, 892,831 ACRES INFESTED IN ONE YEAR

While Alaskans continue to debate the merits of cutting dead, beetle-killed timber across private and public lands in Southcentral Alaska, spruce beetle activity increased 40 percent in 1995 over the devastating levels detected the previous year.

Approximately 892,831 acres of on-going and newly infested areas were detected last year, the highest level of activity on record. The most extensive areas of beetle infestations are in Southcentral Alaska (683,281 acres) and the Cooper River basin (170,767 acres). More than 25 million spruce trees have been infested.

The Forest Service's 1995 Forest Health Management Report revealed that beetle activity in the Chugach National Forest doubled in 1995 to more than 32,433 acres. It noted that beetle activity is increasing throughout the Turnagain Arm area, including Girdwood, Twenty Mile, Ingram Creek, Sixmile River drainage and Hope. The Forest Service also noted the beetle infestation is intense throughout many areas of the Kenai Peninsula, including Kachemak Bay. From Tustumena Lake to Homer, beetle activity is extreme. More than 400,000 acres of spruce are infested with many stands having more than 60% mortality.

A significant increase in beetle-killed timber was found on the west side of Cook Inlet and the infestation more than doubled in the Anchorage Bowl where more than 8,000 acres of spruce were hit. Areas in Anchorage with the heaviest activity are Hillside, Fire Island, Kincaid Park, and the Eagle River and Eklutna River drainages.

With a dry, warm summer at hand, foresters believe severe outbreaks of beetle activity will continue throughout the summer. While there is ongoing debate on the fire danger posed by standing, beetle-killed timber compared to green timber, foresters agree that fire danger over the long term is heightened considerably once the dead trees fall over on top of each other and fill the floor of the forest.

Three salvage logging proposals have been proposed for the Chugach National Forest to harvest beetle-killed timber, but the Forest Service—in the face of intense pressure from environmental groups—has scrapped one plan, severely reduced the scope of another and is considering new public comment on a third.

Under the salvage law passed by Congress last year, the Forest Service had initially identified about 1,300 acres of 12,000 heavily-infested forested acres in the Sixmile area for logging. That proposal has now been reduced to a mere 182 acres—2% of the infested trees in the Sixmile area. A logging plan for the heavily-infested Seattle Creek drainage has been discarded, but the Forest Service is

reviewing public comments for a third proposal in the Resurrection and Palmer Creek valleys near Hope.

Environmentalists are not satisfied with the Forest Service decision to scale back logging plans and have admitted they won't be happy until ALL logging plans are dropped.

The Alaska Center for the Environment (ACE) has formed the Forest Defense Network to whip up public opposition against logging and influencing public policy. In a recent mass mailing, ACE noted the Forest Defense Network is kicking into high gear with a door-to-door campaign. Media campaigns are being developed and demonstrations are being planned among other events and programs. ACE is asking Alaskans to join its network, write letters, participate in direct actions and "help stop senseless logging."

The Campaign has generated scores of letters to the Anchorage Daily News and the Forest Service in opposition to logging. ACE has asked its members to host letter writing parties targeting not only the Anchorage Daily News, but newspapers outside Alaska, including the Los Angeles Times.

The cover of the ACE mailer featured a picture of a clearcut with the superimposed headline, "It's Time To Clearcut Our Kenai Peninsula: Do You Agree or Disagree?" The mailer was filled with emotion and left readers with the impression that a healthy and green forest was being clearcut at alarming rates by the worst polluters in the entire Pacific Northwest.

Absent from the mailer was the fact that logging is occurring in areas heavily infested by the spruce bark beetle and that the infestation is transforming Kenai Peninsula viewsheds into grave-yards of brown dead or dying trees.

Forests concede logging cannot stop the infestation, but emphasize that a combined program of harvesting and reforestation can restore forest health much faster than if no action is taken.

Forest scientist explain that new harvesting programs utilizing modern forest management initiatives to protect wildlife and fisheries is a reforestation program that will lead to a young, healthy and vigorous-growing forest. Since most of Southcentral Alaska is now a fire suppression area, they say logging would take out the dead trees, as opposed to nature's way—fire. If no logging is allowed, many timber stands on the Kenai may revert to grasslands.

With its varied patterns of land ownership, the Kenia Peninsula is a great ecological, long-term experiment in forest management. While extensive logging is occurring near Homer on State and private land, very little cutting is taking place on the much larger expanses of the Peninsula. Only a fraction of the beetle infested spruce will be cut on the Chugach while no commercial logging will occur on the Kenia National Wildlife Refuge and Kenai Fjords National Park. Foresters will be watching the different rates of regrowth, company areas actively managed for logging and reforestation with those forests left to stand as gray ghosts.

NATO ENLARGEMENT  
FACILITATION ACT OF 1996

SPEECH OF  
HON. JACK QUINN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 23, 1996

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, today we have another opportunity to promote peace and se-

curity in the world. The NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act will prepare for the eventually inclusion of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO. As an original cosponsor of the bill, I want to express my strong support for this measure.

The nations of East Central Europe, particularly Poland, have suffered tremendously throughout history. Indeed, they have paid a high price for their unfortunate geographic location. Caught between aggressive neighbors, the sovereignty of these nations has continuously been threatened.

Presently, NATO is in a unique position to help these emerging nations. NATO membership can provide the stability that this region needs as it strives toward democratic institutions and market economies. There is every reason to believe that the presence of NATO will lead to the same political and economic successes that Western Europe has enjoyed in the post-war era.

I am convinced that active engagement with Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic is necessary in the tumultuous years following the cold war. Western institutions such as NATO are crucial to fostering a close relationship with these developing democracies and bringing East Central Europe into the community of prosperous, peaceful nations.

RECOGNITION OF OHIO NORTHERN  
UNIVERSITY IN ADA, OH

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the significant contributions made by Ohio Northern University of Ada, OH. In commending Ohio Northern University for 125 years of prominent service to higher education, I know the rankings are well deserved. As a child I grew up near Ohio northern's campus. My father even graduated from ONU's College of Law. From personal experience, I know ONU is a great contributor to our community. I submit my appreciation and acknowledgment of the efforts taken by the staff, students, and administration. Their combined work has distinguished ONU as one of the best universities in the Midwest according to "US News and World Report." ONU can boast such excellence with a student-faculty ratio of 13:1 and an incoming class in which 1 in 11 is either a valedictorian or salutatorian. Other accolades include recognition in Peterson's "Competitive College Guide" and in Barron's "Profiles of American Colleges" as a very competitive university. Considering the caliber of schools this fine institution competes with, one easily sees that all of Ohio benefits from such a productive and rewarding partnership. I feel that the tradition of quality higher education is being upheld and improved upon by ONU and all the other fine institutions recently listed among this Nation's best. I sincerely wish them continued success.

WAGE WOES BENEATH THE ROSY  
NUMBERS

HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. GINGRICH. This article by Bruce Bartlett clearly describes the true economic worries that American families are facing. Because of stagnant wages and a median family income that has remained flat under the Clinton administration's leadership, families are feeling the Clinton economic crunch. This country would benefit instead from lower taxes that raise family income.

[From the Washington Times, July 8, 1996]

WAGE WOES BENEATH THE ROSY NUMBERS

(By Bruce Bartlett)

For many years, economists and political scientists have studied the relationship between elections and the economy. Their unsurprising conclusion is that when the economy is good, voters tend to reward the incumbent president. On this basis, Bill Clinton would appear to be in good shape. The unemployment rate in May was 5.6 percent, down from 7.5 percent in 1992. At the same time, inflation has been stable at about 2.5 percent and real economic growth has been slow but steady at about 2.2 percent per year.

But beneath these adequate, if unspectacular, numbers lies a potentially serious danger for Mr. Clinton. That is the stagnation in wages and incomes. In short, while the macroeconomy has moved upward, workers and families have been left behind. Real median family income—the single best measure of economic well-being—has been flat during the Clinton years, and down considerably from the Reagan years. Real wages have been flat as well, with increasing numbers of workers forced to work two jobs to make ends meet. And the Clinton administration is not unaware of this problem. Indeed, Labor Secretary Robert Reich has been the most eloquent spokesman for the malaise of the working class. As he put it in a 1995 report:

"In the past year, the American economy has caught fire—but the gains to most American workers have gone up in smoke. Last year at this time, the median full-time worker in this country was earning \$479 per week. This year, factoring in inflation, the median wage is \$475 per week—\$4 less in average weekly paycheck. Among working families, 11 percent do not earn enough to lift themselves above the poverty line. Compared with last year, this year some 636,000 more Americans are working two jobs."

In the year since, all of the concerns expressed by Mr. Reich have gotten worse. The only thing that has changed is the administration line. Recognizing that Mr. Clinton is vulnerable on the issue of wages and incomes, the Council of Economic Advisers issued a report in April totally contradicting Mr. Reich's position. According to the CEA, workers are actually doing great. Since then, Mr. Reich has been noticeably less vocal about the problem of stagnant wages, except for a strained effort to blame the whole thing on a decline in the real minimum wage.

The vast majority of workers make well above the minimum wage. Their problems are the result of slow growth and higher taxes that have reduced their disposable incomes. What they need is faster growth and lower taxes. If the Republicans can make this case, they will find a receptive audience among many Democratic workers and families.