

TRIBUTE TO COL. THOMAS F.
GIOCONDA, U.S. AIR FORCE

HON. JOHN P. MURTHA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 1997

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated U.S. Air Force officer as he departs from his post as the legislative assistant for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to become the Principal Deputy Secretary of Energy, and U.S. Military Representative for Defense Programs.

Col. Thomas F. Gioconda deserves our tribute. He has been connected with the Congress in one position or another for over 8 years of his distinguished 27 year Air Force career. His career accomplishments reflect the type of leader this Nation has depended upon for over 200 years during peace and conflict. I would like to take a moment to highlight Tom's career milestones.

A native of Philadelphia, PA, Colonel Gioconda is a graduate of St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia, PA, class of 1970. Colonel Gioconda also earned a master's degree in school administration from Seton Hall University, and a masters degree in business administration from the University of Montana. His military career began in 1970 with his first assignment to Malstrom AFB, MT, where he served as a missile launch officer. After 4 years as a wing missile operations crew instructor, he served as an AFOTC instructor at his alma mater for 2 years, followed by another 2 years at New Jersey Institute of Technology. He then served as a missile operations instructor and section chief at the 4315th Combat Crew Training Squadron, Vandenberg AFB, CA.

Recognizing his leadership skills, he was assigned to headquarters, Strategic Air Command, as a plans and programs officer, and later became the Congressional Liaison Branch Chief. His exceptional performance in this assignment lead to a follow on tour to headquarters, U.S. Air Force at the Pentagon where he served as a Congressional Affairs Action Officer for the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Operations. During this tour he was selected for squadron command. Colonel Gioconda assumed command of the 510th Strategic Missile Squadron at Whiteman AFB, MO. His squadron was charged with the one-of-a-kind Emergency Rocket Communication System [ECRS] mission. While in command, Colonel Gioconda and his unit hosted the first visit of the Commander in Chief of the Soviet Rocket Forces to an operational U.S. missile launch control center. After successfully completing his command tour, Colonel Gioconda was hand picked to be a legislative assistant to the chairman and vice-chairman.

He has been the principal liaison officer to Congress for both General Powell and General Shalikashvili during momentous times in our Nation's history—the end of the cold war, Operations Desert Storm, Provide Promise, Provide Hope, Provide Comfort, Southern Watch, Deny Flight, and Restore Democracy, Joint Endeavor, as well as countless other military operations and deployments. Tom has accompanied me on factfinding visits to the former Republic of Yugoslavia. Tom was always on top of the issues of the day. I and many others of this body have depended on

him for complete, timely, sound, and accurate information and advice.

Colonel Gioconda has been awarded the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (four oak leaf clusters), three Air Force Commendation Medals, the Air Force Achievement Medal, the Combat Readiness Medal, the Outstanding Voluntary Service Medal, and the Command Missile Badge. He is married to the former Anita Pamerter of Great Falls, MT, and has three sons, Thomas, Tony, and T.J.

In December 1995, Colonel Gioconda was selected for promotion to brigadier general. He will be promoted on August 1, 1997.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor and personal privilege for me to present his credentials and this tribute to Col. Thomas F. Gioconda before the Congress today. It is clear, through his record of accomplishment and his command assignments, that he is someone dedicated to the peace and freedom this Nation enjoys today. All his actions reflect a professional Air Force officer with the clear sense of honor, integrity, and purpose found in the finest military officers of this Nation. We wish him every success in what I know will be a bright future. May he always have fair winds and blue skies.

TRIBUTE TO DR. BOB GRAVES

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 1997

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Bob Graves. Casual acquaintances knew Bob as a dairy farmer from an old Colorado family. His early days were spent on a cattle ranch in Bellvue, CO. He became a veterinarian, worked to increase the family herd and operation, and built Graves Dairy. Many knew him for early mornings spent having breakfast at Vern's in LaPorte, dressed in Levi's, eyes shaded by bushy gray eyebrows. He always had a ready and realistic comment on the subject of the day. Others knew him as a savvy and tenacious opponent in local political battles. He stood up for private property rights, farming and ranching interests, and other ideals he held high. If you fought with him, you did so with admiration. If you fought against him, you did so with trepidation.

But most don't know the Bob who turned a personal tragedy—his daughter's death from leukemia—into hope and a future for thousands and thousands of people around the world. His daughter was one of the recipients of a bone marrow transplant before the medical community understood how critical it was to match donor and recipient marrow. While the operation was not successful, the Laura Graves Foundation, founded in her memory, has become a \$50 million research organization that has greatly improved the chances for leukemia patients. He and the foundation created the matching bone marrow donor program in this country and across the world.

Although grieving over his own loss, he and his wife, Sherry, devoted their lives to this priceless project. Bringing together scientists, politicians, public relations experts, and cancer victims, he worked to improve what had al-

ready been started. Building upon the sponsorship of the American Red Cross, he managed to create a board of directors who were household names. Their reputations, the progress of better funded research, and constant persistence, created the life-saving bone marrow program. He brought together Senator Kennedy and Admiral Zumwalt, Nobel Prize winners and corporations, the American Navy and Russian Chernobyl victims. He and the foundation brought common goals and methods to the scientific community in China, England, Russia, the United States, and elsewhere. After a politically prominent and wealthy American family circumvented the donor system and bought their way to the front of the line, Bob demanded a fool-proof system that would treat all victims equally.

We all enjoy knowing about people who strive to make the news, those who fight for their 15 minutes for fame, but we don't often know about people who just quietly persevere in order to save us and our loved ones. That was Bob Graves. He had a brilliant mind surpassed only by his compassionate heart. When he died, he was creating another foundation—the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Foundation to bring together the worldwide scientific community working on "chronic wasting disease" in wildlife, "mad cow" disease in livestock, and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in people. Again, he was starting the project with his own money in order to benefit people and industry.

Bob Graves, D.V.M., was one person who left the world a better place.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS ON
CHINESE INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES

HON. BILL McCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 1997

Mr. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a bill I am introducing today. It is quite simple in that it would require the Director of Central Intelligence and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to jointly prepare an annual report on the intelligence activities of the People's Republic of China—and most specifically, those which are directed against or affect the interests of the United States.

Some of the news reports on the fundraising scandal suggest that the People's Republic of China has apparently decided to take a more aggressive approach toward influencing American politics. This is occurring at all levels of our political system through the use of legitimate means such as lobbying as well as covert influence operations. At the same time, the Chinese are also relying heavily on the success of their economic espionage efforts to make their economy more competitive with ours. We also have concerns, that I think most Americans share, with the increasing buildup of the Chinese military operations and capabilities, and the potential that that poses a threat to our national security interests in the Pacific rim region.

A China specialist at the Department of Defense, summarized the growing threat posed by China's intelligence agencies by saying:

The Ministry of State Security is an aggressive intelligence service which is coming

of age in the international arena. The combination of a relatively stagnant economy and an increasingly competitive global economic environment will force China to rely more heavily on the illegal acquisition of high technology modernization—Arms production and sales are increasingly being used to gain hard currency and expand global political influence. The MSS will be required to produce intelligence to support this assertive role in the global, commercial and political environments—Western democracies such as the U.S. must adjust the focus of their clandestine intelligence and counter-intelligence operations if they are to meet the MSS's forward posture effectively.

The annual report would document significant developments involving China's Ministry of State Security, the Military Intelligence Department of the People's Liberation Army, and other Chinese intelligence entities operating against the United States. The report is specifically intended to cover trends in the following areas: first, political, military, and economic espionage by Chinese intelligence services; second, intelligence activities designed to gain political influence, including activities undertaken or coordinated by the United Front Works Department of the Chinese Communist Party; third, efforts to gain direct or indirect influence through commercial or noncommercial intermediaries subject to control by the People's Republic of China, including enterprises controlled by the People's Liberation Army; and fourth, disinformation and press manipulation by the Government of the People's Republic of China against the United States.

Various agencies from the intelligence and law enforcement communities will be tasked to provide input on Chinese intelligence activities within the United States and elsewhere. Some of the agencies being asked to contribute to the annual report will include the following: Central Intelligence Agency, Department of Defense, Department of Justice, National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, Department of State, and the Department of the Treasury.

The classified version of the annual report will be provided to both the House and Senate. An unclassified version will be prepared so that the American public can be provided with a general summary of the nature of the Chinese intelligence threat to the United States.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is very crucial yet very simple. It is not one that requires anything more than a gathering of information for us, but I think it is critical information for us. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 1997

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I was necessarily absent during rollcall vote 267. If present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall 267.

APPOINTMENT OF DAVID STRAUSS TO BE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 1997

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the appointment of David Strauss, a fellow Valley City, ND, native and close friend, as Executive Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation [PBGC].

I couldn't be more pleased to see such a good friend named to such an important Government post. Throughout his career, David has been an outstanding public servant deeply devoted to advancing the interests of working families. In this exciting new position, David will continue that work as the Government's top official responsible for protecting the pension security of 42 million American workers and retirees participating in about 50,000 private-sector pension plans.

David comes to the PBGC with extensive management and policy experience as deputy chief of staff to Vice President AL GORE since 1994. In that position, he played a major management role, developed policy options and advised the Vice President on a broad range of economic and domestic policy issues including wage and workplace protection, retirement security, health care, welfare, and trade.

Ensuring that Americans can look forward to a financially secure retirement has emerged as one of the most important public policy issues of the day. As head of the PBGC, David will be a leader in crafting our Nation's response to this retirement security challenge. And with his unique background as a top-notch manager and policymaker, it's hard to imagine someone better suited to this role.

Prior to his position with the Vice President, David served as chief of staff for the late Senator Quentin Burdick of North Dakota and then as staff director of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, which Senator Burdick chaired.

Previously, as North Dakota State Executive Director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Stabilization and Conservation Service—now the Farm Service Agency—he directed an agency with 53 county offices and 1,200 employees, which administered \$1.3 billion in loans and direct payments to the farmers of North Dakota. During this period, he was recognized with a Special Achievement Award from the Secretary of Agriculture for his managerial skill and for reducing administrative costs despite a workload increase.

David Strauss is a superb choice to head the PBGC and I look forward to working with him on a broad range of retirement security issues. Mr. Speaker, I also submit for the RECORD an article from the Fargo Forum on David's appointment.

[From the Fargo Forum, July 3, 1997]

STRAUSS IN LINE FOR PENSION POSITION

(By Mikkel Pates)

David Strauss, a North Dakota native and deputy chief of staff to Vice President Al Gore, has been picked to be executive director of the government's Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp.

Pensions & Investments, the Washington trade paper which broke the story, said the announcement will come any day.

Strauss, 47, was a chief of staff for the late Sen. Quentin Burdick, D-N.D., through most of the 1980's and later for the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works for which Burdick was chairman.

He also served briefly as chief of staff for Sens. Jocelyn Burdick, D-N.D., and John Breaux, D-La., before going to his current job in 1994.

Through an aide, Strauss declined to be interviewed about the new post because no official announcement has been made. Sources say the announcement could come later this week or next week.

The PBGC is a non-profit corporation wholly owned by the federal government. The corporation regulates and monitors pension plan insurance programs.

Among other things, it steps in if a pension plan fails and can't pay benefits. It makes up the difference in assets, administers the fund, and distributes the basic benefits.

The agency covers all single-employer and private defined pension plans and some plans between unions and employers. It is administered by a board, of which the Secretary of Labor is chairman, and includes the secretaries of commerce and treasury.

Sources at Pensions & Investments called Strauss a good choice for the job, despite his lack of hands-on experiences in pensions. The post does not require Senate confirmation.

The story quoted Rep. Earl Pomeroy, D-N.D., also from Valley City, who said the appointment of a top political aide showed the Clinton administration's commitment to retirement income security.

Officials from the Teamsters, the AFL-CIO, and business lobbyists all sang his praises.

"David Strauss' appointment will provide the PBGC with the kind of political leadership it has never had," said Mark J. Ugoretz, president of the ERISA Industry Committee, a Washington trade group representing the nation's biggest companies.

ERISA is the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974.

As Gore's aide, Strauss helped develop White House policy options on a range of economic and domestic policies.

He was involved in working on the Retirement Protection Act, signed by Clinton in December 1994.

In a 1994 interview with The Forum Strauss said that his career hinged to some degree on Gore's future.

"If Al Gore is re-elected vice president and then runs for president in the year 2000, I very much would want to be a part of all of that," he said at the time.

Strauss grew up in Harvey and Valley City, and in the 1970's became one of the state's most successful political strategists.

Among other things, he was executive director of the Democratic-NPL party from 1975 to 1977.

In 1977, he was named North Dakota executive director of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (now the Farm Service Agency).

At the time he was criticized for a lack of farming background for the job.

He later took great pride in winning achievement awards in the agency.

NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS CENTER, CASPER, WY

HON. BARBARA CUBIN

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 1997

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, over a century and a half has now passed since the historic