

Speaker, I want to single out 105 residents of that community, the Ashland Optimist Club, who are really making a tremendous impact in the lives of many more mid-Missourians.

The Ashland Optimist Club is big news in my district because of the huge contribution it makes to the community. Now, the Ashland Optimist Club is one of 4,000 Optimist clubs in the United States and Canada, and was chartered in September of 1964 with only 24 members. Today the club has grown in numbers, still has an original charter member, Mr. Labmon Wren. Mr. Wren, who was once president of the club, has seen firsthand how the community of Ashland has really prospered by the dedication of those at the Ashland Optimist Club that he helped to establish.

The motto of the club is, "Friend of Youth." Here are just a few of the noteworthy accomplishments the club has made to give life to that motto. The Ashland Optimist Club has organized the youth basketball and soccer programs. In fact, Mr. Speaker, one of the local soccer teams will be competing in the national playoffs this summer.

The club has built and donated two tennis courts near the city park. It operates a 32-team Little League baseball program. It purchased new band uniforms for the school marching band; owns and operates the Ashland community swimming pool, the only municipal pool in Missouri to utilize solar energy. The club has sponsored Boy Scouts for three decades.

I also want to single out the club, Mr. Speaker, for praise in helping the general population of the community in several other ways. For example, when a local school nurse needed a tympanometer to test the hearing of the elementary students and the school district budget did not quite allow for the purchase of one, the Ashland Optimist Club donated the equipment to the school. When the Southern Boone County Volunteer Fire Department needed the "Jaws of Life" to extricate accident victims from their vehicles, the club came to the rescue and purchased one for the department.

□ 1015

There are so many activities, food donations to needy families, scholarships for high school students, that the Ashland Optimist Club has taken on to improve the quality of life.

The members have also done their part to save a life. Without a doubt the most meaningful fund-raising the club has produced were the fund-raisers last year to help two residents win the fight against life-threatening health conditions.

A few month ago Mr. John Johnson, a local resident and club member, desperately needed a kidney transplant. The Ashland Optimist Club established a John Johnson Kidney Fund and raised over \$7,000 to help defray medical and travel expenses.

Just a few months ago in August, 4-year-old Tailor Heneisen was diagnosed with a cancerous tumor in her stomach. Without hesitation the Ashland Optimist Club sprang into action and organized an auction in her benefit. The club raised over \$22,000 to help pay for her care and travel expenses. I am pleased to report that through the help and effort of the club, little Tailor's cancer is in remission after a long hard battle and several treatments of chemotherapy.

These examples of small miracles performed by the Ashland Optimist Club prove how a small number of individuals in a community can really make a tremendous impact and better not only the lives of those within the community but all of those who live in mid-Missouri.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I wish to honor the club for its most crowning achievement for this new year. In 1992 the club constructed a 10,000 square foot facility to build a community center on 20 acres in the city. The building has been the site of numerous wedding receptions and high school reunions, Friday night bingos. The facility also provides seniors a place to walk in cold winter months, and is the home court for the local basketball teams. On the grounds surrounding the facility are large soccer fields and the newly constructed rodeo arena that hosts the Missouri High School Rodeo Association rodeo.

The Ashland Optimist Club constructed this facility after borrowing \$330,000 for the project. Last month, Mr. Speaker, the club wrote their last check and paid their mortgage off. And on February 28th the club will be having a special community social and will be having a mortgage burning party.

I am pleased to acknowledge that the club has been able to pay off their mortgage 13 years early due to the efforts of Carl and Lena Long and their STAR bingo team. The Longs and the STAR team diligently worked and promoted the club's weekly bingo game, which is the major form of fundraising for the club. Now that the facility is paid in full, the Ashland Optimist Club will have an additional \$80,000 to \$100,000 annually to continue to spend for the youth and community as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, Carl and Lena Long, the STAR bingo team, and the entire club deserve special recognition for the years of hard work. And on behalf of the entire House of Representatives, I offer my commendation for a job well done.

TRIBUTE TO CHAMPION ENTERPRISES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of

this body and to the American people one of the greatest examples of responsible corporate citizenship that I have ever come across in my 17 years serving in this great body.

Champion Enterprises, a builder of manufactured homes with production operations in my district in Sangerfield, New York, lost its factory last month after a devastating fire destroyed the entire facility. Nothing but ruin and ashes. Two hundred plus workers and their families were left wondering about their future, agonizing over what tomorrow would bring.

But in the ultimate act of loyalty to its employees, Champion Enterprises decided not only to rebuild the factory, something that was going to take four or five months, but to continue to pay its employees their full pay plus their benefits until that new facility is built. That means over 200 families do not have to worry about not having enough money to pay their mortgage or make their car payments or feed their children as a result of that devastating fire.

This responsible corporate decision is good for the workers, it is good for their families, it is good for the local economy, and it is good for the company as well. It is an act of compassion and, frankly, it represents good business.

When I called the chief executive officer, Mr. Walter Young, Jr., to tell him how proud all of us were of that responsible action, he said to me something that was very revealing. He said, "Disasters test the character of individuals and organizations." He told me that he was pleased with the character of his organization and he thanked me for noticing, and I told him all of us are pleased and proud of the character of that organization.

The Governor, George Pataki, the Governor of the Empire State, wrote to Jack Ireton-Hewitt, who is the general manager of the Titan Homes Division of Champion, whose plant was destroyed. He said,

Like so many New Yorkers, I have followed the news accounts detailing the situation of the employees of your Sangerfield plant which was recently destroyed by a devastating fire.

Your admirable actions of the past few weeks not only define the true meanings of corporate citizenship; it refines it, deepens it and amplifies it. Titan Homes' loyalty to its employees in the face of the total destruction of this plant has transformed a tragedy into a reason for celebration.

We realize that your parent company, Champion Enterprises—

the Governor went on to say, could have moved this manufacturing operation to any number of its 66 North American plants.

But it did not. And let me add parenthetically here, so often we hear tales about corporate citizenship that does not pass the responsible test. When something like this happens, on occasion corporations have been known to try to bid one community against another, threatening to move out unless they are given more, threatening

to take the jobs elsewhere to the highest bidder, but not this company. This company said we have dedicated, committed employees, they have an outstanding work ethic, they produce a fine product, and we are going to be loyal to them. It is refreshing to see that loyalty is a two-way street.

Let me return to the Governor's letter:

Titan Homes' swift action to rebuild and modernize an expanded Sangerfield facility is an encouraging vote of confidence in the Mohawk Valley economy, and will no doubt have positive ramifications on the Waterville-area economy in the coming months and years.

Titan Homes' actions reflect more than loyalty to its employees—it's a sound investment in the future and has already been returned in the enduring gratitude of the residents of the Mohawk Valley and the utmost respect from the national business community. We are proud that Titan Homes has been a member of New York's corporate family for more than 25 years.

Signed by Governor George Pataki.

Let me say once again to one and all, Champion Enterprises has set an example for others to follow. It is a corporation that is concerned with profits, as it should be. That is why people go into business, to make money. But it is also a corporation that demonstrates, day in and day out, that the most important ingredient in any business enterprise is the dedicated men and women who, day in and day out, work to make a success of that business.

Congratulations to Champion Enterprise. We salute you.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the letter from Governor George Pataki to Mr. Ireton-Hewitt.

STATE OF NEW YORK,
February 11, 1999.

MR. JACK IRETON-HEWITT,
General Manager, Titan Homes Division,
Sangerfield, NY.

DEAR MR. IRETON-HEWITT: Like so many New Yorkers, I have followed the news accounts detailing the situation of the employees of your Sangerfield plant which was recently destroyed by a devastating fire.

Your admirable actions of the past few weeks not only define the true meaning of corporate citizenship; it refines it, deepens it and amplifies it. Titan Homes' loyalty to its employees in the face of the total destruction of this plant has transformed a tragedy into a reason for celebration.

We realize that your parent company, Champion Enterprises, could have moved this manufacturing operation to any number of its 66 North American plants. Titan Homes' swift action to rebuild and modernize an expanded Sangerfield facility is an encouraging vote of confidence in the Mohawk Valley economy, and will no doubt have positive ramifications on the Waterville-area economy in the coming months and years.

Titan Homes' actions reflect more than loyalty to its employees—it's a sound investment in the future and has already been returned in the enduring gratitude of the residents of the Mohawk Valley and the utmost respect from the national business community. We are proud that Titan Homes has been a member of New York's corporate family for more than 25 years.

I thank you for your outstanding commitment to your workforce and wish you every success in your future in the Empire State.

Sincerely,

GEORGE E. PATAKI,
Governor.

MEDIA MISREPRESENTATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, it might surprise a lot of my conservative friends, but one of my joys every day is reading *The New York Times*, and especially the editorial page of *The New York Times*. There are a lot of writers there that I do not particularly agree with, but I certainly appreciate their flair and their style and just how they are really some of the best and the brightest writers in the business.

One of the best writers stylistically is also one of the most liberal and somebody that I rarely agree with, and that is Anthony Lewis. A few days ago, on February the 9th, Mr. Lewis wrote an article entitled "Self-Inflicted Wound" regarding the impeachment process, and gave a searing critique of the House managers' performance in that. He talked about his greatest concern being the moral absolutism these House managers took over to the Senate trial. This is what he said:

"Representative LINDSEY GRAHAM's voice trembled as he ended the Republican prosecutors' presentation of evidence. 'For God's sake,' he told the Senate, 'figure out what kind of person we have here in the White House.'"

"Why the trembling emotion? Frustration, I think. Mr. GRAHAM and the other Republican managers are true believers.

"If they could only see it, one reason" that Americans don't understand their argument is "their absolute conviction that they are right."

Mr. Lewis goes on to say: "Americans are wise to be uncomfortable with absolutism. Sir Isaiah Berlin, the great British historian-philosopher, showed us that certainty about everything has been the hallmark of totalitarian movements."

Mr. Lewis goes on to say: "The Republican managers did not understand how their zealotry troubled the audience. The *Financial Times* put it, they were 'blinded by their moral righteousness.'" And he goes on to discuss how such moral absolutism is dangerous for this Republic.

Well, I personally believe that the House managers have done a very good job and been pleased with their performance. But if Mr. Lewis believes that they have been blinded by moral absolutism, then I think that is certainly a message he needs to get out to the American people. But I wish while he was getting that message out to the American people, I wish he would also

send a message to the most extreme elements of the left in this House, and in the media, and in Hollywood and across America that moral absolutism from the extreme left is dangerous, just as it would be from the extreme right.

For over a decade the extreme left has practiced the type of moral absolutism of the destructive nature that Mr. Lewis warned of. I remember back in 1987 at the beginning of the nomination of Robert Bork, who has been so villified over the past 11 years it is really hard to recognize that he was one of the most respected voices in the judiciary for years and years. But in 1987 the blind moral absolutism of the extreme left took a vicious, vicious turn during the nomination of Robert Bork.

As Charles Krauthammer wrote in *The Washington Post* on February the 9th, "The Democrats owe Robert Bork an apology. You remember Bork: the brilliant judge and legal scholar who was so savagely attacked when nominated in 1987 by President Reagan for the Supreme Court that his name became a verb. 'Bork: to attack viciously a candidate or appointee, especially by misrepresentation in the media.'" That is *Safire's political dictionary*.

"Within hours of Bork's nomination," Krauthammer goes on to write, "Senator EDWARD KENNEDY was on the floor of the Senate charging that, 'Robert Bork's America is a land in which women would be forced into back-alley abortions, among other travesties; blacks would sit at segregated lunch counters, rogue police could break down citizens' doors in midnight raids, schoolchildren could not be taught evolution, et cetera.'"

Now, these arguments were absolutely false. They were proven absolutely false and outrageous. But the extreme left took them and ran with them and savagely attacked Judge Bork simply because he did not agree with them and their view of the Constitution. He believed that the Constitution should be interpreted in much the same way that many today still believe it should be interpreted, and that is looking at the original intent.

□ 1030

But I do not recall in 1987 Mr. Lewis ever talking to the Senator or condemning anybody for this sort of moral absolutism that now supposedly is this great threat to western-style democracy. Sadly, I expect they did not. And sadly, I expect they never will so long as the moral absolutism and the extremism and the vicious attacks come from the left.

We do not hear about it in the media, either. Let me tell my colleagues, I was deeply, deeply offended, I was deeply saddened by a campaign commercial that ran in Missouri, the home State of the minority leader of this House. This is what this Democratic ad in Missouri said in 1998. I am not talking about 11 years ago. I am talking about in 1998.