

IN MEMORY OF TONY SNOW

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2008

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, on July 12th, former White House Press Secretary, writer, commentator, patriot and a true gentleman, Tony Snow, passed away from colon cancer. Throughout his life and his career, Mr. Snow earned a reputation for wit, thoughtfulness, and intellectual prowess that brought him admiration and acclaim from his political allies and opponents.

A graduate of Davidson College in North Carolina, Tony Snow had a diverse career beginning as an editorial writer for a local North Carolina paper. He grew in the field of journalism to become a syndicated columnist and commentator for several well respected news programs. He was a speechwriter for President George H.W. Bush. After leaving the White House for the first time, Mr. Snow took a post at the Fox News Channel—helping to build that network's news programming—before returning to the White House as press secretary for President George W. Bush.

I am personally grateful that a former member of the staff of South Carolina's Second District, Emily Lawrimore, had the distinct honor to work with Tony Snow in her post as assistant press secretary for President Bush. I know from her experience and the stories of generosity and decency from Mr. Snow's friends and colleagues that we have truly lost an honorable individual who believed in rising above the political rhetoric in this Nation. With his college background at Davidson, the people of the Carolinas especially appreciated his success. At this time of loss, our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Jill, and their three children.

CONGRATULATING CHARLIE DANIEL

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2008

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, one of the finest men I know, Charlie Daniel, has now completed 5 years as a newspaper editorial cartoonist in my hometown of Knoxville, Tennessee.

Charlie is one of Knoxville's most popular and respected citizens. Almost every morning for all these years, people in East Tennessee have been inspired or made angry by, or perhaps simply have laughed at one of his cartoons.

He has certainly helped bring about better government through his work, but the laughter is all right, too. There is not enough good humor in the political process today.

I have one of his cartoons hanging in my Knoxville office and two are on the wall of my home. I have many favorites among his work, but I will give just two examples.

The first showed a father reading a newspaper with the headline "Americans Hire Illegals to Do Work They Don't Want to Do." Then it showed a little boy with his arm around an obviously Hispanic little boy, with

the first boy saying, "I hired Juan to do my homework."

The second showed a man with a clipboard standing at the front door of the home of a very angry man who said, "Well it's about time someone came to ask my opinion," and the man with the clipboard said, "Sir, I'm just here to read your meter."

Charlie worked from 1958 until the early 1990s at the Knoxville Journal, which for most of its history was our morning daily newspaper. When the Journal closed, he began to work for the Knoxville News Sentinel where he remains today.

I worked at the Journal in 1968 and 1969, hired by the longtime editor, Guy Smith, who also was the man who hired Charlie.

The Journal in those days gave titles easier than they gave money, and I was the Assistant State Editor, working under a woman named Juanita Glenn.

Last year I was interviewed in my Washington office by a reporter for the Wall Street Journal. As we walked out, I told her I had once been Assistant State Editor for the Knoxville Journal. I didn't tell her that among my duties were the TV logs and the obituaries.

The Journal newsroom in those days had the most colorful cast of characters I have ever been around.

The corner of my desk touched the desk of Dick Evans, the morning editor and a great journalist. I will never forget how he slammed down his phone after every phone call, no matter whether it was a good call or bad.

Others who I remember so well who worked at the Journal besides Charlie, were Steve Humphrey, Tom Sweeten, Byron Drinnon, Bill Vaughan, Sam Venable, Dudley Brewer, Pat Fields, Bob Adams, Bill Bolus, Jim Skelton, Ben Byrd, Russ Bebb, Ted Griffith, Al Roberts, Hugh Lunsford, Tom Greene, Doug Price, Raymond Flowers, and Margie Trent.

Ron McMahan, Ralph Griffith, and Margaret Underwood, all of whom I knew very well, had left before I worked at the Journal to work in Washington for Senator Howard Baker. One of my longtime best friends, Bill Vaughan, later left to work for Congressman Jimmy Quillen, and even Dick Evans left to work for the Department of Commerce.

A few days ago, Sam Venable, now a longtime columnist for the Knoxville News Sentinel and also a former Journal employee, wrote a wonderful column in tribute to Charlie.

I would like to congratulate Charlie on 50 great years in the news business and also thank him for his service to our community in many ways.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would request that the Sam Venable column about Charlie Daniel be reprinted in the RECORD at this point, and I would like to call it to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD.

50 YEARS AND STILL ON THE JOB

(By Sam Venable)

One of the most poignant cartoons Charlie Daniel ever produced wasn't a drawing at all. It ran on the editorial page of the old Knoxville Journal on Saturday, Nov. 23, 1968, two days after the death of the newspaper's legendary editor.

"Today I find my limited talents fall far too short of paying proper tribute to Guy L. Smith—a great man," Daniel wrote in his signature block letters. "I shall miss his insight, his leadership and his humor—but most of all I shall miss the man who gave me the opportunity to fill this space each day."

That was the first and only time Charlie found himself at a loss for an image. Pretty decent statement about a 50-year career that has produced an estimated 15,000 cartoons and four books.

"I really was stymied," Charlie recalled of that moment four decades ago. "It was very personal for me. Here was the guy who gave me my shot at a time when newspaper editorial cartooning was at a low point."

Alas, the cycle has come around to an even lower ebb. Charlie, who joined the News Sentinel staff after the Journal's closure in 1992, is one of only 80 newspaper editorial cartoonists working in America today. Theirs never was a populous force, but at the craft's peak in the 1960s and '70s, nearly 300 were using their skills to poke, prod, tweak and guide the nation's conscience. Usually with a laugh.

Fortunately for readers of the News Sentinel, this 78-year-old treasure has no intention of setting his pens aside.

"I'll stay as long as the light bulb comes on," Charlie laughed. "I have no hobbies. I don't fish or paint or play golf. If I retired, I'd just go home and bug Patsy (his wife of 54 years). We have trouble making it through a weekend."

You'll soon be reading, seeing and hearing a lot about Charlie Daniel. The News Sentinel is celebrating his golden anniversary this month in a variety of ways.

In next Sunday's Life and Arts section, staff writer Amy McRary will profile the life of her fellow Tar Heel. On the same day, our Perspective pages will showcase some of his classics.

Readers are invited to join the festivities as well. A display of Daniel drawings through the years graces our lobby at 2332 News Sentinel Drive, just off Western Avenue. It'll be open to the public 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday–Friday through September.

As one of the few journalists who served with Charlie at both the Journal and News Sentinel, I'm qualified to propose Daniel trivia. Such as:

—Why is the plaque he won for highway safety awareness inscribed to "I. Daniel"?

(Because he used to put a double descender on the "D" on his tag line, and it looked like an "I.") To keep from embarrassing the highway officials, he really should have changed his name to Ignatius.)

—What was the ghastly mixture of pipe tobacco he used to fog the Journal newsroom with before kicking his smoking habit?

(Half-and-half and some fancy-smancy aromatic blend neither of us could immediately recall after all these years; fittingly, Charlie termed it "Half-and-Half-and-the-Other-Half.")

Obviously, it has been a joy to work alongside Charlie at both newspapers. And I mean "alongside" literally.

As a college student in the late 1960s, my Journal police reporter desk sat an arm's length away from his drawing room. Here in the News Sentinel's new building, Chas and I reside in neighboring cubicles. I call it the Geezer Quad.

That's going to change in a few weeks when our newsroom undergoes a fruit basket turnover desk rearrangement—one of those New Age efficiency initiatives the suits dream up over noon martinis.

Charlie will be moving into the old business news department, which is shuffling to heaven-knows-where, while I'll be going over to his old cubicle. This is called progress.

But I maintain nothing will change, because Charlie, dangnabbit, will still be closer to the window and thus will have greater access to the muse who delivers inspiration on a daily basis.

Hey, I need the muse! Not Charlie! This guy swims in creative juices!

Charlie shows up around 7:30 a.m. and spends several hours scanning newspapers, journals and magazines. Then he doodles with the vast array of ideas the %\$#@! muse has dumped into his lap, cranks out three or four potential cartoons for the next day, decides on one, colors it and saunters out the front door, carefree as a hoppy toad.

I, on the other hand, am lucky to wake up in time to grab lunch, pour a cup of coffee, exchange office gossip with colleagues, compare fishing stories over the phone with friends, e-mail the latest bawdy jokes I've heard to everyone in my address book, drink more coffee, loudly curse the moron who didn't rebrew coffee, check my parlay sheets, drink even more coffee—and then type myself into a furious, sweaty, nail-biting panic till deadline, milking the lone thread of creativity I stole from someone else until it is toast-dry. Is this fair?

OK, so here's the serious truth: Charlie Daniel is blessed with the quickest wit this side of Hollywood. Plus the ability to take that humor, reduce it to a drawing and zing his point home in a panel the size of a Kleenex.

Try it sometime. After you've spent a week in frustration, you might understand how difficult the task is day after day, year after year.

Yet he dismisses the silly notion that he's ever had a real job.

"I'm doing what I did in the second grade," he says. "I've never gone high-tech. I still draw with a pen and paper, not on a computer screen."

Perhaps. But you don't stay on top of this game without a keen eye for news and a comedian's sense of timing.

"Some of my earlier work was overdone," he said. "I've learned to know when to quit a drawing. Just make your point and stop."

"Also, editorial cartoons have a short life span. Next week, somebody might look at it and say, 'What the heck was that all about?' At the same time, you can't be too quick with an idea or else you'll be ahead of the public."

An excellent example occurred recently when NASA announced it was sending plumbing materials to the International Space Station to fix a broken toilet. The next morning, Charlie's cartoon showed a giant plunger blasting off. When confused readers began calling, he realized he'd struck too soon.

"I probably should have given that one a day or two more," he said. "But you're always juggling with the fact that bloggers and late-night TV folks are already using the same material."

Let me tell you a few things I've learned about "Cholly" after working with him over most of 40 years:

The same fellow who has rubbed shoulders with presidents and barons of commerce is one of the most laid-back, down-to-earth, genuine nice guys you'll ever meet.

He can, and often does, make a serious point without having to dip his pen into poison ink.

He is a five-time nominee for journalism's highest award, the Pulitzer Prize.

He is soft-spoken, leads a quiet life of humble service to society's lost and downtrodden, and is quick to laugh at himself.

He takes immense delight in sharing with me visceral hate mail from the occasional reader who either misunderstood a cartoon or was its most-deserved target. Or, as one nutty reviewer ranted in misplaced criticism of country music legend Charlie Daniels (with an "s"), "I hate your music, too!"

I was sitting in the audience in 2005 for a humor-in-politics seminar hosted by the Howard Baker Center at the University of Tennessee. The panel featured some of the

nation's most noted political wits, including the late syndicated columnist Art Buchwald.

Ask anyone who saw this performance: The others were funny, but Charlie brought the house down with self-deprecating lines, one after another.

That same shy attitude is reflected when he talks about the impact of his editorial cartoons:

"I'd be happy hitting .350."

Trust me, his batting average is exceedingly higher. Ol' Ignatius Daniel has made journalism's All-Star roster 50 years straight—and counting.

MEDICARE IMPROVEMENTS FOR PATIENTS AND PROVIDERS ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2008

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of overriding the President's veto of H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act.

For the past several weeks, Congress has debated an issue that should not be considered controversial—health care for our Nation's seniors. This important piece of legislation addresses impeding cuts to physicians' Medicare payment rates. The issue not only affects seniors in my district of El Paso, Texas, but also hurts access to health care for all El Pasoans.

The most important issue to consider when discussing this bill is that the provisions not only stop the impending 10.6 percent cut, but it ensures that seniors and people with disabilities can continue to see the doctors of their choice.

It is also critical to understand that a cut to Medicare will have a significant impact on similar programs. For instance, these cuts would not only affect those covered by Medicare, but it would also threaten access to health care for military members and their families under the military health program, TRICARE. Physicians serving our troops also face the 10.6 percent cut due because TRICARE payments are directly tied to Medicare.

Also, private insurance companies look to Medicare to base their physician reimbursement rates. Physicians in El Paso and across the Nation rely on reimbursement by Medicare and other health care insurance groups to cover health care services rendered when a patient does not pay the full cost of care. In a recent survey of Texas physicians, more than 60 percent stated they would be forced to stop seeing Medicare patients should their reimbursement rates be cut.

H.R. 6331 is significant legislation that eliminates the cuts to Medicare payments for the remainder of 2008 and provides a 1.1 percent increase for 2009. The bill also extends and improves low-income assistance programs for Medicare beneficiaries. Finally, the bill protects seniors' access to therapy services.

I am extremely disappointed at President Bush's obvious disregard for Congress and the people they represent by vetoing this critical legislative proposal. By doing so, the President has sent a clear message to seniors

that he does not believe providing them with access to quality health care is a priority of his administration.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of overriding the veto and by doing so, support Medicare beneficiaries' ability to choose their physicians.

RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2008

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, today I will vote to refer House Resolution 1345 to the Judiciary Committee. My vote does not reflect a belief that this Resolution deserves continued consideration in the House of Representatives, instead it was a vote cast to preclude consideration of the Resolution on the floor of the House.

As you know, the Constitution provides for "impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors." Whether we agree or disagree with this President, most Americans—including myself—do not feel this high threshold has been met. Furthermore, as the lone representative for North Dakota in the United States House of Representatives, I take the responsibility of representing the beliefs and values of my State seriously, and I believe I am reflecting prevailing view among the majority of North Dakotans on this issue.

Again, I do not believe that the House of Representatives should be considering the highly partisan issue of impeachment at this time. Bringing up this Resolution on the floor of the House would not only waste valuable floor time, but would also distract from far more pressing national issues and undermine the bipartisan cooperation that is necessary to pass effective and timely legislation.

CARIB NEWS EDITORIALS SPEAK OF PROGRESS IN THE CARIBBEAN

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD two editorials from the June 24, 2008, publication of *CaribNews*.

The first editorial is entitled "Caribbean Heritage: Building on Its Foundations In a Foreign Land." The piece reminds us of the distance that those of Caribbean heritage have traveled both physically and figuratively. "Confidence in their inner strength has helped people from the Caribbean to win their independence from an imperialistic stranglehold, fight alongside their long-standing African-American allies, in the battle for respect for people's human rights, and succeed in opening up new vistas for the generations that come after them." Caribbean Americans have come a long way from being strangers in a foreign land to gaining recognition for their contributions to American culture.