

Former N.C. Governor stands up for justice

Written by Maya Rhodan Washington Correspondent
Tuesday, 02 April 2013 09:59



WASHINGTON (NNPA) – They were Southern governors who shared the same last name – Perdue – but took different approaches in two high-profile race-sensitive cases. Despite a direct appeal from Pope Benedict XVI, Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue did not spare Troy Davis from execution in 2011 for allegedly killing a Savannah policeman.

Over the objections of many, including some members of her own staff, last December North Carolina Gov. Beverly Perdue issued pardons of innocence to the Wilmington Ten, activists who were imprisoned for crimes they did not commit.

Five days before she left office and 40 years after the Wilmington Ten was convicted Perdue, the first female governor of North Carolina, granted full pardons of innocence to the group. Pardons of innocence are granted to show that the state of North Carolina no longer believes the Wilmington Ten committed a crime.

Perdue was honored by the National Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation last week for her display of courage. The awards ceremony capped a 2-year campaign by the NNPA to win pardons for the Wilmington Ten.

In issuing the pardons, the North Carolina governor cited "naked racism" for the false conviction of the Wilmington 10, led by Benjamin Chavis.

Mary Alice Thatch, publisher of the *Wilmington Journal*, persuaded the NNPA to take on the challenge of seeking pardons for the 10 activists.

"I don't know if you remember Michelle Obama saying, 'For once in my life, I'm proud of my country,' Thatch said as the governor was about to be presented with the award. "I want to say to Gov. Perdue, for once in my life, I am proud of North Carolina. Thank you so much."

Former N.C. Governor stands up for justice

Written by Maya Rhodan Washington Correspondent
Tuesday, 02 April 2013 09:59

