

support literacy programs through the appropriations process and through efforts to promote the achievement of literacy in their communities. Advancing literacy initiatives is a crucial investment in our future. ●

TRIBUTE TO ALEX MANOOGIAN, 1901-96

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, on July 10, Michigan lost one of its greatest citizens, a very humble man of great wealth, an immigrant who embodied all that is good about America, a man of 95 years who still had plans to make life better for people.

Alex Manoogian came to this country in 1920 to escape the oppression of the Armenian people. A few years after his arrival, he founded what is today one of Michigan's most successful business firms, Masco Corporation. But it is the rest of the story that made Alex Manoogian a giant, not only in Michigan but in the United States and in the world, as well.

He touched the lives of young people with educational facilities here and abroad. Cultural and educational institutions in Detroit, Ann Arbor, Armenia and Jerusalem welcomed his generous endowments. If Armenians suffered in America, his adopted land, or in his homeland of Armenia, he was there to help. He founded the Armenian General Benevolent Union to address the catastrophes that befell his people.

The Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians came from Yerevan to preside at the funeral of Alex Manoogian. He described him as a Christian, an Armenian and an American. A Christian, whose deep faith kept him involved in the church for 80 of his 95 years—and he built St. John's Armenian Church in Southfield, MI, one of the most glorious edifices in our community with its golden dome that glows in the sunlight. An Armenian, who never forgot the persecution of his people and the need to continue to touch their lives. An American, who loved this country passionately and who gave back much, much more than he ever took.

I loved meeting with Alex Manoogian. He spoke simply, eloquently and with great intensity about those things that mattered to him. I will always cherish our many discussions. We will all miss him. ●

BOONDOGGLE FOR THE NRA

● Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, the Senate recently approved a Defense authorization bill for fiscal year 1997 that includes an indefensible allotment of tax dollars to a slightly camouflaged version of the earlier Civilian Marksmanship Program.

I have written on this subject in a column that is sent to newspapers in Illinois, and I ask that it be reprinted here to call the attention of my colleagues to this questionable line item.

The column follows:

AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE, IRRESPONSIBLE, BAFFLING BOONDOGGLE FOR THE NRA

(By Senator Paul Simon)

Buried in the annual Defense Department authorization bill is an outrageous gift of \$77 million that will benefit something called the Corporation for the Promotion Rifle Practice and Firearms Safety.

This corporation is the new "private" incarnation of the old National Rifle Association-backed Civilian Marksmanship Program. This program was intended to make sure people could shoot straight in case they entered the military. In recent years, however, it has simply funneled cash, weapons and ammunition to private gun clubs, thanks to the power of the NRA. Until a federal judge ruled it unconstitutional in 1979, gun clubs which participated in this program were required to be NRA members.

Under public pressure to eliminate this useless and wasteful program, Congress "privatized" the program last year.

In fact, the corporation is private in name only. When the corporation becomes fully operational in October of this year it will be given by the Army:

176,218 rifles the Army views as outmoded, but valued at \$53,271,002.

Computers, vehicles, office equipment and other related items valued by the Army at \$8,800,000.

146 million rounds of ammunition valued by the Army at \$9,682,656.

\$5,332,000 in cash.

Total totals \$77,085,658.

Our friends in the National Rifle Association strongly back this measure and it appears to be a boondoggle for them.

What the Army should do with outmoded weapons is to destroy them. Our government has a theoretical policy that it does not sell federally owned weapons to the public. The Civilian Marksmanship Program violates this policy, and the new corporation would continue to violate it.

Why we should be subsidizing rifle practice—which is the theory behind this—baffles me. Hardly any of those who will use the weapons will enter into the armed forces. The Defense Department did not request this.

I had never fired a rifle or handgun before entering the Army, and with minimal training I became a fair-to-good marksman.

Sen. Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey and I tried to eliminate this incomprehensible expenditure from the bill and we got only 29 votes for our amendment. The NRA still has power.

We should be reducing the numbers of weapons in our society, not increasing them.

A government policy of destroying weapons and not selling outmoded guns to the public is sound.

While rifles are not the primary weapons for crime—pistols are—some of those 176,000 weapons will get into the hands of people who should not have them. If 1 percent reach someone who is irresponsible, that is 1,760 weapons.

Let me in advance extend my sympathy to the families of the people who will be killed by these weapons. The will be needless victims of this folly. ●

MEMORIALIZING MICHIGAN VICTIMS OF TWA FLIGHT 800

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, on behalf of Michigan I would like to express my deep regret at the loss of several Michigan residents who lost their lives in the explosion of TWA Flight 800 near New York. We still do not know what happened to flight 800, and therefore do

not yet know if there are culprits behind it who must be brought to justice. But we do know that the lives of fine people have been lost before their time.

Mr. President, six people with close ties to Michigan died in this crash. They were Courtney Johns, an 18-year-old Bloomfield Hills Marian High School graduate, headed for Paris on an exchange program. Dr. Ghassan and Mrs. Nina Haurani, citizens and parents in Grosse Pointe Shores, starting a brief European vacation. Celine Rio, an 11-year-old French girl returning to her home after a 3-week visit as part of a national cultural exchange program. Tracy Anne Hammer, a doctoral student in veterinary science and microbiology at Michigan State University, who was to give a speech on cardiac disease in doberman pinschers before a professional audience. And Elaine Loffredo, a Michigan native who gave up a career in nursing for the excitement of air travel.

Mr. President, these people touched the hearts of many around them, in Michigan and elsewhere. Courtney Johns was a class leader in high school who was headed to Villanova University in the fall. She leaves behind grieving friends and a family devastated by the loss of this young, promising life. Ghassan and Nina Haurani were known in their community as loving parents and good neighbors. Termed "joyous, giving people," they, too, leave behind them grieving friends and a family that will miss them terribly. Tracy Anne Hammer, traveling with her mother, was well on her way to a promising career, was, indeed to launch that career in France, when she was taken from us, her family and friends. Celine Rio, a young girl on the edge of adolescence, had learned about America and had gained a second family in the Winters, her exchange program hosts. Now the Winters and her many other friends in America must join family and friends in France in lamenting the loss of this young spirit. And Elaine Loffredo, who found such joy in air travel and in the people she met—I am told that meeting Mother Theresa was a highlight of her career—was taken from her husband and other family and friends, by this explosion.

Mr. President, these were fine people, leading fine lives until they were taken from us. I know I speak for my entire State of Michigan when I tell families and friends of those we have lost that we share their loss, and that our thoughts and prayers are with them. ●

WHITEWATER INVESTIGATION WAS A COSTLY PARTISAN GAME

● Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, the Special Committee To Investigate Whitewater Development Corporation And Related Matters recently transmitted its final report.

I have written about this costly, partisan game in a column that is sent to newspapers in Illinois, and I submit it

here to call the attention of my colleagues to this political exercise that contributed nothing.

The column follows:

WHITEWATER INVESTIGATION WAS A COSTLY
PARTISAN GAME

(By Senator Paul Simon)

The Senate Whitewater investigation resulted in a political exercise that contributed nothing, except to add to public cynicism and confirming the already widespread belief that in Congress we are playing partisan games rather than tending to the nation's and the public's real needs.

Obviously some people broke the law in the Whitewater events, but the evidence indicated neither a violation of the law nor of ethical standards by Bill Clinton or Hillary Clinton while he served either as President or as Governor of Arkansas.

But the misuse of the FBI files is another matter. Both the White House and the FBI are at fault. The President probably is not personally involved, but it happened in his White House and administration and it should not be treated as a minor mess-up by the President or his staff. The misuse of police powers by governments is as old as governments themselves, and something that must be constantly guarded against.

The abuse of the FBI files comes at a time when there are two other abuses.

One is the Senate investigation which spent almost \$2 million, received testimony from 139 witnesses, and took more time than any investigation of a sitting President in our history—longer than the Watergate or Iran-Contra hearings. "Where there is smoke there must be fire" is an old saying, but those hearing were designed to create smoke. Not only is there a product of questionable worth, we took testimony from many individuals who never in their lives thought they would testify before a Senate Committee, such as secretaries. Some were terrified by the combination of coming before a committee and being on national television.

A second abuse is the multiplying like rabbits of special counsels—really special prosecutors—with no limits on their expenses and their ability to use huge resources from the FBI and other agencies. I voted for the law creating the special counsel, but now I sense we need a better answer.

Since the FBI and the work of U.S. attorneys fall under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General, my sense is that we should review the possibility of a change in how we structure that office. It differs from other cabinet posts in its broad police and prosecutorial responsibilities, and the recent FBI debacle and the runaway habits of the special prosecutors, might provide an incentive to the next Congress and President to look at this question.

For example, we might have an Attorney General appointed for a 10-year term, with a small bipartisan group giving the President a list of five names to choose from, and also giving him the ability to request a new list of names if he found them unsatisfactory, but still requiring confirmation by the Senate. And then have no special prosecutors.

This is not a criticism of Janet Reno, who is a much-above-average Attorney General. Another example of a good appointment is President Gerald Ford's naming of Ed Levi, then president of the University of Chicago. No one felt that at any time Gerald Ford could get Ed Levi to do anything but what he believed was in the best interests of the nation. That is the way it should be.

My hope is that out of the present mini-storms something constructive can happen.

THE AGRICULTURE
APPROPRIATIONS BILL

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I wish to make a few remarks regarding the fiscal year 1997 appropriations bill for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and related agencies programs, which the Senate passed nearly unanimously yesterday.

This appropriations bill is arguably the most important for my State of North Dakota. Agriculture is my State's No. 1 industry, accounting for over one third of our annual economic activity. This bill provides important funding for many USDA activities important to my State, including valuable research, rural development, and, of course, commodity programs. I want to express my appreciation to the chairman and ranking member of the subcommittee for the excellent work they have performed putting this bill together.

Senator COCHRAN and Senator BUMPERS have an extremely difficult task balancing the needs of many important programs funded by this bill with the very difficult budget situation we are facing as we strive to balance the budget. I know the committee received a great number of requests to provide funding for programs and activities that are important to the agricultural sector of our economy, and I realize they could not possibly fund every program or activity at the levels requested. I do want to express my appreciation for the support the committee has provided for the programs in this bill, especially in light of their overall allocation.

I also want to express my appreciation for the help of the staff of the Appropriations Committee, Becky Davies, Hunt Shipman, Galen Fountain, and Jimmie Reynolds, for their excellent work on behalf of the chairman and ranking member.

Mr. President, at this point I would like to comment briefly on two important programs, and express my desire that the House-Senate conference committee will support the programs at the funding level provided in the Senate bill.

First, I want to express my strong support for the funding provided in the Senate version of this bill for the State mediation grants program within the Department of Agriculture. The Senate Appropriations Committee has provided \$2 million for this important program, and I commend subcommittee Chairman COCHRAN and Senator BUMPERS for including funding for this program. Regrettably, the House of Representatives did not provide any funding for the State mediation grants program. It is my hope that Senate and House conferees will realize the benefits of this program and fund the State mediation grants program at \$2 million.

The State mediation program was created in response to the agricultural crisis of the late 1980's, and the program continues to be valuable to farm-

ers and ranchers today. Mediation programs enable farmers and ranchers to meet with their creditors or the local Farmers Home Administration office in a confidential atmosphere which promoted civil discussion, mutual understanding, and in most cases, a fair settlement.

The scope of the State mediation grants program was expanded when the United States Department of Agriculture's [USDA] Reorganization Act of 1994 became law. Now, farmers and ranchers in States which have certified State mediation programs may choose mediation in a variety of disputes with USDA, such as conservation compliance, wetland determinations, and grazing rights.

The demand for this mediation program continues to exist. Nineteen States have certified State mediation programs, and USDA is working with more States to establish certified programs. Mediation is a proven method of sensible and economical dispute resolution. In producers' disputes with USDA, mediators provide the voice of reason and help all parties take a realistic approach to the administration of Federal programs and the requirements of compliance.

A group of my colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, joined me in a letter to Chairman COCHRAN earlier this year, requesting full funding for the State mediation grants program. It is my hope that Senate and House conferees will realize the benefits of this program and fund the State mediation grants program at the Senate-passed level of \$2 million.

Mr. President, I also want to indicate my support for the funding provided in the Senate version of this appropriations bill for the Alternative Agricultural Research and Commercialization [AARC] Corporation, and express my hope that the conferees on this legislation will be able to fund AARC at the Senate-passed level.

This level of funding is justified by the major opportunities for developing markets for alternative agricultural products, and by evidence that the AARC program is providing the necessary bridge from private sector research to commercialization for these products. AARC is a venture capital fund designed to boost farm income by commercializing new uses for agricultural products. Recipients of AARC funds repay AARC's investment, plus a risk charge. AARC's system is revolutionary because it provides actual business financing and hands-on business and technical assistance, as well as competitive research grants and links with the public and private sectors.

In my view, AARC has only begun to tap the potential for commercializing new products in the domestic market. AARC promotes new industrial uses of our farmers' commodities like fiber board from wheat straw, windshield wiper fluid from ethanol, cat litter from waste peanut hulls, and many others. Finding new uses for our commodities and promoting value-added