

our election process on November 7, the failure of a process which generated some \$3 billion in spending by candidates and barely brought out a scant majority of voters in the United States who participated. Think of all the attention paid to that Presidential campaign and election after November 7 with the recounts, the court cases, the Supreme Court, on and on and on. Half the people in this country really didn't have much of a reason to watch it because they hadn't voted in the first place. They were observing something that was as foreign as watching an Australian rules football game, trying to understand what this is all about.

We ought to be reflecting on the fact that so few people participate in our elections. I think it is important to think anew in this new millennium, in this new century, as to how we will make America not only more democratic in name but more democratic in practice; what we can do to make our elections more effective, to bring more people to the polls. I think we ought to approach it with an open mind.

Why do we vote on Tuesday? I don't know. Somebody thought Tuesday was a good day at one point in time. But is it a good day now for most Americans, or is there a better day? Could we find a way to vote on a weekend without, perhaps, raising some religious objections from some groups? I hope so. Can we find ways to vote that are more convenient for voters? In States such as Oregon and Washington, more and more people vote by mail. In fact, in Oregon virtually all the ballots were cast by mail. My brother-in-law lives in the State of Washington. He is a permanent absentee voter. He always receives his ballot by mail and returns it. You can do that in Illinois, but it is pretty difficult. We should be trying to establish a national means by which people can vote without these obstacles.

And let's talk about the voting machinery. In my home State of Illinois, and in 40 percent of the polling places across America, they have these infamous Votomatic punch systems. I have been through enough election contests as a staffer, as an attorney, and as an elected official, that by the time I finish punching my ballot out, I stop for a minute, turn it to the light, I knock off the chads. I know what to look for. I know what can disqualify my vote. How many Americans know how to do that? Probably more today than last year. Still, an awful lot have gone to the polls and made a personal sacrifice to do their civic duty to cast their vote and have their vote be heard, when it comes to the election of the President, only to learn afterwards that tens, if not hundreds of thousands, of ballots have been voided, possibly their own. That is not fair. It is not American. It is not something we ought to tolerate. I think it is more than a coincidence that the biggest breakdown in disqualification of these ballots turns out to be

in inner-city precincts. I don't think that is any accident. In many instances, that is where we have the oldest voting equipment, we have less attention paid to the education of voters, and, as a consequence, folks who are making a genuine effort to do their best and do their civic duty are denied that opportunity.

By and large, this decision on how to run a campaign and how to manage an election is a State and local responsibility, as it should be. But my colleague from the State of New York, Senator SCHUMER, who sits next to me, has proposed that we bring forward a fund for electoral reform across America and create incentives and opportunities for States and localities to upgrade their voting equipment.

Let me tell you about a piece of voting machinery that is used in South America. It is a piece of machinery where you have indicated the name of the candidate and the office and a symbol for the candidate's party. When you vote and push on the screen for your choice, up pops the picture of the candidate to verify that you picked the person for whom you want to vote. Doesn't that sound modernistic and futuristic? You may be surprised to know the equipment is produced in the United States. It is sold in South America, but it has not become popular here in this country. But think of the unlimited possibilities for us to create a system that is honest and fair and helpful to voters, instead of one creating obstacles and problems that can be strewn in their paths so they would leave the polling place uncertain and maybe frustrated.

During this great debate over the election of November 7, 2000, with this electoral vote next Saturday and the swearing in of President George W. Bush on January 20, in just a few weeks, if we do not stop to think about the long-term impact of the integrity of voting in America, I think we are derelict in our duty as elected officials. I hope, if we are not going to amend our great Constitution to eliminate the electoral college, we will at least dedicate ourselves, on a bipartisan basis, to modernizing the machinery of elections across America so the next election in 2 years or beyond will be a fair election, a more honest election, and one that creates more opportunities.

I do not believe there is a partisan spin to this. I believe Republican candidates, Democratic candidates, and independent candidates alike can all be disadvantaged by the uncertainties of the current election system. We need to encourage more people to be involved, and we need to say to them: We are doing everything within our power to use the technology and resources of America to make elections in this country an even better experience for all Americans.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JOHNSON). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. EDWARDS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

OKLAHOMA SOONERS—2000 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I rise to congratulate the Oklahoma Sooners, the football team which defeated the Florida State Seminoles last night by a score of 13-2, the seventh national championship for the Sooners.

This was also the Sooners' 17th appearance in the Orange Bowl. In 1980 and 1981, our friend and colleague from the House, J.C. WATTS, was quarterback and did a great job. I remember those Orange Bowls in 1980 and 1981. J.C. WATTS was not only an outstanding quarterback but also is an outstanding Congressman. I was with him last night to watch the Sooners win their seventh, well-deserved national championship.

The Sooners went to the Orange Bowl with a perfect 12-0 record. They defeated several outstanding teams including the once number one ranked Nebraska, the University of Texas, and Kansas State. Although we did not play them before last night, Bobby Bowden, head coach for Florida State has an outstanding football team and an outstanding program.

I congratulate the Sooners.

I congratulate Coach Bob Stoops, who only in his second year at the University of Oklahoma was named the "AP Coach of the Year"—a well-deserved honor, and it is certainly a well-deserved honor for the entire Oklahoma Sooner football team.

In addition, I wish to congratulate my friend and our former colleague in the Senate, David Boren, who is the President of the University of Oklahoma. All people in Oklahoma can say he is doing a fantastic job not only scholastically but athletically as well.

My congratulations to the team and to their leader.

From the entire State, we are all very proud of the University of Oklahoma for once again becoming the national champions.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MURRAY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL RESOLUTION

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I want to give a report on the progress

Senator LOTT and I have been making throughout the day. We have been discussing matters relating to the organizational resolution throughout the day and have just, again, had the last of our meetings for the day.

While we are closer than we were at the beginning of the day, there are still some matters to be resolved. However, it is my hope that we could resolve the outstanding issues some time tomorrow, and then it would be my hope that the Senate will proceed to a vote on the organizing resolution.

Senators should be aware that it may require a rollcall vote. It is my hope we can avoid that, but that is yet a possibility. So for purposes of the schedule, I think Senators should be prepared to be here to vote. It is my intention to call the Senate back into session at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow. We will have further reports about our progress and about the schedule for the day after we convene.

TRIBUTE TO FORMER CALIFORNIA SENATOR ALAN CRANSTON

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, this past weekend, our nation lost one of its finest public servants with the passing of former California Senator Alan Cranston.

Senator Cranston served California well, and our hearts and thoughts go to his son Kim and the rest of his family at this difficult time.

Senator Cranston holds the distinction of being the only Democrat in our State's history to win four terms to the United States Senate, serving 24 years.

Born in Palo Alto, California in 1914, Alan Cranston was a tireless champion for peace, justice, and human rights. He was also a steadfast advocate for the poor and oppressed.

Senator Cranston was educated at Stanford University where he excelled as both a student and athlete. After graduating, Senator Cranston worked as a correspondent for the International News Service and then served his nation well in the U.S. Army in World War II.

In 1939, Alan Cranston edited the first unexpurgated English translation of Adolf Hitler's "Mein Kampf" published in the U.S. in an effort to alert Americans to the dangers of the Third Reich.

In fact, Senator Cranston had the very unique experience of being sued by Hitler for copyright violation for his work on this editing project—and in true Alan Cranston form—he wore this as a badge of honor and demonstrated that he would stand up to anyone in pursuit of Democratic principles and ideals.

His first service in elected office was when he won his race for California State Controller in 1962. He then ran successfully for the Senate in 1968 and was elected seven times as party whip.

He was called by many as one of the best "nose counters" in the Senate. My esteemed colleague and former Senate Majority Leader ROBERT BYRD said of

Senator Cranston, "He is absolutely superb when it comes to knowing how the votes will fall in place on a given issue."

Senator Cranston also was a strong leader in an effort to protect our environment. I am proud to say that he was the original author of the Desert Protection Act and he called me shortly after I won election to the Senate in 1992 to ask me if I would take over the effort to get the bill approved. In 1994, we amended the bill a number of times but were able to get it passed and make the legislation a reality.

This landmark measure created two new national parks—Death Valley and Joshua Tree—and one national preserve—the Mojave. In total, the measure has permanently saved and protected over 7 million acres of pristine California desert wilderness for all time.

As Thomas Jefferson said in 1809 that "the care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government," it appears to me that Senator Cranston demonstrated this view with strong and forceful advocacy of arms control.

In the Senate, Alan Cranston played a leading role in moving the SALT and START arms control treaties through this body, and he drafted the first bill to eliminate funding for the Vietnam War.

In 1983, Alan Cranston said that ending the arms race would be the paramount goal of his run for the Presidency. That effort was not successful, but his effort to promote an honest dialogue on this issue grew and he continued to work toward a more peaceful planet right up until the time of his death.

In 1996, he became chairman of the Gorbachev Foundation USA based in San Francisco, founded by former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and devoted to nuclear disarmament.

More recently, he served as President of the Global Security Institute, a think tank devoted to same end. The Institute recently persuaded more than 100 international civilian leaders, including 44 former presidents and prime ministers, to sign on to its nuclear weapon elimination initiative.

Signatories included former President Jimmy Carter, former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, Nobel Laureates Kenneth Arrow and Elie Weisel, Coretta Scott King, astronaut Sally Ride and retired Supreme Allied Commander General Andrew Goodpaster.

Former Representative Lionel Van Deerlin describes Senator Cranston's devotion to nuclear disarmament well when he said, "He's got to be remembered for pioneering, when the Cold War was still on, limiting the worst weapons ever conceived."

In summing up the career of Senator Alan Cranston, I believe a recent editorial in the Los Angeles Times aptly sums up his life and his service to our Nation:

[Senator Cranston] toiled in the trenches during a long political career in behalf of California and world peace. The value of his efforts and dedication was not fully appreciated at the time and was overshadowed by his departure from the Senate. It's that body of work that should be remembered and celebrated now.

Mr. President, our Nation is no doubt a better place because of Senator Alan Cranston's service, and we will miss him deeply.

CONCEALED WEAPONS LAW

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I am very disappointed that the Governor of Michigan chose to sign a bill that will increase the number of concealed weapons on our streets by tens of thousands.

On New Year's Day, Governor Engler signed into law House Bill 4530, which takes discretion away from local gun boards and requires that authorities must issue concealed weapons licenses to those who meet certain requirements.

On December 13, 2000, I wrote a letter to the Governor asking him to veto the legislation. I asked the Governor to support our law enforcement personnel who believe the concealed weapons bill will make them and the public less safe. These groups include the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police and the Michigan Police Legislative Coalition, which includes the Michigan State Police Troopers Association, the Michigan State Police Command Officers Association, the Michigan Association of Police, the Police Officers Labor Council, Detroit Police Lieutenants and Sergeants Association, Detroit Police Officers Association, Warren Police Officers Association and Flint Police Officers Association.

I support the position of law enforcement groups in this matter and I believe the people of Michigan do also. Local gun boards should retain control of these often life and death decisions.

KENNEDY CENTER HONORS

Mr. HOLLINGS. Madam President, each year since 1978 our capital city has inaugurated its season of celebration with the Kennedy Center Honors, a joyful celebration of the lifetime achievements of our greatest performing artists. The whole nation shares in that celebration during the CBS broadcast of the Honors Gala, which this past year was on December 27.

All Americans should be grateful to CBS for its commitment to what has become an American institution, our highest honor for the performing artists who do so much to define our national spirit and our identity around the world.

Our deepest gratitude goes to those talented individuals who conceived the Honors and have produced it for more than two decades. George Stevens, Jr., Washington's own showman who came here in the Kennedy Administration to