

Among the foundations investing substantially in voter registration and turnout programs likely to benefit Democrats are the Proteus Fund, which, in addition to direct grants, set up the Voter Engagement Donor Network in 2003 as an information service to 130 other foundations and individual donors; the Pew Charitable Trusts; and America's Families United, which was created in 2003 to channel about \$15 million to voter registration and turnout groups. Most of these foundations voluntarily identify the groups to which they make grants on their Web sites.

One of the best-funded organizations is Project Vote, a 501c (3) group that has an \$18 million fundraising goal and had raised, as of early September, \$13.2 million in tax-deductible contributions. Similar work in registering and turning out urban voters, especially minorities, is being conducted by USAAction Education Fund, the 501c (3) arm of USAAction. Board members for America's Families United include not only Pope, but also Dennis Rivera, president of New York Local 1199 of the Service Employees International Union and a major figure in Democratic politics, and William Lynch Jr., who served as board secretary until he recently became deputy manager of the Kerry campaign.

The close connection between partisan activists and 501c groups is equally clear among conservative groups. Benjamin L. Ginsberg has been a lawyer for the Bush campaign, the Republican National Committee, Progress for America and the Swift Boat Veterans (both 527s) and Americans for Job Security, a 501c (4). Ginsberg was forced to resign as chief outside counsel to the Bush campaign during a controversy over his simultaneous involvement with the Swift Boat group. But he is one of the few activists whose involvement in multiple groups has come under scrutiny.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

MR. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING THOMAS G. LYONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is fortuitous for the Presiding Officer to be presiding because I know of his background, and I am speaking today of a man who just passed away in Illinois who is a great friend of mine. His name is Tom Lyons, a former State senator and chairman of the Democratic Party of Cook County. If you have ever attended an Irish wake—and I bet you have—there is a passionate combination of sadness and celebration.

In Chicago, such a wake is being held for a good and courageous man.

Thomas G. Lyons died last Friday at the age of 75 after a months-long struggle against serious illness.

Mr. Lyons served for the last 17 years as chairman of the Cook County Democratic Party. That was only one small chapter in an otherwise long, interesting and amazing life story.

As a young man, he served as an Army Ranger and a Chicago police officer.

In 1957, he earned a law degree and spent the next several years working first in the Cook County assessor's office, and then in the Illinois Attorneys General office.

In 1964, a time of great change, Tom Lyons was elected to represent northwest Chicago in the Illinois General Assembly.

The following year, he was tapped to serve in the leadership of a State commission studying the need for a new Illinois State constitution. He later served as vice president of the convention that drafted Illinois's current State constitution.

The preamble to that document lays out a series of high and noble aims of government. It reads, and I quote:

We, the people of the state of Illinois—grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberty which He has permitted us to enjoy and seek his blessings upon our endeavors—in order to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the people; maintain a representative and orderly government; eliminate poverty and inequality; assure legal, social and economic justice; provide opportunity for the fullest development of the individual; insure domestic tranquility; provide for the common defense; and secure the blessings of freedom and liberty for ourselves and our posterity—do ordain and establish this constitution for the state of Illinois.

Those same high and noble goals—to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the people; . . . eliminate poverty and inequality; . . . assure legal, social and economic justice; . . . and secure the blessings of freedom and liberty for ourselves and our posterity—were the standards to which Tom Lyons held himself in his public service.

A story in Sunday's Chicago Sun Times last Sunday says a lot about the kind of man he was.

In the 1950s, Tom Lyons was a young soldier on his way to Fort Benning, GA. It was his first trip to the South.

As he walked through a bus station, he was shocked to see one restroom for Whites and another for Blacks. His family said he decided to take a stand—and used the "colored" bathroom.

His son Frank said:

He got into it with the local law enforcement. But he wanted to make a statement. It's who he was as a person.

His family and friends say it was that willingness to stand up for everyone—no matter their race, class or status—that best embodies Mr. Lyons' legacy.

It was also that willingness to treat everyone equally, with dignity, which

nearly cost Tom Lyons his political career four decades ago.

In 1963, the year before Tom Lyons was elected to the Illinois State Senate, the Chicago City Council passed an ordinance banning restrictive covenants and other discriminatory real estate practices that were used to maintain racial segregation in Chicago. But the ordinance was routinely ignored.

In January 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. moved to what he called a "slum apartment" on the West Side of Chicago. That summer, he held a series of "open housing" marches in all-White neighborhoods in the city and suburbs. The demonstrations produced a furor and focused national and international attention on the problem of housing discrimination, not just in Chicago, but in America.

By fall, the issue of housing discrimination became the most volatile issue of the campaign. It helped defeat one of the most courageous men who ever served in this Senate, a man Dr. King called "the greatest of all senators," my mentor, Paul Douglas.

Family and friends warned Tom Lyons that his support for a State fair housing law that year could cost him his seat in the General Assembly. But he voted for the bill anyway—and lost his re-election bid.

Having lost, he didn't give up. He won his seat back 4 years later.

Chicago politics is famously rough and tumble, but Tom Lyons was famous for trying to calm tempers and soothe old wounds by gathering people around the piano to sing great old songs and World War II ballads. He loved politics, not because of what it could do for him but what it allowed him to do for others. That is why his wake this evening will be filled with sadness and with celebration and why Tom Lyons will also be missed in Chicago and throughout our State.

As a young attorney serving in the Illinois State Legislature as parliamentarian for 14 years, I came to know a lot of State senators. There remain many fine men and women who serve in that body. I was learning my earliest chapters of Illinois politics as I watched them in action.

I remember Tom Lyons, a good legislator, conscientious man, a man of principle, with a great sense of humor, who would put an arm around your shoulder and say: Let's go have a beer and sing a song. He was just that kind of guy. His life was a good life, a life of public service and a life of giving to many others. I was lucky to be one of his friends and lucky to be one of the beneficiaries of his good will.

I ask the Members of the Senate to join me in extending our condolences to Tom's wife Ruth; their sons, Thomas and Frank; their daughters, Alexandra and Rachel; and Tom's eight grandchildren.

INTERDICTION OF DRUG SUPPLY

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I just returned from a trip to

Haiti and to the Bahamas. I met with the governments of each of those nations on a variety of topics, not the least of which was the interdiction of the drugs. We increasingly see drugs coming out of Colombia, going into Venezuela and being transported by air out of Venezuela—including from remote parts of southern Venezuela as well as northern Venezuela. They then fly to destinations where the cocaine is dropped and repackaged into smaller packages to be shipped, destined for Europe and the United States.

The increase in the number of flights from 2003 to 2006 is incredible. A map showing lines that indicate the number of flights—they are solid going from Venezuela to the Dominican Republic and to Haiti. The flights have increased enormously, while at the same time the number of drugs transported by sea has diminished. Our Coast Guard is out there. I was with the Coast Guard. They have been fairly successful in interdicting at sea. So as a result, the drug smugglers are using small airplanes flying from Venezuela to the island of Hispaniola, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, where they are sending the drugs to be shipped on to additional destinations.

I spoke at length with President Preval, the President of Haiti, about this problem. President Preval made reference to a 1998 agreement in which the Government of Haiti and the United States pledged to cooperate and, indeed, that cooperation has occurred. And it has occurred on those shipments coming by sea.

But the Government of the United States cannot interdict an airplane unless we shoot them down, and we are not going to do that. So when these flights come into Haiti or the Dominican Republic they either land or drop their cargo of cocaine. That is where the local government, the local authorities, have to be able and willing to make the arrest. Of course this is difficult, in a country such as Haiti that can hardly keep its head above water, as it is trying to with a new government. I must say, that certainly has my support and I believe that President Preval is doing a good job, and is making some progress.

In addition, I spoke at length with the Prime Minister and with the director general of the Haitian National Police. I am very impressed with Director General Andresol. He is an impressive fellow. He has set out a plan to vet all 7,000 members of the Haitian National Police, and he started the vetting process with the top person—himself. He has started the vetting of the police, and he is going to continue to try to get out the graft and corruption. If he is successful, then I believe you will see that the Haitian National Police have the ability to make the arrest when drugs are dropped or transshipped through Haiti. I hope the same thing is going to be done in the Dominican Republic.

Now, in the midst of all this, further to the north, as you get into the Bahama

mas and the Turks and Caicos, we have been enormously successful since the late 1980s in the interdiction of the drugs. The DEA, working with other law enforcement agencies, working with the Coast Guard, working with the Defense Department, and working with the governments of the countries—and the one that I particularly concentrated on this time after Haiti was the Bahamas—they have been very successful. They have helicopters stationed in the area, the Coast Guard at Andros Island in the Bahamas. The Army stationed helicopters at Greater Exuma Island, next to the town of Georgetown in the middle of the Bahamas, and at the southern end of the Bahamas where a the Coast Guard has another station with helicopters.

Well, the Army, being strapped for helicopters, announced the plan that it was going to remove the helicopters. So we went to work. Our Ambassador to the Bahamas, John Rood, brought it to my attention. Several other Members of Congress got involved, and as a result of this an interagency meeting occurred in which it was agreed that although the Army would pull the helicopters out probably by this October, they would still pay for the station for the next 5 years. And we worked it out to get new helicopters that would be transferred to DEA—the Drug Enforcement Administration. Therefore all of that area of the Bahamas in the middle, between Andros to the north and to the west, the island of Exuma in the middle, and further south the to the Coast Guard helicopters—all of that area in the middle would not be blind.

On Sunday I went out there and flew with both the Army and the Coast Guard to see their operation and to be briefed on the details. I was briefed on a live chase that occurred at the time, as well as visiting some of our troops. And I will just tell you what patriotic Americans these are. They are down there for 4 months without their families. They had just gotten home after a year's deployment in Iraq. They are going to be able to go back home in another month and be at home for 2, 3 months, and then they are going back to Iraq. This is the kind of dedication that we have in our Armed Forces.

Well, fortunately, it looks as if we are going to be able to retain new helicopters for this operation so that we will not be blind. But it is going to mean the continued cooperation between the Government of the Bahamas and the United States, building on a history of considerable cooperation. It also means that we need continued, increased progress with President Preval of Haiti and President Fernandez of the Dominican Republic.

Haiti has so many needs. Haiti has desperate needs in health care, desperate needs in infrastructure, desperate needs in education. One little thing we did in a step in the right direction—and many Senators here co-sponsored the bill—I along with them—is called the HOPE legislation. It will

allow textiles from outside to be brought into Haiti, where then value is added by making them into garments. It is estimated that 30,000 jobs will be provided. That is out of hundreds of thousands of people who do not have jobs. But it is a step in the right direction.

I want to give credit to former Senator Mike DeWine of Ohio, who was the sponsor of a bill called HERO and also the sponsor of the legislation that passed called HOPE. He has a heart for Haiti and has been there many times. So the fruits of his long labors and the fruits of the labors of others of us in this Chamber have finally come to fruition to give them another ray of hope.

I am impressed with President Preval. I do believe that he is honest and on the right course. I am also a realist and recognize that there is corruption all around him in his Government. That is one of the main chores that he has in rooting out corruption, so that he can get that Government on the right path, so that they can start restoring some of the services to a people in desperate need. The Haitian people are remarkable. They are so ingenious and industrious and entrepreneurial, with a positive, optimistic outlook. They have just been shackled under years of exceptional poverty.

So, finally, the United States stepped forward with the HOPE legislation. Finally, the United States is getting increased cooperation from the now Government of Haiti, and it is exceptionally important in the future that cooperation continues. It is so important not only because of Haiti, but it is important because it is our children who are on the receiving end of all of the drugs coming out of South America.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, on Martin Luther King Day, we celebrated a man and honored his legacy. It is an opportunity to recognize the movement he inspired and carry it forward with renewed energy. I consider his work and his words, striving to give them both new life.

“The arc of the moral universe is long,” King said, “but it bends towards justice.” As a national community, we must never rest in the pursuit of that justice. We must always demand that our community leaders and elected officials pursue their work with compassion and integrity. This year, as we commemorate Dr. King’s bold vision and great spirit, our Nation stands at a critical point along that arc.

The American people called for a new direction and a new tone in Washington, DC. They put the politics of polarization aside and asked their representatives in Washington to focus instead on the issues that matter most. Too many hard-working Americans are struggling just to get by today. It is time to expand opportunity for all and ensure everyone has a real shot at the American dream.