

Henry J. Hyde: One of the Genuine Heroes of This or Any Era

BY Dave Andrusko

It would be hard to go wrong—a pro-life event honoring Rep. Henry Hyde. After all (as Tim Goeglein, special assistant to President George W. Bush and deputy director of the Office of Public Liaison, put it), Rep. Hyde is to the pro-life movement what William Wilberforce was to the anti-slavery movement in Great Britain.

But on April 25, when National Right to Life celebrated the 13th annual Proudly Pro-Life Awards Dinner by honoring Rep. Hyde, there was a special, almost indescribable something in the atmosphere as we gathered at the historic Willard Hotel. (Jacki Ragan, who wears so many hats for NRL, did her usual magnificent job in arranging the tribute.)

One after another, congressmen and senators paid their respects to a man who has been a towering force in the battle to win back legal protection for the littlest Americans. Rep. Steve Chabot declared, “We have had many wonderful Members of Congress who have engaged in the battle but nobody has been more committed, more effective, more eloquent than Henry Hyde.” [See page 4 for a lengthy excerpt of Rep. Chabot’s remarks.]

Rep. Tom DeLay hailed the “turning of the tide” on abortion. “Life, ladies and gentlemen, is ascendant—a true statement inconceivable without the brilliance, eloquence, and courage of Henry Hyde,” he said. [See sidebar for more of Rep. DeLay’s remarks.]

An anecdote from Mr. Goeglein illustrated what the name “Henry Hyde” means and how widespread he is known. Mr. Goeglein told the audience about how he had been in Vietnam on Palm Sunday. A woman came up to him and began to ask about, you guessed it, Henry Hyde. [See page x for more of Mr. Goeglein’s remarks.]

This illustrates that when the Pro-Life Movement is mentioned, the first name that comes to mind, not only to Americans, but to people tens of thousands of miles away, is the Republican congressman from Illinois’ sixth district.

Rep. Hyde, as someone said that wonderful Tuesday evening, is a “force of nature” on behalf of life. [See page two editorial for more about Mr. Hyde’s remarkable impact.]