

The need for Presidential leadership has never been greater. We know we have the votes for renewing the assault weapons ban in the Senate because we passed such an amendment in March by a bipartisan vote of 52 to 47. The Republican leadership in the Senate, however, refuses to bring the ban back for another vote, and the House Republican leadership refuses to act at all.

In the 2000 campaign, President Bush specifically pledged to renew the ban, but now as the ban is about to expire, the silence from the White House is deafening. It is long past time for President Bush to live up to his commitment.

President Bush has shown that when he wants something from this Republican Congress, he gets it. When he wanted tax breaks for the wealthy, he got it. When he wanted another round of tax breaks, he got them, too. We need that same commitment from President Bush when it comes to protecting our families and securing our communities from deadly assault weapons.

President Bush, the time to act is now. Congress awaits your call.

IRAQ

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, 16 months after President Bush declared "mission accomplished" aboard the USS *Abraham Lincoln*, the fighting in Iraq continues and casualties continue to mount.

Yesterday we reached a mournful milestone that we never thought possible: 1,000 brave Americans have lost their lives in Iraq. Nearly 7,000 more have been injured. The youngest of America's fallen soldiers was just 18 years old. The oldest was 59. More than half had not even celebrated their 30th birthday. They hailed from nearly every State in the Nation. They are the best of America, and we are proud of each one. Although I disagree with the President about Iraq, I honor the service and sacrifice and dedication of each of these brave men and women.

It was wrong for the President to rush to war for such a deeply questionable cause. We all know Saddam Hussein was a brutal dictator, but he did not pose the kind of immediate threat to our national security to justify a unilateral and preventive war.

Despite the President's claim that Iraq is central to the global war on terror, there was no persuasive pattern of ties or operational links between Iraq and al-Qaida. There were no nuclear weapons.

President Bush has stated that the war in Iraq was a catastrophic success. He is right in one sense. The war has been a catastrophe. The war has been a catastrophe for our fallen soldiers, far too many of whom were sent to war with no plan to win the peace. The war has been a catastrophe for their loved ones. The war has been a catastrophe for our Nation's standing in the world and for the war on terror, for it dis-

tracted us from the real threat of al-Qaida in Afghanistan. It has made the war on terrorism far harder to win and it has made America more hated in the world than at any other time in our history.

We need honest solutions that will end the terror of Osama bin Laden and destroy al-Qaida. We need honest solutions that will bring the war in Iraq to a noble end and bring our troops home with honor. This administration has had its chance and it failed the basic test of competence. It failed to deploy enough troops in Iraq to win the peace. It failed at Abu Ghraib. It failed in issuing sweetheart deals to Halliburton. It has failed the basic test of Presidential leadership.

We need a new administration that will be honest with the American people on national security and propose real solutions to make us safer and stronger.

How much time remains for the Democrats?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 8½ minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. Whatever time remains I yield to the Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Before the Senator from New York begins, I do wish to use my remaining 4 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 8 minutes 7 seconds remaining.

ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I believe I have 4 minutes, which I very much appreciate and I want to thank my colleague from California for yielding the time and for her tremendous and unstinting leadership on this very important issue.

If nothing happens, AK-47s, Uzis, and TEC-9s are going to be back on the streets next week. That is a giant step backward. It is hard to believe that with all the progress we have made in the fight on crime, with the reduction in crime, with the reduction in the number in law enforcement who are hurt and killed in the line of duty, with the new war on terrorism upon us, that we are going to make it easy for anybody to get an AK-47, provided they have not been convicted of a felony. Someone on a terrorist watch list will be able to walk into a store and get an AK-47.

What is going on in America? This should not be a contest. This bill should have been renewed without a debate. Everyone who studied it has agreed it has been broadly successful. This President and the previous four, from Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford to Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter, are on record as being for this, and because of a small band of people who are ideologues, who are extreme, we are not going to see this happen.

This represents the dysfunction of American politics. When a country

cannot deal with an issue in a straightforward, forthright way, when a country that has had success takes a step back because a narrow few have some ideological notion that everyone should be entitled to have any weapon they want—some of them even believe a bazooka or a tank is okay—then something is wrong.

We need some leadership. We need the President of the United States to ask the House of Representatives to vote on the bill. We have not heard a peep out of him. We need some leadership from the leadership of the House to allow the bill to be on the floor. The crime bill of 1994, for all the "sturm und drang," was one of the great governmental successes of the last decade.

As we wrote it, our motto in that bill was tough on punishment and smart on prevention. We brought a grand coalition from the most liberal to the most conservative to deal with the scourge of crime. The only reason there is not much of a fuss on this issue, regrettably, is because we have succeeded, because crime rates are lower and the large impetus to do more has declined because of our success.

When one has success, the answer is not to undo that success. It is to continue what has been done, and we are not. It is a sign, in my judgment, of the weakness of our politics, and even of this Republic, that the Senator from California and I are on the floor today as the gates are closing, pleading with our President and our colleagues to allow a vote to occur. This is not the America of which we should be proud.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from New York. I remember my call to him 10 years ago over in the House saying, "Chuck, would you consider handling this in the House," and he did. It was not easy. After the 1994 vote, the House repealed the assault weapons legislation, under pressure from the NRA. He stood fast—we stood fast—and the law continued. I am very grateful to the Senator and I want him to know that.

Going on at this very time is a press conference of law enforcement from all over the United States. One of the people who journeyed here for this press conference is a man by the name of Lee Guelff. His brother James Guelff was a police officer working out of Northern Station in San Francisco when a call came in that there was a sniper at Pine and California Streets. Officer Guelff responded to the call. What he found was a sniper, clad from head to toe in Kevlar, with military-style semiautomatic assault weapons, as well as over 1,000 rounds of ammunition. He had his service revolver, and the shots were flying.

As he went to speed-load his weapon, he was hit in the head by a bullet of the hundreds of rounds this man fired. It took 150 police officers to bring down this man clad in Kevlar at the corner of Pine and California Streets.