''I pray our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

''Yours, very sincerely and respectfully, Abraham Lincoln.''

SUPPORTING RIGHT-TO-CARRY LAWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, today the House will consider H.R. 822, a long overdue measure to ensure that States recognize the concealed weapons permits issued by other States.

This very simple measure has unleashed a firestorm of protests from the political left. I noted one polemicist, who obviously has not read the Constitution, wax eloquently of the constitutional violation of States' rights enshrined in the 10th Amendment. What nonsense. Article IV of the Constitution could not possibly be more clear: ''Full faith and credit shall be given in each State to the public acts, records and judicial proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may, by general laws, prescribe the manner in which such acts, records, and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof.''

It is precisely this article that requires one State to recognize driver's licenses or birth certificates or arrest warrants issued by another State. Without it, we are not a Union but merely a loose confederation.

Well, then we're told this is dangerous and risky to allow honest and law-abiding citizens to exercise their lawfully issued permits in other States. Upon what basis do they make this claim? Certainly not upon any empirical data.

The impact of right-to-carry laws, that is, laws that require the issuance of a concealed weapon permit to any law-abiding citizen, has been studied extensively, and the vast preponderance find that crime rates have fallen in those States after they've adopted such laws. No credible study has ever found that the enactment of such laws has produced an increase in crimes or suicides or accidental deaths.

Overall, States with right-to-carry laws have 22 percent lower violent crime rates, 30 percent lower murder rates, 46 percent lower robbery rates, and 12 percent lower aggravated assault rates as compared to the rest of the country. Indeed, right-to-carry laws have been so successful that no State has ever rescinded one.

So, if the left can't make a rational case on constitutional grounds or on empirical grounds, what is the problem? I suspect it comes down to what Ronald Reagan once called this irreconcilable conflict between those who believe in the sanctity of individual freedom and those who believe in the supremacy of the State.

Years ago, I had the honor to work for the legendary chief of the Los Angeles Police Department, Ed Davis. During his 8½ years as chief of the LAPD, crime dropped in Los Angeles even while, during the same period across the rest of the Nation, it was ballooning by more than 50 percent. Chief Davis founded Neighborhood Watch. He was an ardent opponent of laws that restrict ownership of firearms by honest citizens. His successful philosophy was predicated on the principle that, as he put it: ''It's not the responsibility of the police department to enforce the law. That is the job of every citizen. The police department is there to help.''

□ 1020

As citizens, we're an integral part of the laws that we enact. That doesn't mean we act as vigilantes, but it does mean that each of us has an inalienable right to defend ourselves and our families from violent predators with whatever force is necessary. And if we see a child being molested or a woman being robbed or an old man being beaten, we have a moral responsibility to intervene to the extent that we can.

A concealed weapon in the hands of honest and law-abiding citizens makes us all safer. Simply knowing that there are responsible citizens among us capable of responding with force is itself a powerful deterrent to crime. That's the well-documented experience of every State with a right-to-carry law. But a society in which honest and law-abiding citizens are disarmed by their government is a society in which the gunman is king.

This is a truth that ought to be self-evident, but it is lost at the altar of the authoritarian left, which seems to concentrate all power in government at the expense of the people. Perhaps the best test of the self-evident nature of that truth is illustrated in a full-page newspaper ad I once saw that offered a cut-out sign, which in 150-point type said: ''There are no guns in this house.'' The caption under it asked, ''Would you post this sign in your front window?''

THE STOCK ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge and implore my colleagues to support the STOCK Act, the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act, and I ask also that Speaker BOEHNER bring this bill to the floor for a vote immediately.

On Sunday night on CBS, their news program ''60 Minutes'' highlighted the potential problem of insider trading on Capitol Hill. Unlike all other Americans and investors, Members of Congress and their staff are not held legally responsible for profiting from nonpublic information they gain from their official position serving the public. This is absolutely outrageous and strikes at the heart of the democracy.

When I first came to Congress and sat down with the author of this bill originally, Congressman Baird, and he started explaining to me what this was about, I, as most Americans, was shocked to believe it wasn't already a bill. Why would you allow the breach of trust of the American public to believe that their Member of Congress could potentially be trading on information to enrich themselves? It's not the point of, is it happening? The point is if the potential lies there.

At the heart of every relationship is trust. If the trust is violated, everything that comes after that is a moot point. And this might be the greatest understatement ever: the American public is understandably frustrated with all the bickering and gridlock here. They don't trust institutions, they don't trust their banker, they don't trust corporations, and they don't trust Congress. If you thought we couldn't go any lower than a 9 percent approval rating, just have the people who watch ''60 Minutes'' vote now and see where they're at.

This legislation is a very big step in the right direction. It's about restoring the faith and trust in Congress and the work of democracy. Ronald Reagan was right. We've heard about President Reagan several times today. Trust but verify. That's what this piece of legislation is about. We want to work with Speaker BOEHNER and get this bill moving. And let me tell you, it's very simple on what it does. The bill would prohibit insider trading on Capitol Hill. It will remove loopholes and any confusion about what's right, wrong, legal or illegal. No insider trading by Members of Congress and their staff, period. If you do it, you break the law and you will be held accountable. It's common sense.

The STOCK Act would prohibit Members of Congress and Congressional staff from using nonpublic information obtained through their official duties for personal gain in the stocks in the commodities markets. It would also prohibit private individuals and firms who attempt to mine such information from public officials to use it for insider trading. Specifically, the bill is simple and short and says this: It requires that the SEC and the CFTC write rules that ban using congressional, nonpublic information to make trades. It changes the House ethics rules to specifically ban Members and staff from using nonpublic information to make trades. It changes House disclosure rules to require Members and staff who already file financial disclosures to disclose trades of $1,000 or more in a timely fashion, in addition to the annual disclosures. And it requires political intelligence firms to register like lobbyists. These are the people