

and the issue of violence in their own hands and say we, as the leaders of this country, stand with you.

I commend Senator DASCHLE for his statement, for bringing to the attention of the Senate our responsibility as adults to reduce the number of guns to which our young kids have access, and urge our colleagues to move forward on these critical issues that have been left behind in this session of Congress.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, yesterday was the 6 month anniversary of the shooting at Columbine High School in Littleton, CO. Fourteen students and a teacher lost their lives in that tragedy on April 20, 1999. But still the Congressional leadership refuses to send to the President comprehensive juvenile justice legislation.

This is shameful.

As we have for months now, Senate and House Democrats stand ready to work with Republicans to enact into law an effective juvenile justice conference report that includes reasonable gun safety provisions. Yesterday, all the House and Senate Democratic conferees sent a letter to Senator HATCH and Congressman HYDE calling for an open meeting of the juvenile justice conference.

We need to bring this up. Vote it up. Vote it down. I don't know what everybody is scared of. But at least let's vote.

This delay is simply because of the opposition of the gun lobby to any new firearm safety laws. Even though the Senate passed the Hatch-Leahy Juvenile Justice Bill in May, we still have not moved forward on a juvenile justice conference report.

I hope the majority will hear the call of our nation's law enforcement officers to act now to pass a strong and effective juvenile justice conference report.

Ten national law enforcement organizations, representing thousands of law enforcement officers, yesterday endorsed the Senate-passed gun safety amendments and support loophole-free firearm laws: International Association of Chiefs of Police; International Brotherhood of Police Officers; Police Executive Research Forum; Police Foundation; Major Cities Chiefs; Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association; National Sheriffs Association; National Association of School Resource Officers; National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; and Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association.

Law enforcement officers in this country need help in keeping guns out of the hands of people who should not have them. I am not talking about people who use guns for hunting or for sport, but about criminals and unsupervised children.

The thousands of law enforcement officers represented by these organiza-

tions are demanding that Congress act now to pass a strong and effective juvenile justice conference report. As a conferee, I am ready to work with Republicans and Democrats to do just that.

According to press reports, the Republicans are meeting and having sensitive negotiations over gun proposals. Apparently, the Republicans on the conference and the Republican leadership met last Thursday to hammer out an agreement on guns. They were not successful. Bicameral Republican meetings cannot be confused with bipartisan conference meetings. Only in open conference meetings with an opportunity for full debate will we be able to resolve the differences in the juvenile justice bills and get a law enacted.

Every parent, teacher and student in this country is concerned about school violence over the last two years and worried about when the next shooting may occur. They only hope it does not happen at their school or involve their children.

We all recognize that there is no single cause and no single legislative solution that will cure the ill of youth violence in our schools or in our streets. But we have an opportunity before us to do our part. We should seize this opportunity to act on balanced, effective juvenile justice legislation, and measures to keep guns out of the hands of children and away from criminals.

I hope we get to work soon and finish what we started in the juvenile justice conference. It is well past the time for Congress to act.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SNOWE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that on Monday, October 25, it be in order for the majority leader, after consultation with the Democratic leader, to proceed to executive session in order to consider the following nominations on the Executive Calendar: Nos. 253, 254, 255, 257, 278, and 279.

Mr. DASCHLE. Reserving the right to object, I ask unanimous consent that Calendar No. 159, Marsha Berzon, and Calendar No. 208, Richard Paez, be added.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I object to the addition of those nominees at this time, although we are working to see if at some point one or both of these nominees could be considered.

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, on behalf of a number of colleagues on this side, I will be compelled to object at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000— CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany the Interior appropriations bill (H.R. 2466) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The report will be stated.

The clerk read as follows:

The committee on conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill, H.R. 2466, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses this report, signed by all of the conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of October 20, 1999.)

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I further ask consent that the conference report be considered as read, the report be agreed to, with the motion to reconsider laid upon the table, and I ask consent that any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The conference report was agreed to.

THOMAS PAINE MEMORIAL

Mr. CRAIG. Madam President, seven years ago legislation was enacted, with my support, to create a memorial on the National Mall honoring Thomas Paine. A site has been selected and approved at 1776 Constitution Ave. However, the memorial project needs to be reauthorized until 2003 in order to raise the necessary funding to complete construction. Today I want to spend a moment to recognize the great American patriot, Thomas Paine.

Thomas Paine thrived on new ideas, was broad minded and progressive. Through brilliantly written persuasion, he advocated four cornerstones of American society and governance: independence, representation, unity, and leadership. Thomas Paine was the first patriot to call for a "Declaration of Independence" and a "Continental Charter" which proposed the basic principles of our constitution: "securing freedom and property . . . and above all things, the free exercise of religion."