

We should not take action against Iraq until both we, the American people and our regional partners, are convinced of the reasons for so doing and that there is a clear mission and goal in mind.

The United States must also consider carefully the consequences of precipitous action.

Can we assure our regional partners that our actions will not involve the de-stabilization of the region?

Might unilateral unsupported action against Iraq result in attacks against close allies such as Israel or protests against regional leaders in Egypt, Saudi Arabia or Jordan?

Following any military action, are we prepared militarily and financially to remain in the region until Saddam is removed, the people of Iraq are free, and a viable democratic government is in place?

These are complex questions to which there may be no easy answers. But they are questions that must be addressed before we take any action if those actions are to be successful and the results, enduring.

If this matter is not handled properly, there is a profound risk that the Middle East will be further destabilized, and place U.S. interests in the region and in the war against terrorism in jeopardy.

None of us has the wisdom or foresight to see where this war will lead us, how long it will last, or when it will end.

But we are all foursquare in our determination that we, and all civilized peoples, succeed.

I offer my thoughts and comments today not as a criticism of the administration, but rather because I feel that we have a deep obligation to make sure that as we proceed with this endeavor we do so with thoughtfulness, not afraid to ask the tough questions that must be asked or address the issues that must be addressed, and with the unity of purpose that will guarantee our success.

GUN-RELATED DEATHS ARE STILL TOO HIGH

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the Centers for Disease Control most recent National Vital Statistics Report, which measures all causes of death in the United States reports that the death rate from firearm injuries dropped nearly 6 percent from 1998 to 1999. The 1999 gun-death toll was 28,874 persons, the first time the figure has dropped below 30,000 since national statistics on gun deaths were first kept in 1979. Preliminary data indicate that there was likely another significant decline in 2000. These are encouraging statistics, but the number of people killed by guns each year is still far too high.

There are several important pieces of legislation before the Senate that were designed to address gun violence. On April 24, 2001, Senator REED introduced the "Gun Show Background Check

Act." This bill would close a loophole in the law which allows unlicensed private gun sellers to sell guns without conducting a National Instant Criminal Background System check. I cosponsored that bill because I believe it would be an important tool to prevent guns from getting into the hands of criminals and other people prohibited from owning a firearm.

The "Use the National Instant Criminal Background System in Terrorist Investigations Act" was introduced by Senator KENNEDY and SCHUMER in the wake of September 11. This bill would reinstate the 90-day period for the FBI to retain and review NICS gun purchasing data records for irregularities and criminal activity. The need for this legislation was demonstrated when the Attorney General denied the FBI access to the NICS database to review gun sales to individuals they had detained in response to the terrorist attacks. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this bill and urge the Senate to act on this legislation.

Another important component of any strategy to reduce gun violence is preventing children from gaining access to firearms. Senator DURBIN's "Children's Access Prevention Act" would hold adults who fail to lock up a loaded firearm or an unloaded firearm with ammunition liable if the weapon is taken by a child and used to kill or injure him or herself or another person. The bill also increases the penalties for selling a gun to a juvenile and creates a gun safety education program that includes parent-teacher organizations, local law enforcement and community organizations. I am also a cosponsor of this important bill that would help to curb the thousands of preventable firearm deaths that occur each year.

The statistics I mentioned support the argument that the Brady Law is working to prevent gun-related deaths. However, the number of gun-related deaths is still disturbingly high and more must be done. The bills I support are common sense approaches to gun-safety that deserve the attention of the Senate.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, all of us in this Chamber know the dedication of those on our staffs who work tirelessly to keep us informed and keep this process moving forward. And, once in a great while, a staffer comes along who becomes so much a part of the process, so much a presence in this place, that few can't imagine the Senate without them.

Ed Hall, staff director on the Committee on Foreign Relations, is one of those people.

A dedicated public servant for more almost 25 years now, he has been a rock-solid steady hand, an extraordinary professional, and—above all—a gentleman.

Now he is completing his final week with the U.S. Senate. And we wish him well.

But before he goes, I hope Ed won't mind too much, though I know he will,

if I take a few minutes to pay tribute to him. Ed is one of those rare, talented staffers who always seems to know the answer before we ask the question. He always has the facts.

He conscientiously attends to the details of the hearings, the legislation, the briefing books, the negotiations—with a trademark combination of wisdom and graciousness, and without ever expecting a word of thanks, much less an entire speech.

All of us know and appreciate the hard work and dogged efforts of our staffs, but too often it goes unspoken. And rarely is it expressed on the Senate floor. Bud Ed Hall is an exceptional man who deserves exceptional recognition for making what we do here possible.

He is here when most of us arrive. And he is here long after most of us have gone home.

He is one of the most decent, hard-working, fair-minded and open-hearted men I have met, loyal almost to a fault, a professional with no agenda but to promote the work of the committee, and to look after its staff.

Ed is perceptive about human nature and profoundly patient with it. But what has always impressed me is his encyclopedic grasp of the legislative process, along with expert insight into parliamentary procedure.

It takes that kind of experience, wisdom and finesses to get things done around here, and make no mistake, Ed Hall gets things done.

Ed developed these traits, I am sure, at Harvard and Michigan, as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, then in private practice, the Marine Corps Reserve and through a series of positions of distinction on Capitol Hill.

He started in 1975 with Senator Claiborne Pell on the Rules Committee, moving 3 years later to the Commerce Committee as Chief Counsel for Senator Howard Cannon.

Then Ed practiced law for a while in Idaho, but as anyone who knows him could tell you, Ed Hall is no simple country lawyer, to borrow a phrase that was popularized by my Senate colleague Sam Ervin, who was here and Ed and I first arrived, so he came back to the Senate as Chief Counsel on the Foreign Relations Committee, again working with Senator Pell.

A few years later, I had the good sense and the good fortune to retain Ed as Minority Staff Director.

If there is one thing that I think I will always remember when I think of Ed, it is his unique take on the legislative process and the goings-on of the Senate.

He has been known to say that if you know what to listen for, you learn after a while that the Senate produces a kind of music, combining rhythm, pace and melody wholly unique to this place.

Ed Hall has always known what to listen for.

As both minority and majority staff director, Ed's role has been a kind of

conductor, orchestrating our work to the music of the Senate.

During my time on the committee as ranking Democratic member, and then as chairman, Ed oversaw Senate consent to ratify the chemical weapons convention, the reorganization of the U.S. foreign affairs agencies, the debate deciding the expansion of NATO, and the establishment of a way to pay our country's arrearage to the United Nations.

He did it in close coordination with his Republican colleagues on the committee—sometimes at odds over small matters of language. Sometimes at odds over major issues of fundamental principle. But Ed has always bridged the gap.

He treats all parties with respect, and tries to accommodate all interests involved. His success in so doing is evidenced by the close personal friendship he shared with Admiral James "Bud" Nance, Staff Director for my distinguished colleague from North Carolina, Chairman HELMS, until Bud passed away in 1999.

Bud and Ed genuinely cared for one another, and the maturity and mutual approval that they brought to the job filtered down through all the ranks of their respective staffs.

It is not for nothing that some of the younger staff members refer to Ed Hall as "Daddy Ed." He has led by example, bringing out the best in those for whom he is responsible and helping them feel that what they do is more than a mere job.

But, though I can't imagine where he finds the time, Ed Hall's work doesn't end when he leaves his office.

Ed's collaborative and caring approach to working with others is consistent with his religious convictions. He has been modest about them while in the office, but generous in expressing his faith through intense involvement in community affairs.

Ed has long been active in the work of "The Green Door," a nonprofit organization that helps the mentally ill achieve independence and self-sufficiency.

He is a member of the board of directors for Episcopal Relief and Development, which provides assistance to those in need in the United States and abroad.

And he has been an at-large trustee for the Virginia Theological Seminary, where he will soon be vice president for Institutional Advancement.

We can only hope that Ed's new position will give him more time with his family. To his wife, Sherry, let me say thank you for all the times she kept his dinner warm on my account.

Ed Hall has always seen to it that I receive the best possible preparation for a speech, and that the staff maintain a modest collection of quotations for such occasions, and that it is always at hand.

So it will be no surprise if Ed recognizes something that the English essayist G.K. Chesterton once said:

The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and left untried.

Well, I am here to tell you that while some may have found it difficult, and perhaps some have not tried hard enough, Ed Hall is living proof of a transcendent ideal that people of all convictions will recognize: he is an abundant spirit, a humble soul.

He is a pillar of this institution. In a place where turnover is the order of the day, he has been a rarity, and he leaves a legacy of service for which the Senate will be forever grateful.

I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Edwin K. Hall.

DEPARTURE OF WALLY BURNETT

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as chairman of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, I rise to express my regret that the subcommittee will soon be losing one of the most treasured members of its staff. Wally Burnett, our minority clerk, will be moving on to other opportunities at the end of this week. I know that I speak for all members of the subcommittee in wishing him well and thanking him for his fine service.

Wally Burnett brought a wealth of experience to the subcommittee staff given his prior experience as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Budget and Programs at the Department of Transportation during the administration of President George H. Bush. More importantly, Wally brought to his position a strong sense of fairness, decency, and a desire to do the right thing. This trait could be seen across all of the Transportation bills that Chairman Stevens and Chairman Shelby ushered through the Senate.

While Wally always demonstrated a strong sense of duty to the entire Nation, Wally never forgot that he is an Alaskan. And while Wally could not always be depended upon to wear a jacket to subcommittee and full committee meetings, he could be depended upon to provide his most expert views in an informed and balanced manner. I will always be grateful for the many courtesies that Wally demonstrated toward me, whether I was serving as a junior minority member of the subcommittee or as subcommittee chairman.

As Wally leaves his position in the Senate, I wish him the best of luck in his new endeavor. I also express my hope that his tirelessly patient wife, Kristin, and his children, Tucker and Mattern, will finally see more of him.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

LEADERSHIP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

• Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I recognize the achievements of a great Kentuckian. Dr. Lee Todd has not yet completed his first year as President of the University of Ken-

tucky, but he has already left his mark on Kentucky's largest public educational institution. His approach to academic governance has earned him the accolades of both the students and faculty of the University of Kentucky, as well as from local community leaders.

Dr. Todd's success at UK should not come as a surprise. As an alumnus of the University, he understands the interests and passions of the students. His training and tenure as an academic has given him a detailed understanding of the challenges and needs of the faculty. And his career as a successful businessman has well-prepared him to forge an efficient and responsive administration that is dually committed to crafting excellence in education and enhancement of UK's endowment. I have no doubt that he will succeed at both goals.

Building upon the achievements of his predecessors, Dr. Todd has continued to bring top-notch research and teaching faculty to Kentucky. In addition, he has forged greater cooperation with and stronger ties to the Lexington community—a relationship that promises to be mutually beneficial. From UK's truly exceptional Medical Center to its important agricultural research, the University of Kentucky is not merely a preeminent state educational institution, but a tremendous asset to the Lexington community and the entire Commonwealth of Kentucky. Likewise, President Todd has worked to create a partnership with the federal government, a partnership I look forward to continuing in the future.

President Lee Todd has brought with him innovative ideas and a commitment to excellence at the University of Kentucky. I hope that the students of the University and the people of Kentucky are lucky enough to have President Todd at the helm for a very long time. Kentucky is fortunate to be able to claim Dr. Todd, his wife Patsy, and his children Troy and Kathryn as citizens.

I hope my colleagues will join me in thanking Dr. Todd for his service to the Commonwealth of Kentucky and to higher education.●

IN HONOR OF PHILIP AUTHIER, MPH, RN

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I congratulate Philip D. Authier, MPH, RN, 2002 President of the American Organization of Nurse Executives, AONE. Philip Authier is also Vice President of Patient Care at St. Mary's Healthcare Center, in Pierre, South Dakota. Among his many accomplishments, Mr. Authier, has been a member of AONE for 17 years and served on the AONE Board of Directors from 1995 to 1999. During this time he also served on AONE's Finance Committee and as a AONE representative to the Region 6 Regional Policy Board of the American Hospital Association. In addition, he is a past president of South Dakota Organization of Nurse Executives and has