

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend Deputy Jason Scott of Tennessee was killed by a 16-year-old barricaded in his home with semiautomatic weapons with 30-round magazines. This must stop. One in five law enforcement officers slain in the line of duty is killed with an assault weapon. Our Nation's police officers have worked hard to keep assault weapons off our streets. That is why Congress must revisit the assault weapons ban without attaching special interest handouts. Otherwise, assault weapons will be back on our streets September 14. That is in 181 days. That is good news for terrorists, cop killers, drug dealers and the terrorists that live among us here in our country. Unfortunately, it is bad news for America's families and police officers.

Since I took the floor a week ago tonight, over 400 Americans have died in this country from gun violence. But instead of the sense of urgency that we should do something about it, the House has stood idly by. Some seem content to let the assault weapons ban expire on September 13. The ban has kept us safer for the last 10 years. It has also respected the rights of gun owners, protecting the hunting rifles, shotguns and pistols favored by law-abiding citizens. Only criminals have been kept from their gun of choice. This explains why 66 percent of gun owners support renewing the ban. The American people support it by even more numbers.

Once again our Nation's law enforcement officers are leading the fight to keep assault weapons off our streets. Before the ban, assault weapons were only 1 percent of privately owned guns but nearly 9 percent of all guns used in crimes. Following the ban's enactment, there were 18 percent fewer assault weapons traced to crime. This is a bill that has worked. It has some flaws in it and that is why I had introduced a bill that would close those loopholes. We know that the gun manufacturers have taken the guns that have been banned, and we know that they have made copycats. Those of you that remember the killings that happened here in D.C. with the D.C. sniper, that is a copycat.

Why do we need these particular guns on the street? I promise that I will never do anything to take away the right of someone to own a gun, but to have assault weapons back on the streets is totally insane and it is insane. The American people feel that

they cannot do anything. Well, they can.

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They can write to their Congressmen, their Senators, certainly the House Speaker and the President. The President of the United States has said that if he has a bill on the desk, he will sign that bill. I am begging the American people to use their right to be able to talk to their Congressman or their Senator. Let us hear their voices. Otherwise, in 181 days we will have assault weapons back on the street.

We do not even have the time to talk about the health care system and how much it costs from gun violence in this country. It is over \$4 billion a year, and the American taxpayer pays for half of that, mainly because those that are injured lose their insurance halfway through their treatment; and, believe me, I know this from experience.

People keep saying they have no voice in the government. They can have a voice. They can have their words be heard by those who represent them here in the House. All I am asking is that we are allowed to bring up the Assault Weapons Ban here on the House floor and have a vote. Have a vote. But right now we are told that the bill will not be brought up. It is going to be allowed to just die.

Ten years ago before I ever came to Congress, I came down here to lobby the people that worked here, to tell them the story and why assault weapons should not be on the streets. Colin Ferguson of the Long Island railroad shooting had 15 bullets in his clips. He was able to get two rounds off, 30 bullets, and each one of those bullets found a mark in a victim. And now we are going to allow the large-capacity clips back on the streets again? This is basically what our men and women are using in war in Iraq.

Please let your voices be heard.

AIR DOMINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION NEED F/A-22 AND JSF

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONNER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, the events of September 11, 2001, and the global war on terrorism have shown that our military must continue to transform to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Thirty years ago, it was difficult to predict the nature of the war we are fighting today, to defend freedom and defeat terrorism. This proves that we must continue to develop the most advanced weapons to ensure America's military dominance in the future.

Our Nation's defense is envied by every country in the world. We have built our air, land, and sea fleet with the most advanced technology available. That technology, perfected over

decades, ensures the safety of our armed servicemen and servicewomen. In 10 to 20 years, we must be able to say the same thing.

We are in the process of transforming our military into more agile, adaptive, accurate, and adaptable units of war power. The army is shifting its resources to become lighter, more targeted, and quicker in its response time. The Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force are developing the next generation of weapons systems that will continue our air and sea dominance.

I support these efforts to move toward the transformation of our military. September 11 changed the way wars are fought. We are fighting enemies hiding in school buses, oftentimes located 2 feet from schools. These unconventional fighters are lurking in the homes of innocent men and women hoping our military will not want to attack citizens. In some cases, our targets are 10 feet from our own military bases. Pinpoint accuracy is crucial to preserving the lives of innocent men, women, and children.

Today I want to focus on two important examples of transformation: the Joint Strike Fighter and the F/A-22 Raptor. The Joint Strike Fighter and the F/A-22 Raptor are essential to transforming our military to meet the challenges of air dominance of the 21st century. As America's new generation of fighter aircraft, these tactical fighters will guarantee air superiority and air dominance for decades to come.

The F/A-22 is the state-of-the-art next-generation fighter aircraft. Undetectable on enemy radar, the F-22 carries a larger weapons load and increased missile range, and it is faster and more maneuverable than its predecessor, the F-15.

The Joint Strike Fighter will be the prime 21st century multi-role fighter for the U.S. Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps. The basic Joint Strike Fighter design, with a few modifications to meet each service's needs, will be used for all three services. The Joint Strike Fighter will have the best next-generation avionics, weapons systems, and stealth capacities.

We can no longer rely on weapons and aircraft developed in the 1960s and 1970s to shield us from enemy fire, nor should we settle on using less than superior equipment to guide specific strikes against evil in all parts of the globe. Our land, sea, and air fleet must be equipped for new kinds of warfare. They must be capable of moving together as we head into the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, we owe it to our men and women in uniform to give them the very best equipment as soon as possible.