

As you can see by this chart, 91 percent of Americans believe that tracing data should be used in some form to help crimes, 91 percent. Why aren't we doing a better job on helping our police officers do their job?

Last week, New York Mayor Bloomberg teamed up with Boston Mayor Menino on this very issue. Together they have formed a bipartisan coalition of more than 120 mayors from across the country. The group has many mayors from the urban as well as the rural areas. These mayors understand the need for tracing data. They understand that Congress has done little to help gun violence and stop gun violence in this country.

They are tired of sitting back as their cities lose more and more citizens to gun violence. By the way, they are also tired of seeing the health care costs on those victims that do survive. This is something that we should be dealing with. It is a health care crisis in this country.

Last week, they held their annual conference here in Washington. They spoke with Members from both sides of the aisle. This is not a Democrat or a Republican issue. It is not a pro-gun or anti-gun issue. It is a pro-law enforcement issue with common sense, and it is supported by an overwhelming majority of Americans.

We must do everything in our power to keep guns out of the hands of those that don't deserve to have a gun. That is why I introduced the NICS Improvement Act. This bill will simply strengthen the States. Right now when the NICS system doesn't have the information in it, how can it basically report out who should not be able to buy a gun?

My NICS bill will be giving the States the money to bring their computers up to speed, so that way when someone is adjudicated in court, whether it is on a felony or on domestic violence, someone who should not be able to get a gun shouldn't be able to get approved through the approved NICS system. This is common sense.

Again, this is a pro-safety issue. It doesn't affect anyone who wants to buy a gun, but it makes this country safer from gun violence.

I know it is a very political issue. Everyone is always saying that you are trying to take away my gun. I have never done that. What I am trying to do is save lives; and I am trying to save, certainly, people from being harmed. Our mayors across this great country understand that.

We can do a better job. Congress needs to start listening to the American people. These statistics show that gun owners, by the way, approve overwhelmingly of being able to trace these guns. We should be able to do it. We can do a better job. Americans should have a safer country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. FOXX addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PERSEVERE AND TRIUMPH OVER OUR FOE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, 271 years ago, American patriot and champion of human liberty, Thomas Paine, was born. His pamphlet "Common Sense" is credited with convincing the people of what was then the 13 colonies to declare themselves independent and committed to representative government and human liberty.

Paine was thus instrumental in bringing about the American Revolution. During that historic life and death struggle with Great Britain, which then was the world's mightiest empire, Paine was called upon by George Washington. At a moment when the tide seemed to be against us, General Washington implored Paine to write something that would bolster the spirits of those Americans supporting the patriots' cause.

Yes, there were naysayers and defeatists in those days too, as well as people who were demoralized by the ongoing conflict that was going badly. Yet, had those before us lost faith and given up, the cause of liberty and independence would have been lost. Thomas Paine, at this dark moment of despair, wrote "The American Crisis." It was read aloud to every soldier in Washington's Continental Army, some listening while standing in the snow, freezing, ill equipped and hungry. Yet, they did not give up. They did not give into pessimism. It made all the difference for them and for us.

Every generation of Americans has to bear the weight of responsibility that comes with a commitment made to human liberty by our forefathers and mothers 200 years ago. When freedom was in the balance and darkness of defeat loomed, Americans persevered and carried the day in the battle against tyranny and injustice, sometimes at horrendous cost, as in our Civil War when we rid America of the sin of slavery. Yes, at times, it looked as if the Union was lost.

Lincoln had the thankless job of leading this country and keeping it unified, he, and the Union soldiers, steadfast and strong. How our world would be different, our country would be different today had they quit and gone home.

In the 20th century, Americans stepped forward to save the world from the evil onslaught of Japanese militarism and Nazism and then communism. There were always low points when pessimism could have taken hold; and had America retreated, it would be a far more sinister world.

So, too, with the current preeminent threat to our security and freedom and the world's, radical Islam has declared war on our way of life. It is an enemy to the liberty those Americans before us so cherished and sacrificed to protect. We are now at a moment when the people of our country are weary of this conflict, especially as it plays itself out in far-off Iraq, where deadly explosions take the lives of Americans, young Americans, as well as Iraqis.

Let us not fool ourselves. The future of freedom and America's role in the world is in the balance. The future will be determined by what we do. Yes, there is reason for despair. The casualty lists include names of young people from Orange County, my Orange County, heroes such as young Marine Lance Corporal Marcus Glimpse of Huntington Beach, whose funeral I attended last April. Also, there is Corporal Angel Jose Garibay of Costa Mesa, and just this past weekend, the funeral of a 23-year-old second lieutenant from Irvine, Mark J. Daily. They now have joined a very selected band of brothers in heaven who gave their lives for America and for the cause of human freedom. Yes, we are proud, but also we feel a profound sadness at their loss.

Perhaps as we decide now, in this moment, when the bloodshed seems so futile, we should remember an earlier time of crisis, when the future seemed bleak, but our own resolve carried the day and the cause with it of human liberty.

I will read the following excerpt from Thomas Paine's "The American Crisis," when he said: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he who stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated."

I ask my colleagues and the American people to think about these words and to stand firm for the cause of liberty for which our Founding Fathers have sacrificed so much.

We Americans, made up of every race, religion, and ethnic group have a special role to play in this world. We are the hope and light of all those who would live in freedom and long for justice. So as we face the crisis of our generation, perhaps we should again visit the

words of Thomas Paine who inspired those who came before us to persevere and triumph over a formative foe.

HONORING COACH TONY NAPOLET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I have given many speeches on the floor of the House, but none do I feel so good about as the one I am about to give about my friend and a great man in Warren, Ohio, Coach Tony Napolet.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the recently completed season and the still ongoing career of someone who is an institution in Ohio high school football in the community of Warren and the family of Warren John F. Kennedy High School. It is Coach Tony Napolet.

Overall, Coach Napolet has garnered three top 10 AP rankings, five State semifinal appearances, a winning percentage of 71.6 percent during his time at Warren John F. Kennedy High School and an overall coaching record of 191 wins, 84 losses and three ties. All of the records, all of the statistics and all of the awards, Mr. Speaker, cannot speak to the influential and inspirational man that is Tony Napolet.

Mr. Speaker, in short, he is a legend. He is funny, he is passionate, he is loyal, he cares about his kids, and he is the best. Tony Napolet is every part of what a high school football coach should be. He realizes and has always realized that the role he plays is not just that of a football coach, but as someone who is preparing young men for the next step in their lives, whether that involves football or not.

I had an opportunity as a young man to coach for a season with Coach Napolet at Kennedy, and you think about how you try to define, Mr. Speaker, or pick a couple of points that really describe Coach Napolet, and there are a couple that I think of. One is his faith in God, something that he is not afraid to share with his players, the students at Kennedy, and it is not just the prayer before the game, and it is not just the mass that we go to before the game.

It is when you go to a mass during the week or in the morning and you see Coach Napolet at one of the many churches, Catholic churches, in the City of Warren, where he is actually practicing what he is preaching. I remember him telling the kids to have a relationship with God, to make God your best friend. It is that kind of an example that he sets for his kids.

But there is another one, the St. Henry's Division V State championship game several months ago, that I think really sticks with these kids. And it is the situations that Coach Napolet is in and how he responds to them, because life many times is about how you respond to situations in your life.

The Kennedy team was, unfortunately, down 21-7. Then they got the

ball, and then they were down 28-7 towards the end of the game and only a few minutes left, and the Kennedy offense got the ball back, and they ran a flea-flicker. They tried to score.

Regardless of how much time was left in the game, Coach Napolet was teaching these kids that you never give up. You persevere, regardless of what the circumstances are. And those are the lessons that he has taught those young men who have graduated from Kennedy and have played football for the Warren John F. Kennedy Eagles.

So, today, Mr. Speaker, I am not honoring a coach and his distinct record but rather a great man who also happens to be a coach.

Coach Napolet, we love you and you really are the best.

□ 2000

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN LAVELLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to someone that lost their life several days ago.

Today, on Staten Island, at St. Peter's Church in St. George, many gathered, family and friends of John Lavelle. He was a State assemblyman from Staten Island and also the Democratic Party leader from Staten Island. His mother, his children and not to mention his colleagues in the State legislature, the Governor, the Attorney General and many members of the City Council, Councilmen Oddo and McMahon; State Senator Andrew Lanza; State Assemblyman Vincent Ignizio; the borough president; and so many others who flocked to the church to honor a good, decent guy.

As I mentioned, he was a leader of the other party; and perhaps, if he had had his way, I wouldn't be here today. But in a way it is a reminder, and John Lavelle to me lived it, that you can disagree and you can feel very passionately about certain things, and, in fact, most often, John and I, we shared the same goals: how to help those who are poor, how to help those who are oppressed.

He was the son of immigrants. The notion that new immigrants to this country make it the great country that it is and they need our help. The fact that he was such a community oriented guy.

Some of the eulogies today emphasized not just his passion, but his son talked about John's grandson and will the community be okay now that his grandfather passed away? He had a beautiful family. Three boys and grandchildren that kept him going and kept him strong.

He was someone who came into office not just for the sake of running. In fact, he spent many years in the private sector and, while in the private

sector, paid his dues. He paid his dues at the soup kitchens. He paid his dues at helping those who were poor and oppressed. Politics was his life and his passion, but it wasn't just about politics. In my opinion, John was truly someone who wanted to help others.

And I will bet you right now there are folks gathered back in Jody's Club Forest on Forest Avenue in Staten Island who are raising a beer to John and his life and his memory, as well they should, because as much as he brought to life a passion for politics, he also brought a passion to be around others and to fight hard during the day. Almost like two lawyers in a courtroom, they are fighting it out on behalf of their clients, but when the courtroom door closed, you could get together for a beer and share and swap a story or tell a joke.

The world needs more folks like him. He was someone who wasn't so caught up on style. He was focused more on substance. Indeed, a straight shooter and someone who, although you may disagree with his policies or his point of view, he knew exactly what he meant and where he was coming from.

So we pay tribute because I know sometimes in life, especially in political life, we have a tendency to get caught up in the toxic environment which is created, but I can tell you in Staten Island folks were able to rise above it. And last week alone, while John laid in the ICU, Democratic- and Republican-elected officials as well as so many family members and friends held vigil in the hospital to hope for a recovery that tragically and sadly did not come.

Staten Island was a better place because of John Lavelle. This country was well served by his service. So tonight I pay heed not as a political official here but as a friend of John Lavelle.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BRING OUR TROOPS HOME NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday I participated in a rally and march here in Washington, DC, on the Mall, organized by United for Peace and Justice. United for Peace and Justice is a coalition of over 1,300 groups from all over this country.

Citizens came from near and far. They came by car and bus and train and plane to urge this President and this Congress to end the war in Iraq. They were young. They were old. They were rich. They were poor. They were