

press reality show-type meeting where he made big promises of improving gun safety. The President declared, in that meeting, that Republican lawmakers are so scared of the NRA. He said that and admitted that the Republican lawmakers are scared of the NRA, but he said that he was not.

Then, just a short time thereafter, what did he do? He didn't have an open show meeting with the NRA. He didn't want the American public to see how he hovered down and gave in to the wishes of the NRA. It wasn't an open press meeting.

If he was so strongly against the NRA or could stand up to them, he should have had a meeting in the Oval Office and had the same press coverage so that we could hear what he was saying to them and they were saying to him. But all we know is what the results were.

The results were that, after he had this behind closed doors meeting with NRA, he didn't come out so strong anymore. He started to back down. He started to say—well, he was so strong about, hey, it didn't make sense about 18 to buy a gun, 18 to 21. That was not in his plans anymore. We saw that he had changed his whole demeanor. Something took place.

We say, Mr. President, if you are not afraid of the NRA, then you do an open meeting with the NRA with the same press as you have done with Members of Congress.

This is the 30th day since we have had that terrible shooting in Florida, and we have got young people now outside who are saying enough is enough. Some think young people don't have an effect on American history and the camera. Well, I dare say to you, I can recall a young person who was only about 17 years old who stood bravely and took beatings to say he wanted America to go in a different direction. That young man is now a Member of Congress and someone whom we admire. He goes by the name of JOHN LEWIS. He was only 16, 17 years old, and it changed America.

And I dare say, there are some 16- and 17-year-olds who are outside today who will change America and make it a better place, and we need to join them. We have got to stop the kinds of letters that I have been receiving in my office.

I have been receiving letters from individuals from the Jack and Jill Association, a large association of young people who want a better America, one named Jeremy Chavez, who said: "My mother has been forced to discuss with me my fear of safety while at school in light of the mass murder of children our age in a place that should be a safe haven for our education."

This is a conversation that neither Jeremy's mother nor any mother should need to have. Yet, with 7,000 innocent children killed since Sandy Hook in 2012, it is one that parents across America are forced to have with their children.

Parents have to instruct their kids to hide under the desk as I did as a child

when I was afraid or we were afraid of a nuclear weapon when we were in the arms war. We used to have to have shelter drills. Here we are, in 2018, and our children have to have shelter drills because of Americans and others who can come in with an assault rifle and take lives in a matter of seconds.

No, that is not the United States we want. That is not the United States that these young people want to live in, and they will stand and fight and change the course of America.

DEMANDING VOICES BE HEARD ON GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, students from across the Nation, including from my Ninth District in Michigan, are demanding that their voices be heard on the issue of gun violence. They are upset with the carnage they have witnessed. They are fearful for their safety, and they are tired of excuses and inaction.

But 1 month after the tragedy in Parkland, Florida, not to mention so many prior school shootings, Republican leaders in Congress have failed to bring up any legislation that might meaningfully control the weapons that are being used to kill and wound so many Americans. So all of us Democrats are coming here today, many of us. On the Republican side—I am not sure the screen can show—we see empty seats. No bill on assault weapons, no bill on improving background checks, no bill to ban bump stocks, nothing—this is a terrible moment of silence when we desperately need a moment of action.

While there is no single answer to gun violence, any credible response must address the weapons of war that are turning our schools, houses of worship, movie theaters, and concerts into battlefields. Assault weapons with magazines holding 30 bullets are not needed by hunters nor are they required for self-defense. They are killing machines, and increasing numbers of our fellow Americans have become their victims.

Congress must stand up to the NRA and say, "Enough." Even President Trump called out Republican Members of Congress for being too afraid of the NRA to act, saying the NRA has "great power over you people; they have less power over me."

But ever since, President Trump has been backtracking, showing he, too, is more scared of the NRA's political muscle than he is of the public's demand for change. This outcome is depressingly familiar.

Fifty years ago, 1 week after Bobby Kennedy was assassinated, I spoke on the issue of gun violence at Wayne State University. I felt compelled to speak about the myths that the NRA was spreading regarding any effort toward sensible gun control. In my 1968

speech, I said: "One of the favorite sayings of the NRA and the rest of the gun lobby is that 'guns don't kill people; people kill people.' The figures show the inaccuracy of the statement. The truth is that 'people with guns kill people.'"

This remains as true today as it was 50 years ago, and yet we still remain paralyzed by the NRA. And what is its solution to gun violence? More guns. More guns in the classroom by arming teachers, more guns on the streets through lax concealed carry laws, and more guns crossing State lines by over-riding local laws. In this deranged math, more guns somehow equals less violence.

Grieving parents and terrified students deserve so much better. They are tired of the stonewalling, the diversion, and the deception. They are demanding real action to stop gun violence. Let us act now.

THOUSANDS GATHER TO PROTEST GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARPER). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, as we speak, thousands of young people from across the country are gathered outside to protest gun violence and to ask, to beseech, to demand that we take action.

Mr. Speaker, we know what to do. We know that we ought to amend the law to provide effective background checks before people can purchase guns—not just background checks when you purchase from a licensed dealer, but background checks when you purchase a gun anyplace.

We know that we ought to eliminate the 3-day limits so that, if they don't finish the background check within 3 days, you can't get your gun.

We know that we should renew the assault weapons ban that was in effect from 1994 to 2004 so you can't buy military killing machines in this country for civilian use.

We know we ought to ban the high-capacity magazines that can convert guns into killing machines for large numbers of people that have no other purpose. You don't hunt a deer with a high-capacity magazine.

We know we ought to ban bump stocks, and we know the other things we ought to do.

But we are, too many of us, cowards. We quell before the National Rifle Association.

We know the fact is that it is guns in the hands of people that kill people. Compared to every other country in the world, every other industrial country in the world, we stand out like a sore thumb.

If you look at other statistics, this country—Great Britain, 75 people killed by guns in a year; another country, 142. No country is in more than three digits except the United States at 33,000.

They tell it is mental health. The American people do not have mental health rates or lack of mental health 1,000 times or 10 times or 20 times or 40 times more than people in Western Europe or Japan or Australia. You cannot explain a difference of 75 or 150 to 33,000 by mental health.

They tell us we should arm teachers, but we know that trained police officers hit their targets about a third of the time when they fire a gun and, in a gunfight, when the adrenaline is running, 13 percent. If we arm the teachers, we will have more teachers and more students killed.

We have a President who has shown cowardice. He criticized Senator TOOMEY for being afraid of the NRA, and then he, after meeting with the NRA, backed down on everything he said he would do.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, we know what to do. We are the only country in the world with the kind of gun murder rates that we have.

The Republicans have opposed all the measures that we ought to take, but the Republicans have a choice. They can continue to be complicit in their repeated slaughter in our schools, in our churches, in our concert halls, and in our streets by continuing their cowardly subservience to the NRA, or they can act to protect us and our children. They know how to do it. They cannot have it both ways. Let's see what they do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

□ 1100

IN SUPPORT OF GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, the NRA—the NRA—the NRA stands for “No Republican Action.”

It has been a month since 17 children and their teachers were gunned down while at school in Parkland, Florida. It has been more than 5 years since 26 children and their teachers were slaughtered in Sandy Hook.

In both of these instances, the same weapon was used: an AR-15 semiautomatic assault rifle.

And Congress still has taken no action to end gun violence.

Mr. Speaker, there have been more than three dozen moments of silence related to gun violence since the Sandy Hook massacre. There have been zero moments of action.

As those of us who are married or have children know, the silent treatment doesn't work at home. Well, it surely isn't working in Congress. There are dozens of reasonable gun safety bills pending in this esteemed legislature, but the majority party is giving the American people the silent treatment.

NRA: No Republican action.

Meanwhile, between the moments of silence, around 7,000 children have been killed by guns since 2012.

NRA: No Republican action.

Let us take action on Mr. CICILLINE's assault weapon ban to end the flood of new semiautomatic assault weapons onto the streets.

Let us take action on Mr. THOMPSON's bill to strengthen the background checks.

What is the problem with making sure that we check each person's background? Does the NRA say that that is wrong, too?

There is no Republican action.

Let us take action on my Safer Neighborhoods Gun Buyback Act to encourage people to safely, freely make the economic decision to self-disarm and dispose of most of their violent weapons.

Mr. Speaker, the NRA spends tens of millions of dollars in our elections. I received a grade of F. It is the first F that I have ever gotten that I was proud of.

What do the American people get?

They get no Republican action. Let us end the silence of inaction.

GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS HELP CHANGE THE DIRECTION OF OUR COUNTRY

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, today marks 1 month since the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida; 1 month since we lost 14 students and 3 teachers in yet another senseless act of gun violence; 1 month since the survivors inside those hallways have seen their lives changed forever.

The survivors and the grieving families are not just grieving their loss. They are helping to change the direction of this Congress and the direction of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I am leaving from here to go join the thousands of students who have descended upon the Capitol today, whose leadership will help guide the direction of this country, and who understand that 1 month after the horrific shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School—1 month in—and this Congress has failed to act.

There are thousands out there today. There will be hundreds of thousands and millions more in the weeks ahead.

The community that I represent, Mr. Speaker, will not be defined in the future by the tragedy that happened at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. It will be defined by the leadership of the student survivors who are inspiring a nation and helping to take us to a place where children can feel safe going to school in the morning and parents can know that when they take their kids to school in the morning, they will be able to pick them up safely at the end of the day.

That is the result of this tragedy. That is what this is going to mean for

our country. We are going to follow the lead of these student leaders. They are an inspiration to us. They are an inspiration to all of us, and I am off to join them now.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Pastor Rodney David Cannon, Frostproof Church of God, Frostproof, Florida, offered the following prayer:

Creator God in Heaven, we thank You for this great Nation and for placing us in it for such a time as this. We humbly ask for Your wisdom and guidance in leading as we lay down our titles and take up the servant leader's towel. May we honor You by serving those across the aisle, across the street, and those around the world.

Protect those who are protecting us.

In the name of Your Son, Jesus, who taught us to pray by saying:

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILLIAMS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING PASTOR RODNEY DAVID CANNON

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) is recognized for 1 minute.