

Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University. "Multivitamins are a safe and effective tool for the promotion of health and prevention of chronic disease."

Multivitamins and Public Health: Exploring the Evidence, a two-day meeting held October 1-2, 2003, in Washington, D.C., brought together leading health and nutrition experts from government agencies, top research universities and health advocacy organizations to examine the state of the science supporting daily multivitamin use and help chart the course for future research. The meeting was co-sponsored by the Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University and the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition and was supported by a grant from Wyeth Consumer Healthcare.

The Lewin Group, a wholly owned subsidiary of Quintiles Transnational, is a nationally recognized health care and human services consulting firm in Falls Church, Va. The firm specializes in helping public and private sector clients solve complex problems in healthcare and human services with policy analysis, research and consulting.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, as we near the end of the 108th Congress, I must express my disappointment that this Congress has failed to pass sensible gun safety legislation. By ignoring these bills we are missing opportunities to increase the security of our families, communities, and particularly our police officers.

The greatest of these missed opportunities has been the failure to reauthorize the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban. On September 13, 2004 this legislation expired, allowing 19 previously banned assault weapons, as well as firearms that can accept detachable magazines and have more than one of several specific military features, such as a folding/telescoping stock, protruding pistol grip, bayonet mount, threaded muzzle or flash suppressor, barrel shroud or grenade launcher to be legally sold again. Common sense tells us that there is no reason for civilians to have easy access to guns with these features.

Earlier this year, I joined with the majority of my Senate colleagues in passing an amendment to reauthorize the assault weapons ban for another 10 years. However, the bill to which it was attached was later derailed. Despite the overwhelming support of the law enforcement community, the ongoing threat of terrorism, bipartisan support in the Senate, and the pleas of Americans who have already lost loved ones to assault weapons tragedies, the ban was allowed to expire, as the President and the Republican congressional leadership were unwilling to act.

We also missed the opportunity to close the gun show loophole. Under current law, when an individual buys a handgun from a licensed dealer, there are Federal requirements for a background check to insure that the purchaser is not prohibited by law from purchasing or possessing a firearm. However, this is not the case for all

gun purchases. For example, when an individual wants to buy a handgun from another private citizen who is not a licensed gun dealer, there is no requirement that the seller ensure the purchaser is not in a prohibited category. This creates a loophole in the law, making it easy for criminals, terrorists, and other prohibited buyers to evade background checks and buy guns from private citizens. This loophole creates a gateway to the illegal market because criminals know they will not be subject to a background check when purchasing from another private citizen even at a gun show.

I cosponsored an amendment offered by Senators REED and MCCAIN which would have closed the gun show loophole because I believe it is a critical change needed to prevent guns from getting into the hands of criminals and other ineligible buyers. This amendment would have simply applied existing law governing background checks to individuals buying firearms at gun shows. Like the amendment to reauthorize the assault weapons ban, the bill to which the amendment was attached was later defeated, and despite the fact that a bipartisan majority of Senators voted in support of closing the gun show loophole, Republican leadership has refused to schedule another vote on the issue.

This Congress has also failed to consider several other pieces of sensible gun safety legislation which would make it more difficult for convicted criminals to gain access to firearms. One such bill, the Military Sniper Regulation Act, would change the way .50 caliber guns are regulated by placing them under the requirements of the National Firearms Act. This would subject these weapons to the same regimen of registration and background checks as those weapons regulated under the National Firearms Act. These powerful weapons can accurately hit targets a mile away and tighter regulation is needed to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands.

Another bill not considered in the 108th Congress, the National Instant Criminal Background Check Improvement Act, would have provided funding to fix the hole in the current NICS background check system caused by the failure of many states to computerize and update their criminal history records. This failure can result in delays for some who lawfully seek to purchase a gun as well as an inability to block gun sales to some unlawful purchasers. To fix this problem, States need adequate funding to input and update criminal history data. This bill would have authorized \$1 billion to help states do just that.

Unfortunately, the 108th Congress has retreated from the goal of creating a safer nation by keeping dangerous guns off of our streets. Instead of strengthening laws that would help prevent future gun crimes and terrorist attacks, Congress has allowed legislation like the assault weapons ban to

expire, giving potential criminals and terrorists easier access to powerful weapons. The 108th Congress's record on gun safety is not one of which to be proud. I will continue to work toward passing sensible gun safety legislation to help make our communities more safe. I hope that next year in the 109th Congress, the Republican congressional leadership and the President will begin to work with the bipartisan majority who want to enact sensible gun safety legislation.

WHERE TO NEXT?

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, in the next several weeks I will be visiting Europe to meet with government and business leaders in London, Paris, and Brussels. I believe the United States' relationship with the European Union and the states of Europe is of supreme importance. America's economic, security, political, and institutional links with Europe are stronger and deeper than with any other region of the world. Recently, the importance of this relationship was explained very well in an article written by the Honorable James Elles, who is a Member of the European Parliament.

I ask unanimous consent that Mr. Elles' article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ON EU/US RELATIONS: WHERE TO NEXT?

Once the race for the US Presidency is finally over, the new President and his advisors will move from reflecting on the results of a successful campaign and will look for the conduct of policy in the months ahead.

What are the immediate priorities with which to deal on both the domestic and foreign fronts? How, for example, should economic growth best be fostered? How are priorities to be handled in far away places such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine? What is to be the real objective of the four-year mandate by which he would like to be judged as being a truly successful President?

As these questions are being mulled over between now and the Inaugural address early next year, he might reflect that thinking is taking place across the other side of the Atlantic on many of the same issues. Although the incoming Commission President has not yet got the approval of the European Parliament for his new team, he will be also considering how to answer a similar set of questions.

How similar are the policy challenges for the incoming EU and US administrations? Is it correct that Europe is swamped, as many would have us believe, by a huge anti-American wave generated by hostility to the Iraq War? Or is there an extensive common agenda which could be drawn up in the next few weeks and serve as a basis for joint action over the period 2005-2008?

Certainly, there is no shortage of potential flash points in external policy which the pessimists can draw attention to and which are already on the transatlantic agenda. The war against terrorism will certainly be at the top of the US agenda, in its continued search for ensuring domestic security.

In this context, the run-up to elections in IRAQ will require steel nerves. So will their aftermath, in particular, determining what