

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The leader controls the time. Does the leader yield for a question?

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. The only point is that, as the leader just said, we are following a procedure where the leadership is going to look at the amendments and then make their judgment as to whether the Senate will get a chance to consider these issues. I must say, that is an unusual procedure to follow, when many of us are trying to cooperate with the leadership. We are more than glad to enter into short time agreements and then to let the Senate work its will.

I thank the Chair.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 810 AND S. 1317

Mr. REID. Mr. President, prior to the distinguished majority leader leaving the floor, I have a short statement I would like him to listen to. Then I will propound a unanimous consent request.

Two months ago, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. Two months in legislative time may not seem like a lot of time. But in the lives of people who are sick or who have loved ones who are sick, it can be an eternity. The bill that passed the House was a rare victory of bipartisanship. I sincerely hoped, after having read that it had passed, that we would embrace the same spirit of bipartisanship in the Senate and pass this legislation that offers hope to millions of Americans who suffer from deadly disease, and their families.

In May, I spoke with my friend, the distinguished majority leader, about the need to take up this crucial legislation as soon as possible. I was assured that Senator FRIST would work with Members of both sides of the aisle so that we could consider the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act before we broke for our August recess.

The month of July, of course, is almost over. We hope to be able to complete things in the next day or two or three. But this legislation, in the lives of the people I mentioned, can't go on forever. We believe this legislation could produce and will produce stunning medical breakthroughs to some of the dread diseases that affect mankind.

What we have been asking is simple. We propose that the Senate take up two bills: the stem cell bill, which is H.R. 810, and a blood cord bill, which is S. 1317, just like the House bill. Instead, we have heard that we are going to consider six bills, and now we read seven bills. We haven't seen the language of all seven.

It doesn't have to be that complicated, I don't think. The House dealt with the issue very simply, and we should do the same.

A bipartisan majority supported the stem cell bill in the House. I believe there is a tremendous body of Senators who will also support this legislation. Every day we delay consideration of this bill is another day we deny hope to millions of Americans and people throughout the world with Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, spinal cord injuries, heart disease, and diabetes, to name only a few.

These patients, as I have said, don't have the luxury of time like some of us do. Let's have an up-or-down vote on these bills and send them to the President as quickly as possible—like today.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 119, H.R. 810, the stem cell research bill, that the bill be read the third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

I further ask unanimous consent that the Senate then proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 156, S. 1317, the cord blood and bone marrow transplant bill; that the committee substitute be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read the third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, reserving the right to object. The issue of support for stem cell research is one that I believe deserves examination by this body. Stem cell research itself is very promising. I ran a very large multidisciplinary transplant center, and part of that was a transplant arm that transplanted literally hundreds of people with cord blood—or with bone marrow transplants, which is very similar to using cord blood, which one of the bills addresses. Passage of that bill would extend that therapy—which is with adult stem cells—with the variance of cord blood. I agree that passage of that bill would help hundreds of people by establishing registries that could be easily accessed.

H.R. 810, Calendar No. 119, the stem cell research bill—the bill the Democratic leader mentioned—is also a bill that I believe should be addressed in this body. It is a bill that has passed the House of Representatives in a bipartisan way.

In trying to address those two bills, I have extended to both sides of the aisle the opportunity to have clean up-or-down votes on those bills, as well as a fascinating new arena of research—very promising—that gives an alternative not to the Castle bill or the H.R. 810 bill, but an alternative where you don't have to destroy embryos at all, with the opportunity to develop what are called pluripotent stem cells, or embryonic-like stem cells, which also should be addressed.

Thus, my proposal has been to address the cord blood bill, H.R. 810, the

alternative new research, where embryos do not have to be destroyed; a cloning bill, Senator BROWNBACK's bill; and a bone marrow bill. I have been unsuccessful in trying to bring that to the Senate floor. There are concerns on our side of the aisle about that approach—having clean votes on these bills.

I am not going to give up on the stem cell issue because the research is hugely promising. I think, although each of us has individual thoughts about the potential of stem cells and the moral and ethical issues around stem cells, it deserves our body politic addressing the issue. So with that, I will continue to address the issue. I hope that after we come back over the recess, we will be able to address the issue.

I do object to the unanimous consent request, as we finish over the last 48 hours with our business on the floor of the Senate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business for 1 hour, with the first half of the time under the control of Democratic leader or his designee, and the second half of the time under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

STEM CELL LEGISLATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, before leaving the floor, if I can have the attention of our minority leader. Is it the understanding of the leader in propounding this request that the measures proposed in the request had bipartisan support in the House of Representatives, and he believes as I believe—and I see my colleague, the Senator from Iowa, who is a great leader on this, who believes as well—that there is very strong bipartisan support for the legislation, and we could, in a reasonable period of time—really in a matter of hours—pass the legislation and still not exclude the possibility of continued debate and discussion on the other measures relating to stem cells; and that this would permit us to act before August 9, which would be the fourth year since we had the limitation and restriction on stem cell research, the kind of research that 80 Nobel laureates in a letter to President said offers the greatest opportunity for progress in the areas of Parkinson's disease, juvenile diabetes, cancer, and

so many other diseases—do I understand the position of the Senator from Nevada is that he believes the progress taken in the House of Representatives in a bipartisan way should be given the opportunity for action in the Senate?

Mr. REID. I say through the Chair to my friend that I believe there is a significant majority in the Senate that would quickly support both of these bills. I say that without any hyperbole. I believe without question that a significant number would vote for this legislation.

Mr. KENNEDY. Is it the position of the Senator from Nevada that this is the same kind of research that, as I mentioned earlier, Nobel laureates indicate offers the greatest opportunity for progress in dealing with the kinds of illnesses and diseases that just about every family in America in one way or the other is affected by, and he believes, as I do, that this offers an enormous opportunity for hope and progress in conquering or curing these diseases?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have spoken with scientists, physicians, people who have diseases, and the families of those who have diseases, and there is a sparkle of hope and anticipation from the scientific community, from the people who are ill, and from their loved ones—a sparkle of hope and opportunity that I have never seen before. There is the hope that these children, for example, who are stuck with needles tens of thousands of times in their little lives will no longer have to have that done; the hope that someone who is beginning Parkinson's syndrome will be able to be cured. This is hope I have never seen before.

We need to go forward with this as quickly as possible. That is why for us in the Senate, a couple of months is not much. For those people who are sick and the loved ones of those people, it is an eternity. I can remember Steve Rigalio, an executive at Nevada Power, the largest power company in Nevada, who got sick with this disease. I personally watched this man. He had Lou Gehrig's disease. I personally watched this man deteriorate before my eyes. He was dead in a matter of months. The average life expectancy from the time the disease is diagnosed is 16 months. That is why the time we spend here is so important and why we must move forward.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this time I have taken this morning be charged to leader time and not to morning business time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, if I might follow up on the discussion now on the Senate floor, might I ask the distinguished majority leader a question. It is this Senator's understanding, and I think the understanding of others with whom I have spoken, that the distinguished major-

ity leader, during the last work period—I think that was prior to the Memorial Day—no, before the Fourth of July break, I guess it was. It was my understanding that the majority leader had made a commitment that we would bring up a stem cell bill prior to the August recess. I may be mistaken. If so, I stand to be corrected.

My question is to the distinguished majority leader, was a commitment made to bring up the stem cell bill? If so, I am wondering why we have not done so and why we have waited until 2 days before we leave and we still don't have a stem cell bill before us?

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of the Democratic leader, our colleagues from both Iowa and Massachusetts. It gives me an opportunity to make it clear. My belief both in the science, the potential—we have to be careful not to overpromise. I know my colleagues are aware of that. As a physician, you never overpromise and give false hope. You have to be very careful. On the other hand, I understand the huge promise of this science, the proven therapies of adult stem cells, as well as these magnificent embryonic stem cells. Unfortunately, the only way you can obtain them is from the destruction of the blastocyst. That is the ethical issue everybody struggles with.

As majority leader, people come to me all the time and have this discussion in a very personal way, about the complexities and the advancing science coming together in a nexus that we are going to increasingly have to face in this Chamber. Both of my colleagues who have spoken this morning have been real leaders in that field. I, in the last 2 months, have said we have a responsibility to come back and review policy—policy where you have advancing science. You have moral considerations for each one of us, but that is our responsibility.

As individuals, we have different feelings, but as a body politic, this body needs to address them. Now, in doing that, I have put on the table, as leader and in discussions with the Democratic leader for the last 6 weeks, the opportunity to address the Castle bill, H.R. 810, which passed the House, and bring it to the Senate floor free of amendments. The bill is not written very well. It doesn't have the ethical construct that I believe we absolutely need.

So I think the bill is not ideal. But to give the opportunity to have a vote on that bill, to give the opportunity to have a vote on the cord blood bill, which is proven therapy—and cord blood can be used, and bone marrow transplants are used right now for thousands of people. That is adult stem cells. Then to address the newer science, which is too preliminary but gets through a lot of ethical issues—right now, to get the stem cells, it requires the destruction of the embryo. There is a science out there that is preliminary but promising, and maybe

you don't have to destroy embryos to get these cells. That really has been developed in talking to scientists, and that deserves consideration on the floor as well because it gets beyond all the ethical considerations.

As we said, let's get clean shots on these three bills so everybody can express themselves and see where the votes are. Others have come forward, and my colleague from Kansas says he cannot agree to that, to giving these bills up-or-down votes on the floor without the consideration also of another very important bill, and that is the cloning bill, which is an element a little bit outside of just the developing embryos and the destruction of embryos. So I put that offer on the table after discussion with the Democratic leader.

With that, other people have their individual bills. That is why we are not addressing it right now, because I have not been able to get unanimous consent to do that. What I hope both of my colleagues and others recognize is that I believe, as leader, it is an important issue that has to be addressed by this body. It needs ongoing review, and I am trying to do just that. I have been denied that by the body thus far. To bring up a bill and pass it today, which strikes at the moral and ethical fundamentals of each and every one of us, and try to just take that single bill—or just two bills through without respecting my colleagues, I just cannot do that. I look forward to working with both of my colleagues on this important issue, which I believe needs to be addressed.

Mr. HARKIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa controls the time.

Mr. FRIST. I am happy to respond.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank the majority leader. It is this Senator's understanding that there have been a number of different bills proposed to deal with cloning and a number of other issues that don't really pertain to the issue of embryonic stem cell research as the bill was passed by the House.

Is it not true, I ask the distinguished majority leader, that H.R. 810—the bill we are talking about that passed the House with a bipartisan majority and has a number of supporters on both sides of the aisle in the Senate—has bipartisan support in the Senate? Last year, I will say in further expanding on my question, I think there were 58 Senators who signed a letter in support of that legislation, many of the same Senators who are still here. So it has a lot of bipartisan support. These other bills, we don't know. In fact, I say to the distinguished majority leader, there are a couple of bills we heard about but we have never seen any language on.

My question to the majority leader is: Why can't we bring up the bill that passed the House, which everyone knows about—it is clear, it is straightforward, it passed the House, as I said,

with a bipartisan majority, it has bipartisan support here; we all know it has enough votes to pass probably many more than even 60 votes, I would venture to guess—why can't we take that up, pass it, get it to the President, and then when we come back in September, we can take up these other bills?

I do not have any problem with these other bills coming up. Some I may support when they come up. To bring them all up together clouds and confuses the issue. Why can't we just bring up the House bill, simple, straightforward, have a limited debate on it, and vote it up or down as they did in the House, I ask my leader?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, the majority leader is recognized.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I very much appreciate the question. It gives me the opportunity to show the work and the challenge it is to address an issue that strikes at the science and ethical concerns.

My approach has been to include what I think the Senator from Iowa wants, and that is a clean up-or-down-vote on this bill. I have real concerns with how that bill is written, and I will give several examples of why it bothers me a bit the way it is written and passing as a clean bill. But I am willing to do that if I can take into consideration the moral concerns and scientific concerns of others in this body and give them the same opportunity that the Senator from Iowa is asking for, and, thus, put together a group, a defined group, but not an unlimited group—we will be voting up or down on all sorts of votes—but see where everybody is on alternative ways: You do not have to destroy embryos to get the same cells you get from embryos, the cord blood bill, H.R. 810, and the cloning bill. It is a separate issue but involves the creation of embryos and ultimately the destruction of embryos.

That is what we are talking about. That is my attempt. It is going to take a while on the floor of the Senate because of the fact of it not having gone through the committee process and the fact everybody does stand in little different positions, from an ethical standpoint, on any of the bills.

On H.R. 810, the consent process is inadequate, from my standpoint. There is not an ideal ethical construct. It says informed consent, but it does not specifically talk about the potential for financial incentives between, say, a physician and an in vitro fertilization clinic. That is not addressed specifically in the bill. Instead of voting up or down, I would like to at least discuss those issues.

Another issue—there is informed consent and the financial incentives—would be if we pass it, it is passed forever; there is no opportunity to come back and look at it on a periodic basis, say, every 4 or 5 years.

I mention those concerns because I am willing to step back and give a

clean vote on that if we can take into consideration other people's issues or their particular bills. I am a little surprised my colleagues have not taken me up on that opportunity, but since they have not, we will have to come back and figure the best way to address it when we get back after the recess.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for his response. I know Senator KENNEDY wants time to make a speech. On the stem cell bill, I say to my friend from Tennessee, the distinguished leader, the clock is ticking. It does have a lot of support. There may be a lot of ideas out there. No bill that ever passes here has 100-percent approval by everybody of every, as they say, "jot and tittle" in the bill. If I were to rewrite H.R. 810, I might want to write it differently myself.

The fact is a lot of thought was given to it. The disease groups that represent the very ill people in this country—the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, Spinal Cord Injury Foundation, and a whole host of other groups—have put their stamp of approval on this bill. They want it passed.

It just seems to me that the more we dawdle around here—I understand we are in the last couple of days. We have been here all of July. This bill, H.R. 810, has been sitting here. We could have taken it up at any time. It is this Senator's observation that all of a sudden all these other bills are popping up on cloning, chimeras, and others, which I am not saying are not important issues, but they are separate and aside from this issue.

If the distinguished majority leader wants to bring those up at some other time for debate and amendments and bring them up for a straight up-or-down vote, that is fine, I don't have a problem with that, but don't tie them in with a bill that has strong majority support on both sides of the aisle, strong bipartisan support, as was shown in the House, and one which, if passed, could be sent to the President right away for his signature and which could really open the door so our scientists could get to work on embryonic stem cell research.

It seems—I am not accusing anyone of this, but it is the process we go through sometimes—there is a lot of smoke and mirrors going on, and a lot of bills are popping up to confuse the issue and to try to pull people away from support of H.R. 810.

Again, I say to my friend from Tennessee, I hope that we can have some assurance from the leader that when we get back in September that we will take up H.R. 810 and, I say to the Senator from Tennessee, if they want to bring up these other bills at some other time, in some other context, I can assure him this Senator would not object. I would have no objection to it. But right now there are objections to bringing them up at the same time, not just on this side of the aisle, but I also understand on the other side of the aisle.

It seems to me the clearest way is to bring up H.R. 810 and the cord blood bill and get them out of the way and deal with the others. I hope the majority leader will assure us we will do that when we come back in September.

Mr. FRIST. To complete this, from my standpoint, I want it to be very clear, to be understood that the majority leader of the Senate has offered to his colleagues to bring up six bills. The statement is made this is going to have an overwhelming bipartisan support. It did in the House. All I am saying is, let's, in a short period of time—what has been offered to both sides, is spend a day debating these six bills which do, if you look at the six bills, take the range of ethical considerations and moral considerations of this body and do look at the science—alternative ways of developing embryonic stem cells—and let's take them to the floor and allow each one to get a vote, and let's see where the votes are.

It may be the bill of my distinguished colleague from Iowa will get a majority vote or a supermajority vote, but so may the cord blood bill. I hope it does. I think it will save lives. The alternative bill, let's see what it is. It has never been discussed on the floor. I would hope the distinguished colleague from Iowa would vote for it because there is potential hope there, as well as obtaining embryonic stem cells from embryos. Also, the cloning bill. Let's debate it in a defined period of time and vote on that. Let's see where the body is. That has been my approach, and that has been the offer to both sides.

The Senator is correct, on both sides of the aisle there is this hesitation to do it. I need for my colleagues to understand that I am pushing for clean votes over a period of time, where we can address the very issues my two colleagues want to address.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank the Senator.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I join my colleagues in expressing my deep sorrow and regret that the Republican leadership has allowed another month to go by without taking action on the bipartisan stem cell bill approved overwhelmingly by the House of Representatives.

Over the last several weeks, Republican leaders in the Senate have ignored the true priorities of the American people. They have denied the Senate the opportunity to provide our troops the protections they need against attack. They have denied the Senate the chance to guarantee funding for veterans' health, and to raise the minimum wage, and to allow importation of lower cost medicine from Canada and other nations.

And they have stalled and delayed, and twisted and turned, to deny action on legislation to unlock the healing potential of stem cell research.

They say there is no time for stem cells, or for the needs of our troops, or our veterans, or working families. There's plenty of time to protect the

makers of lethal assault weapons—but no time for lifesaving cures.

The bill is right there, Mr. President, right there on that desk in front of you. At any time, the majority leader could walk over, pick it up and have a vote on a bill that would bring new hope to millions of Americans.

For years, patients and their families waited for a medical breakthrough to provide new hope for serious illnesses like Parkinson's disease, spinal injury, and Alzheimer's disease.

Then at last, dedicated scientists made that breakthrough. They discovered stem cells, which can repair the injuries that cause untold suffering and shorten lives.

The cruel irony is that just as medicine was giving patients new hope, the Bush administration snatched it away through needless restrictions on stem cell research.

In a few days, on August 9, patients across America will mark the fourth tragic anniversary of that cruel decision.

We in the United States Senate had the opportunity—no, we had the responsibility—to see that August 9 of this year did not mark 4 years of failure and 4 years of missed opportunity.

But the Republican leadership would not let us meet that responsibility. They let the first week of July slip by, and then the second, and now the last—all with no action on this urgently needed legislation.

Every day that we delay is another day of falling behind in the race to cure diabetes, cancer, Parkinson's disease, and many other serious illnesses.

It is another day for America to lose ground to Korea, Singapore, Britain, and other nations in the competition for global leadership in biotechnology.

Most of all, it is another day of shattered hopes for millions of patients and their families across America.

Some respond to the failure of the current policy by saying we should explore new ways to develop embryonic stem cells. I agree. Let's explore the potential of new discoveries in genetics and cell science to improve the ways we can tap the potential of stem cells. But let's not restrict essential research while scientists explore speculative and preliminary theories.

Some say we should encourage research on stem cells from the blood in umbilical cords or on adult stem cells from bone marrow and other tissues. Again, I agree. We should seek help for patients wherever it may be found. But it makes no sense to limit medical research to one narrow channel when the Nation's leading scientists agree that these alternatives have a more limited potential than embryonic stem cells. As a letter signed by 80 Nobel laureates in February 2001 stated:

Current evidence suggests that adult stem cells have markedly restricted differentiation potential. Therefore, for disorders that prove not to be treatable with adult stem cells, impeding human pluripotent stem cell research risks unnecessary delay for millions

of patients who may die or endure needless suffering while the effectiveness of adult stem cells is evaluated.

The conclusion of an NIH report in June 2001 is clear:

Stem cells in adult tissues do not appear to have the same capacity to differentiate as do embryonic stem cells.

It would be cruel to base the hopes of millions of patients on an ideological conclusion that these experts are wrong. By all means, let's pursue vigorous research on adult stem cells, but let's not deceive the American public into thinking it's an adequate substitute for embryonic stem cell research.

Legislation should be an expression of our values, and our legislation says loud and clear that we value patients and their families—not rigid ideology.

It is a travesty that no action has been taken on this lifesaving measure.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the unanimous consent request offered today by Senator REID. The Senator has asked unanimous consent for the Senate to take up H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, and S. 1317, the Bone Marrow and Cord Blood Therapy and Research Act.

Both of these bills have been passed by the House and are sitting at the desk waiting to be passed by the Senate and sent to the President for his signature.

The month of July has come and is nearly gone. Yet these two House-passed bills, with strong bipartisan support, sit and wait at the desk.

The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act has 41 sponsors—Republicans and Democrats alike. This legislation is the result of many years of bipartisan cooperation in both the House and Senate. I am pleased to join my colleagues, Senator ARLEN SPECTER, TOM HARKIN, ORRIN HATCH, TED KENNEDY, and GORDON SMITH, who have worked tirelessly on behalf of patients and their families across this Nation to see that embryonic stem cell research moves forward.

This legislation is proof positive that Senators from many different points of view, be they liberal or conservative, pro-life or pro-choice, can work together on legislation that will help speed the pace of cures and treatments for more than 110 million Americans.

Identical legislation passed the House on May 24 by a vote of 238 to 194. Congressman MIKE CASTLE, Republican, Delaware, and DIANA DEGETTE, Democrat, Colorado, are to be commended for their tireless work in getting this bill passed in the House.

It is essential that the Senate move quickly to pass this bill. The clock is ticking. August 9 marks the fourth anniversary of President Bush's policy limiting Federal funding for embryonic stem cell research. At the time it was thought there were 78 stem cell lines available to researchers, today that number is 22. And all 22 of the lines available are contaminated by mouse

feeder cells and not usable for research in humans.

So why has the Senate still not acted? The simple unanimous consent request put forth by Senator REID would allow the Senate to vote on this bill as early as today. We could send it to the President for his signature tonight.

What is going on here is an attempt to obscure what is a very simple issue. What is going on here is an attempt to allow votes on other bills in order to pull votes away from H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act.

I think it is appropriate for the Senate to debate other related issues at a later time. In fact, yesterday I introduced S. 1520, the Human Cloning Ban Act—with 25 bipartisan cosponsors—which would prohibit once and for all the immoral and unethical act of human reproductive cloning. I believe strongly that Congress must pass a prohibition on human cloning or attempts to clone human beings.

But first we must act on the unanimous consent request offered today by Senator REID, and I hope that request will be one of the first issues the Senate deals with after the August recess.

Embryonic stem cell research is the bright new frontier of medicine. We owe it to the 110 million Americans suffering daily with debilitating and catastrophic diseases to pass H.R. 810.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa yields the floor. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that exchange be part of leader time and not interfere with the morning hour.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. To be more precise for our timekeeping purposes, did the Senator say part of the leader's time?

Mr. KENNEDY. The time not to be charged as part of the morning hour.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I understand we have half an hour; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank the Chair. I ask the Chair to notify me when I have 3 minutes remaining.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will so notify the Senator.

END TO ARMED CAMPAIGN

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, this morning the IRA has issued a statement indicating that it has formally ordered an end to the armed campaign. I welcome the statement. Hopefully, the statement means we are finally nearing the end of this very long process to take guns and criminality out of politics in Northern Ireland once and for all.