



Enough With Your Thoughts and Prayers

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People are dying.

As of the most recent count, 58 people were senselessly murdered in Las Vegas last night, and more than 500 wounded. Another horrific mass shooting tragedy on American soil. This is a sad day for our country—and I am heartbroken for the many families whose lives have been irrevocably upended by this act of terror. But for all of those thinking and praying for the souls of the dead and their bereaved families, think and pray on this: we, as a nation, have once again failed to protect our citizens from preventable tragedy.

There is so much we don't yet know about this shooting. What does seem clear is that the gunman used at least one fully automatic assault weapon and had ten rifles in his hotel room. These are weapons of war, easily accessible in America. There have been 1,400 mass shootings since Sandy Hook, and yet we have failed to think or pray up a way to pass legislation that would change this reality. And even worse, after highly publicized mass shootings, there tends to be a loosening of gun laws. Right now, Congress is considering legislation that would make it easier to obtain silencers. Just imagine the increased scope of the carnage last night had the shooter possessed a silencer. It is criminal that Congress has failed to act in the face of the epidemic of mass shootings over the past many years; it is obscene that they are considering legislation that will exacerbate the problem.

This is not rocket science. A ban on weapons designed for battlefield use and a ban on high capacity magazines. Universal background checks for all gun buyers. Expanded mental health treatment. Restricted gun sales to anyone with a history of violence—especially a history of domestic violence—or mental illness. The overwhelming majority of Americans support these measures. So what exactly are we waiting for? Maybe we should pray on it?

[Charles Clymer - writer](#) - wrote this morning: “Being in this country, right now, is living in a terrible lottery. At anytime, at any place—a church, a school, a concert, at work, on a random street—we are at risk of being in a massacre. And our Congress continues to do nothing. They have failed us.”

One of these days, our nation will hit a tipping point. I dread the calamity that finally awakens us to the need to extricate our political system from the craven grip of the NRA and take real action to protect people from weapons of war. In the meantime, shame on us for not mustering the political will and the moral outrage to effectively address this crisis. Shame on us for letting our elected officials off the hook.

The news cycle will move on from this in a couple of days. It always does. And the only ones left to dwell in the tragedy will be those who lost loved ones or whose lives are forever altered by injury and trauma.

I am a person of faith, someone with a real prayer life. But I also know the limits of prayer: we cannot pray our way out of this endless loop of devastation and distraction. The only way out is collective spiritual and political action. That means saying NO to the diversionary tactics, NO to the empty excuses, NO to the bald-faced lies that will inevitably follow on the heels of this tragedy, as they always do. We have to use our voices, our resources, our connections, whatever public platform and political capital we have to call out the insanity of easy access to deadly weapons. This will not end until we end it.

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