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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. PETRI].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

September 8, 1997

I hereby designate the Honorable THOMAS E. PETRI to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. McDevitt, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2159. An act making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2159) "An Act making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. GREGG, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. INOUE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. BYRD, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). Pursuant to the order of the

House of January 21, 1997, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD] for 5 minutes.

KOREAN AIR FLIGHT 801 LEGISLATION

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, as Guam recuperates from Korean Air Flight 801's crash on August 6, I wish to direct the Nation's attention to a key participant in the facilitation of various procedures linked to this tragedy. From its investigative efforts to its family affairs responsibilities, the National Transportation Safety Board was and continues to be an instrumental component in this process. The NTSB's efficient work continues to clarify the many aspects of the crash, such as the state of the aircraft, weather conditions and the like.

One of the NTSB's main functions is its role in helping victims' families cope with their losses. I laud their efforts in tactfully dealing with the aggrieved individuals in such unsavory, but necessary, procedures as the identification of the remains. The NTSB has and continues to conduct their investigations professionally and competently. I have had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to meet with NTSB officials while they were on Guam and recently in Washington. They assure me that they are doing all that they can in their efforts to bring closure to this serious tragedy.

As Members of Congress, we should also exert every effort to aid those af-

ected by this tragedy. In the next few days, I will be introducing legislation which would require foreign air carriers to establish disaster assistance plans if they are permitted to travel in the United States. This legislation would allocate various responsibilities to the foreign air carriers should their aircraft have an accident on U.S. soil. American carriers are already abiding by this requirement under the Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996.

Mr. Speaker, the reason I propose this legislation stems from Guam's experience with Korean Air Flight 801's tragic end. Many have complained about lack of guidance and proper coordination on the part of Korean Air in their dealings with the victims' families. While it took over 20 hours for NTSB personnel to reach Guam, Korean Air personnel and victims' families not from Guam had already arrived on the island within 4 to 5 hours. At this point, much could have been done to coordinate family and media needs as well as protection of the crash site. However, due to the lack of established arrangements, family members did not receive information on the complex nature of the investigation as well as a clear vision of the various agencies and departments' priorities who were involved in the search and rescue mission.

The ensuing confusion has resulted in an exercise of patience and perseverance on behalf of various officials and family members alike. I believe that my legislation will eliminate much of the disorder which normally results from traumatic episodes such as this crash. I am working closely with NTSB and the Department of Transportation in the formulation of legislative language, and I am very encouraged by the support shown by my colleagues in the House and in the Senate. As Members of Congress, I believe we share the responsibility in ensuring the safety of our constituents whether

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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