

they choose to fly in domestic or foreign air carriers.

I would also like to highlight another benefit of this legislation. As we enter into the next millennium, evolving technology will continue to draw citizens of different nations closer together. This legislation will not only aid American citizens, it will also benefit other nationalities boarding flights with prearranged disaster assistance plans. Common sense points to the competency of this legislation and I encourage the rest of my colleagues to support it.

We must prove to our constituents that we care about them whether they fly domestic or foreign airlines, and I encourage my colleagues to be forward-looking and support my efforts in requiring foreign air carriers permitted to fly in the United States the responsibility to arrange disaster assistance plans should an accident occur on American soil. This legislation is a pledge that Korean Air's 801 passengers did not perish in vain.

GULF WAR VETERANS DESERVE TO RECEIVE BENEFITS AND HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot in the newspapers recently about the gulf war syndrome, so I thought I would take a moment to comment on them.

First of all, as chairman of the Veterans Subcommittee on Health, we are active in marking up pieces of legislation that affect this matter, but I wanted to point out this morning, Mr. Speaker, that I want to commend the Presidential advisory committee on gulf war veterans' illnesses for recommending to the administration that it create a permanent statutory program of benefits and health care for the thousands of veterans who have been plagued with a variety of unexplained symptoms.

Coincidentally, the full Committee on Veterans' Affairs will be marking up legislation that my subcommittee earlier formulated that will require the VA to create a \$5-million program, competitive grant program, under which up to 10 VA facilities would establish demonstration projects to test new approaches to treating Persian Gulf veterans which meets with their satisfaction.

This proposed legislation will require the VA to utilize three approaches. These approaches could be used alone or in combination. The new approaches are: First, a specialized clinic which serves Persian Gulf veterans; second, multi-disciplinary treatment aimed at managing symptoms; and third, the use of case managers.

I have a bill in Congress, H.R. 2206, which of course also reaffirms the VA's

obligation to provide verbal counseling to Persian Gulf veterans with respect to the finding of its registry examinations.

This legislation would also specify that these veterans are eligible for VA health care for any problem related to service in the Gulf, not just those problems that may be linked to exposure to toxic substances or environmental hazards.

While I commend the advisory committee for its recommendations to establish a permanent program of benefits and health care, Mr. Speaker, I must also voice my strong objection to the fact that it stands by a previous presidential commission report issued in January that declared that it could not find a causal link between the frequently reported symptoms of fatigue, headaches, sore joints, and rashes, commonly referred to as the gulf war syndrome. Furthermore, the committee report stated that it believed that stress was "likely to have been an important contributing factor."

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues may recall, in the last Congress we enacted legislation to extend priority health care for veterans exposed to agent orange and those who served in the Persian Gulf war through December 31, 1998. My commitment then and now is to provide priority health care to those who served in the gulf war. It is a long-standing commitment, and not just by virtue of my new position as chairman of the Subcommittee on Health.

With respect to what has been known as the gulf war syndrome, I took a deep interest in requesting that we aggressively seek answers to the many unexplained illnesses experienced by gulf war veterans. One of the first casualties of this mysterious group of diseases was a constituent of mine, Michael Adcock of Ocala, FL, who died at the age of 22 after serving in Operation Desert Storm.

After returning home from the gulf war, Michael suffered a number of symptoms which had befallen many other gulf war veterans, including persistent nausea, skin rashes, aching joints, hair loss, bleeding gums, blurred vision, and lack of energy, among others.

Michael died in 1993, three years after coming home from the Desert Storm operation. We are still looking for answers to the causes of this mysterious syndrome which appears to be indigenous to those who served in the gulf war.

I think we all know how terribly urgent it is that we continue with our research efforts until we find the answer to the cause of this syndrome that is so ubiquitous to those veterans.

In light of the controversy surrounding unexplained illnesses Desert Storm veterans have and are experiencing, the VA, Department of Defense, NIH and the HHS have long been conducting extensive research into possible causes of the unexplained illnesses associated with this military campaign.

Mr. Speaker, I am optimistic that through these efforts we might find the missing link that will explain this rash of perplexing illnesses which seem to be indigenous to those particular veterans. We all know how invaluable the research being conducted is and the need to find answers as to what is causing thousands of gulf war veterans to be plagued by a rash of unexplained symptoms.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Department of Defense and the VA will continue to both aggressively treat symptoms associated with Desert Storm syndrome and investigate its causes or cause.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 42 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. UPTON) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We are grateful, Oh God, that whatever our place in life and whatever our need, whether our spirits are rising or whether we know adversity, we can express our thanksgivings to You for Your promises to us and to every person. We are grateful that we do not walk the paths of life alone, or face the mysterious and bewildering events of the day by ourselves, but Your guiding hand gives direction and Your spirit lifts us when we are weak. With thanksgiving and praise we begin this week and with hearts of gratitude we offer these words of prayer and petition.

This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. KILDEE] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILDEE 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.

EDUCATION IS A COMMONSENSE MATTER

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, what is the secret to getting a great education? Brandnew classrooms, the latest computers, a teaching staff trained in the latest pedagogical methods, record spending on school budgets? Of course not. Common sense alone suggests that a great education is a product of the same ingredients that has made for a great education for centuries: motivated students, parents who care about their children's schooling, and teachers with energy and dedication.

What Federal program conceived in Washington, DC, can produce motivated students? What Federal program can make parents care about their children's schooling? What Federal program can produce teachers with energy and dedication?

Mr. Speaker, this is truly puzzling for me, that so many people with Ph.D.'s right here in this community in education and journalists with equally impressive credentials tend to forget these commonsense facts so often when it comes to education. It is time to get back to basics. It is time that Washington encouraged them to do it now, and not tomorrow.

THE WORLD IS IN MOURNING FOR MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, September 6, the world lost one of its greatest humanitarian leaders. The death of Mother Teresa of Calcutta has touched literally billions of people in every part of the world, particularly in India, where Mother Teresa began her work taking care of the poorest of the poor some 5 decades ago.

Mother Teresa's death has prompted an outpouring of grief, as well as gratitude to this diminutive woman who many considered a saint on Earth. India's Prime Minister Gujral, visiting the modest convent chapel where Mother Teresa entered religious service, said that the world is mourning. Flags in India are flying at half-staff and a state funeral is planned for Saturday, the highest honor the Indian Government can give.

The funeral offers an opportunity for everyone, from powerful world leaders to the humblest people of Calcutta, to join in paying tribute to a woman who tirelessly ministered to the world's most afflicted citizens.

Mr. Speaker, as we mourn the passing of Mother Teresa, I am sure that all of us in this body extend our best

wishes to her successor, Sister Nirmala, as she works to continue the work begun by this remarkable woman who saw God in the face of every human being.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5, rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 7 p.m. today.

MISSISSIPPI SIOUX TRIBES JUDGMENT FUND DISTRIBUTION ACT OF 1997

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 976) to provide for the disposition of certain funds appropriated to pay judgment in favor of the Mississippi Sioux Indians and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 976

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Mississippi Sioux Tribes Judgment Fund Distribution Act of 1997".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this Act, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) COVERED INDIAN TRIBE.—The term "covered Indian tribe" means an Indian tribe listed in section 4(a).

(2) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) TRIBAL GOVERNING BODY.—The term "tribal governing body" means the duly elected governing body of a covered Indian tribe.

SEC. 3. DISTRIBUTION TO, AND USE OF CERTAIN FUNDS BY, THE SISSETON AND WAHPETON TRIBES OF SIOUX INDIANS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including Public Law 92-555 (25 U.S.C. 1300d et seq.), any funds made available by appropriations under chapter II of Public Law 90-352 (82 Stat. 239) to the Sisseton and Wahpeton Tribes of Sioux Indians to pay a judgment in favor of the Tribes in Indian Claims Commission dockets numbered 142 and 359, including interest, after payment of attorney fees and other expenses, that, as of the date of enactment of this Act, have not been distributed, shall be distributed and used in accordance with this Act.

SEC. 4. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS TO TRIBES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to section 5, as soon as practicable after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall distribute an aggregate amount, equal to the funds described in section 3 reduced by \$1,469,831.50, as follows:

(1) 28.9276 percent of such amount shall be distributed to the tribal governing body of the Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe of North Dakota.

(2) 57.3145 percent of such amount shall be distributed to the tribal governing body of the Sisseton and Wahpeton Sioux Tribe of South Dakota.

(3) 13.7579 percent of such amount shall be distributed to the tribal governing body of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana, as designated under subsection (b).

(b) TRIBAL GOVERNING BODY OF ASSINIBOINE AND SIOUX TRIBES OF FORT PECK RESERVATION.—For purposes of making distributions of funds pursuant to this Act, the Sisseton and Wahpeton Sioux Council of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes shall act as the governing body of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation.

SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF TRIBAL TRUST FUNDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As a condition to receiving funds distributed under section 4, each tribal governing body referred to in section 4(a) shall establish a trust fund for the benefit of the covered Indian tribe under the jurisdiction of that tribal governing body, consisting of—

(1) amounts deposited into the trust fund; and

(2) any interest and investment income that accrues from investments made from amounts deposited into the trust fund.

(b) TRUSTEE.—Each tribal governing body that establishes a trust fund under this section shall—

(1) serve as the trustee of the trust fund; and

(2) administer the trust fund in accordance with section 6.

SEC. 6. USE OF DISTRIBUTED FUNDS.

(a) PROHIBITION.—No funds distributed to a covered Indian tribe under section 4 may be used to make per capita payments to members of the covered Indian tribe.

(b) PURPOSES.—The funds distributed under section 4 may be used by a tribal governing body referred to in section 4(a) only for the purpose of making investments or expenditures that the tribal governing body determines to be reasonably related to—

(1) economic development that is beneficial to the covered Indian tribe;

(2) the development of resources of the covered Indian tribe; or

(3) the development of a program that is beneficial to members of the covered Indian tribe, including educational and social welfare programs.

(c) AUDITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct an annual audit to determine whether each tribal governing body referred to in section 4(a) is managing the trust fund established by the tribal governing body under section 5 in accordance with the requirements of this section.

(2) ACTION BY THE SECRETARY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If, on the basis of an audit conducted under paragraph (1), the Secretary determines that a covered Indian tribe is not managing the trust fund established by the tribal governing body under section 5 in accordance with the requirements of this section, the Secretary shall require the covered Indian tribe to take remedial action to achieve compliance.

(B) APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT TRUSTEE.—If, after a reasonable period of time specified by the Secretary, a covered Indian tribe does not take remedial action under subparagraph (A), the Secretary, in consultation with the tribal governing body of the covered Indian tribe, shall appoint an independent trustee to manage the trust fund established by the tribal governing body under section 5.

SEC. 7. EFFECT OF PAYMENTS TO COVERED INDIAN TRIBES ON BENEFITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—A payment made to a covered Indian tribe or an individual under this Act shall not—