place, the longer things take to happen, and it is incumbent upon us to get this joint committee up and running.

I might say to the gentleman that I know he has suggested a commission, but I feel very strongly that it is our responsibility as a Congress in a bipartisan way to address these issues and have oversight of these issues. And in accepting and understanding that responsibility, and not being relieved by somebody else or some other commission of that responsibility, this was one of those things that was important for the country.

We looked back at precedent, even when the gentleman’s side of the aisle was in the majority, and found a precedent for doing this in a bipartisan, bicameral way when the Democrats wanted to do it, and we thought it made sense and so that is exactly what we did.

So we feel strongly that we, in a bipartisan way, are responsible for looking at these issues, and I would imagine both sides would want the attention of the country. This is the crisis we are in, and we will address this by whatever means is necessary to get it up and going. And also next week, I would assume that the Speaker would make those appointments that are necessary to fill that joint committee.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader, and reclaiming my time, I think I have suggested this before, but I believe it would be useful, perhaps at some point in time in the near term, that the Speaker convene the leadership of both sides of the aisle to discuss how we are going forward.

I understand there were precedents for the action that was taken, but it was not taken after discussions with this side of the aisle. And as the majority leaders know, both on the Senate side that was the case and on the House side it was the case.

Again, I agree with the gentleman’s proposition that the public wants to see us move ahead together and respond to the needs of those who have suffered, not party politics or ideological differences, but helping those who are hurting and making sure that we protect those who may still yet be vulnerable. I think we can best do that by working together.

On another subject and moving on, can the majority leader tell me where we stand on reconciliation? Press reports indicate that there is a delay in the development of those bills, as called for in the budget resolution, at least for some period of time. Can the gentleman bring us up to date on what the present status of reconciliation is?

Mr. DELAY. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the majority leader for his information.

Mr. DELAY. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the majority leader for his information.
In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

PROVIDING FAMILY ASSISTANCE IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE KATRINA

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as we offer our sympathy and reflection today to the victims of 9/11, we stand here again looking at another horrific and unspeakable tragedy, Hurricane Katrina.

The numbers are clear that the greatest victims will be children. Some 400 children are homeless, and we know that between one-third and a quarter of them will have a traumatic experience after the end of their journey through Hurricane Katrina. We know that 35 percent of them experienced this terrible tragedy will have a severe mental illness, and we also know that there are 800 missing children that are now lost or presumed dead through Hurricane Katrina.

I think it is important as we look toward the future and move quickly to address the horribleness of this tragedy that we provide for a one-time grant assistance for the children who have been impacted by this hurricane and that legislation be drafted and passed by both bodies to secure their protection and that we provide a structure that will monitor these children through adulthood, through reaching the age of majority.

We have heard from psychiatrists that say that the most vulnerable victims of this tragedy who will suffer a horrific experience will be our children. We must rally around them. It is imperative that this Congress work together to provide them with the financial, social, psychiatric, and, of course, family assistance that is necessary.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. (Mr. SORRELL.) Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

A WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER 1900

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Poe) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. Poe. Mr. Speaker, the devastation of Hurricane Katrina is a vivid reminder to Texans of another hurricane that occurred 105 years ago, the weekend of September 8, 1900, in Galveston, Texas. That hurricane, known to many as "the storm," was the deadliest natural disaster to take place in American history.

In 1900, Galveston was the showplace of the Gulf of Mexico, referred to by many as the Jewel of Texas and the wealthiest city in the State of Texas. On that weekend in September, as 40,000 residents and vacationers were bidding farewell to summer, weather forecasters were watching closely an uncertain hurricane brewing in the Gulf of Mexico. Having very little of today's weather forecasting equipment, the trackers lost the location of the storm in the gulf after it passed the predicted landfall of Florida.

It began as a tropical storm on August 27, 1900, and no one could imagine what it would become. Twelve days later, in the darkness of the night on September 8, 105 years ago today, it started to rain in Galveston and the water silently and quickly began to rise. It crept and covered the low-lying island. The island was barely above sea level at 5 to 9 feet. There was no time for any evacuation.

The strong winds and rains ravaged the city. Houses were devastated and people were swept away. As the power went out and phones went out, people started wading through the murky mounting water. They sought shelter in downtown buildings and churches as the gale winds and incessant rain continued to increase.

Nuns in the local orphanage tied a rope around the waists of the children and unsuccessfully tried to lead them to higher ground. Of the 93 children and 10 Catholic nuns, only three boys survived.

No one was prepared or adequately warned for this Category 4 hurricane that hit the city of Galveston. The force of the 140-mile-an-hours winds caused a water surge that covered most of the 3 mile by 30 mile island in minutes.

The nameless hurricane destroyed 3,500 buildings, over half of the city. The loss of life was staggering. It reminded me of the scripture of old, that the judge came down the road, and the winds blew and beat against the houses. But when the rains stopped and the wind blew no more, over 8,000 people had died. Hundreds more were never accounted for. Nearly everyone on the island knew a friend or relative who had perished.

Isaac Cline, a Galveston forecaster, never believed that the hurricane could ravage this paradise island. After the calm came once more, Cline described the storm's aftermath as "the most horrible sight that was ever witnessed by a civilized people."

When the hurricane finally moved inland, and it did not end its winds until it got to Canada, the task of recovery was overwhelming. Prisoners of the State penitentiary were used in the cleanup to find the dead, buried at sea, only to resurface on the beaches. Bodies were still being found in February of the next year. Since it was not possible to bury the thousands that died, there were eventually cremated.

The story of Galveston's hurricane is a story of death and devastation and ultimate determination.