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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. SHAYS].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 12, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable CHRISTOPHER SHAYS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, 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 and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

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

(Mr. UNDERWOOD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

RESTITUTION FOR GUAM

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of attending ceremonies in Honolulu about 10 days ago marking V-J Day and the end of the war in the Pacific.

I was moved by the expressions of gratitude to our veterans who fought in the war in the Pacific, many of whom did not return home, and countless many who were injured and who

bear the scars of war today. We certainly owe them a debt of gratitude.

I want to take this opportunity to call attention to the story of an American community occupied by the enemy during this war, and the brutality visited upon these Americans. Guam was attacked simultaneously with the attack on Pearl Harbor, and Guam was subsequently occupied by the enemy, an occupation that lasted 32 months, from December 10, 1941, to July 21, 1944. Guam was the only American community occupied—some may note that the Aleutian Islands were also occupied, but the Native Alaskans and the military evacuated these islands prior to the start of hostilities. Not since the War of 1812 have American civilians been subjected to an enemy occupation.

The occupation of Guam was made more brutal because of the loyalty of the people of Guam to the United States. This was a time of severe hardship and scarcity of food. This was a time when our people were placed into forced labor to work in rice paddies, to build fortifications for the enemy, and to clear a field by hand for a future airfield. This was a time when many suffered the brutality of beatings, and some were executed by beheading. This was a time when our people, in the closing weeks before liberation, were forced to march to internment camps in southern Guam to await their fate. And this was a time of atrocities, of villagers being rounded up into caves where they were killed by grenades and machinegun fire.

With this kind of war experience, it is not likely that the people of Guam will ever forget the occupation. But it seems that this Nation has forgotten the people of Guam. It certainly seemed that way after World War II when the Treaty of Peace with Japan was signed by the United States, absolving Japan of any war reparations. It certainly seemed that Guam was for-

gotten by the United States Congress in 1948 and again in 1962 when legislation was passed to allow for some compensation to the victims of World War II, but not the victims who were on Guam.

Mr. Speaker, I have introduced legislation, H.R. 2041, the Guam War Restitution Act, to address the claims of the people of Guam for the wartime atrocities that we endured. My bill would allow compensation for forced march, forced labor, internment, injury, and death for those who suffered during the occupation.

The amounts authorized for these injuries are modest, and are in line with amounts paid in 1948 to other Americans who were authorized to receive compensation.

It is important, 51 years after the liberation of Guam and 50 years after the end of the war, to bring closure to this issue. This issue is not going to fade away. Federal amnesia about Guam's occupation and the injustice of the way compensation was handled is not going to work. We remember, and we will not forget.

To those who may question why we are coming to Congress for compensation, let me point out two things. First, the Treaty of Peace with Japan takes away our recourse to seek compensation directly from Japan. Second, war claims were paid to other Americans by successive acts of Congress beginning in 1943, and as I mentioned earlier, in corrective legislation in 1948 and 1962 that did not include Guam.

To those who may argue that it should be Japan, not the American taxpayer that pays this bill, let me assure you that we agree. The Federal Government had every opportunity to seize Japanese assets after the war in payment of claims. Furthermore, my bill includes a funding mechanism that would not cost the American taxpayer a dime—Congress may choose to impose a fee on the sale of United States

□ 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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military equipment to Japan. After all, the national security and our security arrangements with Japan in Asia were often cited as the reasons to forgive Japan of any war reparations.

I hope that my colleagues would support H.R. 2041, the Guam War Restitution Act. I hope that we can put closure to this issue. I noted that much publicity was given to the Japanese apology for World War II. Who will apologize for the mishandling of Guam war reparations? Who in Congress will take responsibility for the Treaty with Japan signing away Guam's rights, and who in Congress will apologize for the oversight in not including Guam in war claims legislation in the past? Who now will stand up for what is right and do what is right for the American citizens of Guam who endured a brutal occupation?

MEDICAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. CHRISTENSEN] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, despite liberal attempts to hide the truth, the word is out.

The American people have learned that our precious Medicare system is going broke.

It is clear that unless important actions are taken, Medicare will be belly-up in the year 2002.

We are not going to let that happen.

We are going to save Medicare and strengthen it—giving our seniors more options and more choices.

One option we should give seniors is a Medical Savings Account.

A Medicare MSA would allow seniors to join a private health plan that would pay all expenses above a set level, and allow seniors to deposit their Medicare dollars in a personal medical savings account to be used to pay expenses below that level.

At the end of the year, seniors choosing this option could withdraw any unspent money left in the MSA or buy insurance coverage for prescription drugs or allow the money to grow with interest to pay future medical bills. It is their choice.

Let us hope the liberals choose to abandon their Medi-scare tactics and join us in saving Medicare by giving seniors more choices like Medical Savings Accounts.

NUCLEAR BOMBING IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, about 150 years ago, by show of military force with guns, bullets and cannons, the Government of France incorporated into a colony a group of Polynesian islands currently known as French Polynesia, with its current capital in the town of Papeete and the main island called the island of Tahiti.

Mr. Speaker, these Polynesian islands were popularized by the famous historical novel that was written by Mr. Hall and Mr. Nordoff in the early 1930's, and later, a couple of very famous films were based on this novel. They are currently known as the Mutiny on the Bounty. As you well know, it was a historical fact that a British Naval captain by the name of Captain Bly was assigned to go to these islands in the South Pacific to bring back a certain fruit called the bread fruit so that it could be transferred to the Caribbean to feed the slaves, as it was part of the British empire at that time.

Mr. Speaker, these islands are currently in tremendous turmoil, as has been witnessed by the American people and throughout the world, of what has happened in the eve of the recent decision made by President Chirac in June that the Government of France was going to resume nuclear testing in the South Pacific. And the proposed plan by President Chirac was that for the 8-month period, once each month the Government of France was going to explode one nuclear bomb each up to the equivalent of 10 times the power of the bomb that we dropped in Hiroshima 50 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I am sad to say that this new testing program began a couple of days ago and as a result of that, riots broke out in the city of Papeete. The main airport was closed and the island of Tahiti was at a standstill.

Now the tremendous uproar, Mr. Speaker. Everybody is pointing fingers at everybody. President Chirac recently, by the media, is pointing fingers at Australia and New Zealand and other countries for causing all these riots to occur. New Zealand and Australia are saying, no, Mr. Chirac, you are to blame for this thing that has happened now to the people of Papeete and the French Polynesians.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the American people are aware of the fact that this is the same situation that occurred in the early 1960's when our Government also exploded some of the most powerful nuclear bombs the world has ever witnessed in the islands of Micronesia.

I recall in 1954 we exploded what was known as the bravo shot, in which we exploded the first hydrogen bomb that was 50 megatons, and let me explain this to the American people and to my colleagues. The power of this bomb that we exploded on the island of Bikini was 1,000 times more powerful than the bomb that we dropped in Hiro-

shima. As a result of that bomb, 300 men, women and children on the islands of Rongelap and Utirik just playing on the ocean floor, not even knowing exactly what was happening, and the sad part of this legacy and the story in our own country, Mr. Speaker, our officials knew that the winds had shifted but they did not stop the detonation of that bomb. And as a result of that, as a result of that, these people were directly impacted by nuclear contamination because of what we did to them.

Mr. Speaker, to this day, these people are still suffering, still suffering from radioactive contamination, having the highest rates of cancer, leukemia. You can call it what you may, but these people are still suffering and no amount of money our Government could ever give these people will bring them back to normal health.

Mr. Speaker, this is the same problem the people of the Pacific have been fighting for years, and by our own admission, by our own admission, in 1963 we said, hey, we better not do this any more, it is hurting the environment. We conducted some serious atmospheric tests in Micronesia, underground, on the ground, under the reefs. We have done it and we found out that ecologically it was not suitable, and this is the reason why we did these tests now underground in the State of Nevada.

Mr. Speaker, we advised our friends from France, you cannot do this in the atolls of these islands in the Pacific Ocean. The Pacific Ocean is not a stagnant pool. It is an ocean that constantly moves, like what we call the Humboldt Current, and by doing this, our good friend, President DeGaulle, said, no, we are going to do it.

So for the past 20 years, the Government of France has exploded over 240 nuclear bombs on these islands in French Polynesia, mainly on these two atolls known as the Moruroa and the Fangataufa atolls.

Mr. Speaker, on Moruroa atoll, the Government of France has exploded over 163 nuclear bombs; and 8 more nuclear bombs, Mr. Speaker, that atoll is going to collapse, and when that contamination comes out of that atoll, it is not just the 200,000 French Polynesians that are going to be affected by it, but the whole Pacific Ocean.

Mr. Speaker, somehow we have taken a very passive view of the seriousness of the situation, and Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues and the American people, something has got to be done. President Chirac has got to get the message. What he is doing is wrong. It is morally wrong and it is time that we stop this madness.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There being no further requests for morning business, pursuant to clause 12, rule I, the House will stand in recess until 12 noon.