

AIR SHOW TRAGEDY IN LVIV, UKRAINE

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 4, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of the victims of the world's worst air show disaster. On July 27th, a Ukrainian SU-27 fighter jet crashed into a crowd of spectators at an air show outside Lviv in Western Ukraine, killing 85, including 23 children, and wounding 116 more. The plane's two pilots lost control of the fighter during complicated maneuvers and managed to eject just before impact. The severity of injuries varied and many still remain hospitalized, while the cause of the crash is being investigated.

Considering there were thousands of spectators attending the air show, the damage could have been much worse. However, given the recent series of tragic accidents in Ukraine, most significantly, several deadly mine explosions, I commend the spirit of the Ukrainian people and their resilience in the face of overwhelming tragedy. I also offer my prayers and profound condolences to those families having suffered losses of loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, the entire world witnessed during the September 11th attacks on this Nation. Oftentimes when people are faced with tragedy and adversity, there are also extraordinary actions of heroism and generosity. Within the first hours following the air show tragedy, the Ukrainian Federation of America mobilized international relief efforts. They coordinated with medical institutions and individual physicians and technicians who agreed to provide medical treatment, relief supplies and transport free of charge. This remarkable humanitarian effort has greatly improved the prognosis for many of the victims. In addition, many Ukrainian-American organizations have established bank accounts to collect donations for a victim-relief fund.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to help in this critical endeavor and to pray for the victims and their families to speed their healing.

HONORING GEARDÓID Ó MAOILEOIN

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 4, 2002

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Gerry Malone, President and past Vice-President of the Irish National Teachers Organization (INTO).

After earning a teaching degree from St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, in 1966, Mr. Malone returned to his local parish as Principal of Bellurgan NS. In recognition of his professionalism and dedication to education, Mr. Malone was later appointed Principal of Rampark NS, the school he attended as a youth. Mr. Malone continued in that capacity for 27 years.

For many years now, Mr. Malone has been active in the INTO. He represented the primary teachers of Cavan, Monaghan, and Louth. As a representative, Mr. Malone has

been actively involved in all the major education issues that have faced the organization.

Outside of work, Mr. Malone enjoys music, musicals, Gaelic games, and traveling. And aside from education, Mr. Malone's other great passion is mountain walking. Mr. Malone and his wife Jo have two children, Clodagh and Feargal. They are the proud grandparents of Aisling and Donal Carthy.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the entire U.S. House of Representatives joins me in thanking Mr. Malone for his steadfast commitment to the educational system of Ireland and for his service as President of INTO.

NAVAL MANDATE PRESENTS OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICAN FARMERS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 4, 2002

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues an important environmental initiative, which impacts the U.S. Navy. In 1987, Congress mandated that the U.S. naval submarines eliminate the dumping of plastic waste by 2008. This requirement presents a unique opportunity for the commercial development of biomass products to replace the use of plastics on our submarines. Further research was done on this subject as a summer project in the 2002 Office of Naval Research (ONR) Science and Engineering Apprenticeship Program (SEAP). This summer, as one of the SEAP participants, Christina Lieberman, an incoming Stanford University freshman, authored a report on the viability of biomass products as an alternative to plastics on submarines. Her report suggests that biomass products may offer significant opportunities to aid the Navy in reaching its 2008 mandate but it may also provide new economic markets for corn and soybean farmers. A summary of Christina's report is listed below. I commend it to my colleagues' attention for future consideration about how our nation's farmers can help to solve this environmental mandate for the U.S. Navy.

POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS FOR BIODEGRADABLE PLASTIC IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY FLEET AS A METHOD TO MEET MARPOL 73/78, MPPRCA, AND APPS REGULATIONS

(By Christina Lieberman)

First implemented in 1983, the international marine pollution prevention agreement known as MARPOL 73/78 dictates that all signing nations must comply with Annexes I and II, which prohibit vessels from dumping oil and bulk noxious liquids, respectively. The United States has further agreed to comply with Annex V, which bans vessels from dumping plastic waste. To enforce this agreement at home and to extend jurisdiction to all vessels in U.S. command (including military vessels) and in U.S. territorial waters and exclusive economic zones, Congress passed Title II in Public Law 100-220—formally titled Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act (MPPRCA)—on 29 December 1987. Written later, the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (APPS) with amendments current to 1 November 1998, requires all Naval surface ships to comply with Annex V by 31 December 1998 and all submarines by 31 December 2008.

The U.S. Navy is currently developing and refining pollution prevention procedures to

process and store plastics onboard. Most surface ships are currently outfitted with at least one Plastic Waste Processor (PWP), and crews have reported success with this method; ships without PWPs find other ways to retain plastic waste. Researchers at the Naval Surface Warfare Center—Carderock Division (NSWC-CD) are currently testing compaction and storage methods for submarine plastic management in four demonstration projects. While surface ship and submarine crews have reported success with their respective waste processes, replacing petroleum-based plastic with biodegradable products may be a more effective and environmentally responsible solution.

While the Navy's current methods to make surface ships and submarines compliant with MARPOL 73/78 and MPPRCA are feasible and successful, they are only short-term solutions. Bioplastic is environmentally responsible, and with enough funding, research, and development, it could soon run at full-scale production levels and become a commercially viable replacement for petroleum-based plastic in most applications. Biodegradable plastic may be the Navy's long term solution to environmental regulation compliance. Additional funding is necessary, however, to launch demonstration of feasibility projects and to further research in bioplastic applications within the Navy. Although bioplastic products offer the most convenience to submarine waste processing, biodegradable plastic is just as applicable and as beneficial to surface ships.

Not only would further research and development to promote biodegradable plastic help the Navy, but the nation would also profit from such technology. The following lists the key advantages of bio-based plastics:

Corn farmers often overproduce, and as agricultural biotechnology advances to further increase crop yield, productivity will double in the near future. Bio-based technology provides another market for corn crops.

Commercializing bio-based plastics from domestically grown crops allows American citizens to profit and releases pressure to import petroleum from the Middle East.

Biodegradable plastic encourages the growth of municipal composting plants and slows accumulation of trash in landfills.

Production and use of biodegradable plastic create much less air pollution and greenhouse gases than petroleum-based plastic. Plants create their carbohydrates from atmospheric carbon dioxide. Bioplastic factories extract this carbon to create the polymer. When biodegradable plastics decompose, the released carbon dioxide is returned to the atmosphere, thus completing the cycle. Petroleum products use carbon compounds from the ground and release them into the air; no new carbon dioxide is introduced to the air with biodegradable polymers.

After the necessary parts of crops are used to create the biodegradable polymer, residual biomass can be burned cleanly to generate energy.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO FALLEN OREGON FIREFIGHTERS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 4, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute today to the life and memory of five courageous firefighters. The wildfires, that have swept through Colorado, Oregon and other western states, have engulfed thousands of acres, requiring the assistance of brave

firefighters from across the nation. Today we honor Jacob Brent Martindale, Daniel Rama, Retha Mae Shirley, Zachary Zigich, and Bartholomew Bailey, all dedicated, heroic, brave individuals who selflessly sacrificed personal safety, and ultimately their lives for the state of Colorado and fellow citizens of our nation. I honor the legacy of each fallen firefighter, and praise the accomplishments their selfless dedication has brought to our country.

It is with great sadness that I recount the lives of each, and express my condolences to their friends and family. Zachary Zigich, 18 years of age, was a resident of Twin Falls, Idaho; he was an athletically talented individual who excelled in tennis, football, and music. He was the middle child of two siblings, and the son of Mike and Angie Zigich. He was an emphatic individual who provided his firefighting skills and services nobly to his community.

Jacob Brent Martindale, 20 years of age, was a resident of Boise, Idaho. His devotion to nature and environmental protection explains his courageous dedication to firefighting. When not working, Jacob could be found in the wilderness fishing, hiking, kayaking, and mountain biking. He was a wonderful friend to many, and he graduated with honors from Centennial High School.

Bartholomew Bailey, 20 years of age, was a resident of Corvallis, Oregon and excelled as a skilled, knowledgeable firefighter. Although young in age, he surpassed all expectations and impressed his colleagues with numerous accomplishments. Bartholomew was noted as an exceptional vocalist participating in numerous chamber chorale performances. Additionally, he was an exquisite performer on stage, awing crowds and packed theaters.

Retha Mae Shirley, 19 years of age, was a resident of La Grande, Oregon who had a flare for exploration. Whether rain or shine, Retha was a dependable asset and a key member of her firefighting team. Truly, her death is an enormous loss to her peers, and a saddening time for her friends and family. Retha was studying at the Oregon Institute of Technology's nursing program, working with steadfast determination toward her goal to become a doctor. Her brother Jesse and parents Larry and Linda survive her.

Daniel Rama, 28 years of age, was a resident of Baker City, Oregon, and lived his existence to fight fires. Dan returned the previous evening from two extensive weeks of "Fire Prevention Training." Dan was an exceptional student in school, and well respected by his peers. Although his family grieves his loss, they embrace the memories of joy and comfort he provided. Dan was a valiant firefighter, who devoted his life toward the service of his community. It is an honor to acknowledge someone of such great integrity and character.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a sincere heart, I commend these five individuals as honorable leaders, patriots, and loyal, dignified servicemen and woman of our firefighting community. It is with a heavy heart, we pay tribute to each person who gave their life so selflessly for the great people of Colorado. I mention each of their names and achievements briefly, but in truth, they each deserve more recognition than I can offer today. Each courageous firefighter nobly surrendered their lives in defense of our nation's forests, and I am honored to pay tribute and remembrance in this body of Congress, and before this nation's forests and

people who live nearby and I am honored to pay tribute in this body of Congress, and before this nation to their sacrifice.

Though each of these young firefighters is no longer with us, their impact will continue to be felt in the lives of the many they touched and remembered by the thousands they worked to protect.

CONTINUING CRISIS IN FOSTER CARE

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 4, 2002

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago Los Angeles County's foster care system was sued by advocates for children alleging that negligence, mismanagement, and abuse and neglect of children are routinely committed by that agency. More specifically, the suit charged that many thousands of foster care children with behavioral, emotional, and psychiatric impairments desperately need, but are not being provided, medically necessary mental health, behavioral support, and case management services, as required by federal law.

When that lawsuit was filed on July 18th, I pointed out to Members of Congress that the allegations described in the lawsuit were not unique to California. States across the country are failing children in foster care. Since that time, officials in the District of Columbia have confirmed that several foster care boys were sexually abused at various group home facilities, including one for mentally retarded foster children. Florida's Department of Children and Families acknowledged that in addition to its inability to account for some 532 foster care children, children have been placed in motels due to shortage of foster homes.

In the following article in the August 22nd Washington Post, an audit of Maryland's child welfare system reveals that the state has lost track of some foster care children for months and failed to ensure proper health care. In one case, a child spent 10 months in the care of a foster parent whose criminal record included two sex offenses and an assault charge. Just as in Los Angeles, the Maryland audit also revealed that foster care children were routinely denied basic health care, including doctor's visits, dental checkups, and psychiatric treatment.

We cannot continue to spend billions of dollars on a system that does not provide what children need to thrive, or in some cases, even to survive. The government must require greater accountability to ensure the health and safety of every child in its custody.

The article follows:

[From the Washington Post, August 22, 2002]
AUDIT FINDS LAPSES IN MARYLAND CHILD CARE—CONTACT LOST WITH CHILDREN; ONE PLACED WITH OFFENDER

(By Matthew Mosk)

The Maryland state agency responsible for 12,000 orphaned, abused and neglected children has lost track of some children for months, failed to ensure proper health care and, in at least one case, entrusted a foster child to a sexual offender, a comprehensive review by the state's Office of Legislative Audits has concluded.

The review reported "significant concerns" about Maryland's Social Services Administration and found numerous instances of neglect on the part of the state's social workers. In nearly half of 163 cases randomly chosen for inspection, caseworker's files showed that they had lost contact with the children and their caregivers for anywhere from two to 16 months.

Child advocates said that particular finding was an unsettling reminder of the case of a 5-year-old Miami girl who was missing for 15 months before caseworkers discovered that she was gone.

"The degree to which we are at risk of repeating [the Florida tragedy] is unconscionable," said James P. McComb, executive director of the Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth, which made up of agencies that serve children.

Maryland's troubles are also a reminder of similar woes in the District, where the child protection system has long been considered one of the most dysfunctional in the nation.

The Maryland audit included other, equally disturbing findings pertaining to the agency's ability to keep tabs on the people entrusted with children's safety and well-being. At one point, in the midst of conducting the review, the audit team discovered that a child had spent 10 months in the care of a foster parent whose criminal record includes two sex offenses and an assault charge. After being notified by auditors, social workers moved the child.

The case was later revealed to be part of a broader problem: Files contained no evidence of mandated criminal background checks for caregivers in 45 percent of the cases the audit team reviewed.

Lapses on the part of social workers also extended to the medical care that was supposed to be provided to children. Basic health care, including doctors' visits and psychiatric treatment, appeared to have been neglected in one-third of the cases the auditors reviewed, and there was no evidence of dental checkups in the files of 68 percent of the children.

Moreover, there was no sign that 35 percent of the children in state custody were attending school.

In a written response to the audit, Maryland Secretary of Human Resources Emelda P. Johnson pledged improvement and said local social services departments have been informed of the findings. Asked yesterday about the findings in a telephone interview, state social services officials blamed paperwork problems for many of the shortcomings.

"The issue here is documentation, not whether something actually happened but whether it was in the folder," said Linda E. Mouzon, executive director of the Social Services Administration.

The audit, however, concludes that the problem not only involves documentation but also "raises significant questions about the actual monitoring and delivery of critical services."

Several of the attorneys charged with representing the children's interests in court agreed that the shortcomings are not merely bureaucratic snags.

"There's no excuse for children in the state's care to be living in the same condition that prompted them to be removed from their homes in the first place, but that's what we're seeing," said Joan Little, who heads the child advocacy unit of the Legal Aid Bureau in Baltimore, which handles more than 5,000 of the children's legal cases each year.

Little said she has personally witnessed cases involving children whom the state agency mistakenly placed in the homes of criminal sex offenders and who then became