

as backup commander for the Apollo 10 flight;

Whereas Gordon Cooper logged 222 hours in space and retired from the Air Force and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in 1970;

Whereas the special honors Gordon Cooper received during his lifetime included the Air Force Distinguished Flying Cross, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Distinguished Service Medal, and the John F. Kennedy Trophy; and

Whereas Gordon Cooper passed away at his home in Ventura, California, on October 4, 2004, at the age of 77: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives honors the life of astronaut Leroy Gordon Cooper, Jr.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, during this Congress, the President has laid out a bold plan to return men to the moon and then go on to Mars as we begin to explore the wonders of our solar system, a vision that would not be possible were it not for a group of exceptional men who stepped forward to accept our Nation's Manifest Destiny of the 20th century. In those very early days some 45 years ago, we were behind in the race into space. The Russians had put the first satellite into orbit, sent the first living creature into space, and were the first to send an object to the Moon. American prestige was suffering around the world, and President Eisenhower and the Congress realized that things had to change.

In response to that challenge, they created NASA and along with it, Project Mercury, the initial step that got us to the moon first. But those were difficult days. Our scientists and engineers were struggling to build rockets that were capable of lifting the heavy payloads needed to get us there, and those rockets would explode in gigantic fireballs almost as often as they didn't. Being strapped inside a flying bomb and hurled into space at 17,000 miles an hour was hazardous duty of the highest order, but in April 1959, the Nation chose seven courageous men who were willing to put the interests of the Nation ahead of their own.

One of these was Leroy Gordon Cooper, Jr., a native of Shawnee, OK, a colonel in the U.S. Air Force and a test pilot who logged more than 7,000 hours flying time—4,000 of which were in jet aircraft. They called him "Gordo", and in May 1963, he became the first American to orbit the earth for more than a day. Two years later along with astronaut Peter Conrad, Gordon Cooper set a new space endurance record by traveling more than 3 million miles as the command pilot of the Gemini 5 mission and demonstrated for the first time that men could live and work in space long enough to make the trip to the Moon and back.

He continued to support our national goal of landing a man on the Moon by serving as the backup command pilot for the Gemini 12 mission in 1966 and as backup commander for the Apollo 10 trip to the moon in 1969, logging a total of 222 hours in space and receiving a number of special honors along the way before he retired in 1970.

Mr. Speaker, I remain convinced that the exploration of space in many ways holds the key to our future here on earth. Just as it was when Gordon Cooper first went into space more than 40 years ago, space travel remains a dangerous business. We have experienced some setbacks along the way, and yet it remains our destiny. In future years as we ex-

ploring the moon and beyond, the successes that we will enjoy and the wonders that we will find on the other side will have been made possible by the courage and devotion to country of men like Gordon Cooper, and it is with great pleasure that I rise today in support of House Resolution 847 to honor his gifts to our Nation.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 847.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will recognize Members for Special Order speeches without prejudice to the possible resumption of the legislative business.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. DUNCAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. STUPAK addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BOOZMAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. ORTIZ addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. DOGGETT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. REYES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. GONZALEZ addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. GREEN of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. HINOJOSA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. EDWARDS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

OCEAN POLICY

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

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans have been in the majority for basically 10 years, and we have done a number of very positive things. What I would like to speak to this august body about tonight is an issue of oceans.

In 1994, when the Republican majority took over, they began to reorganize the committee process. At that time, they wanted to make it more applicable to the Members to represent their districts, to represent their regions and to be more efficiently organized, to spend the taxpayers dollars wisely.

What we did, however, was to consider that we will continue to reorganize the process as the years went by to ensure that Members had an opportunity to serve on the committee that not only represented their districts, but that also represented their desire to be a visionary Member of this Congress.

□ 1945

One of the committees that was eliminated was the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee that dealt with oceans issues, fisheries issues, the Great Lakes and things of that nature.

The reason that one single standing committee was important was because there are billions and billions and billions of dollars that are generated in the U.S. economy as a result of the world's, and especially the jurisdiction of the oceans, that fall in the United States, of the oceans, whether that is trade, whether that is commercial fisheries, recreational fisheries, marine habitat, the weather, the climate, the

rain that sustains the country. All of these issues are dealt with because of ocean and Great Lakes issues.

The committee, however, was reduced to a subcommittee and put under the jurisdiction of the Interior Committee which was renamed the Committee on Resources.

There is still a great deal of effort to put forth a good ocean policy by the Federal Government. However, since the full committee was reduced to a subcommittee, much of the jurisdiction was taken away. On the House side, there are 19 full and subcommittees that deal with a myriad of ocean issues; and, as a result of that, even though committees work well together in their area of jurisdiction, the issues dealing with oceans are relegated to a very small piece of any one single committee, even the Committee on Resources, where that full standing committee became a subcommittee.

Because the issues are so fragmented, there is no one particular center of gravity to develop policy, in my judgment, for the U.S. ocean policy.

What I am suggesting that we do in the next Congress is that we create a standing committee that has full jurisdiction over the oceans, that takes that \$120 billion annual economy that is generated by oceans, that deals with the commercial fishing activity from Alaska to Hawaii, to the Pacific, to the Gulf of Mexico, to the Atlantic Ocean, an area whose jurisdiction is larger than the 50 States combined. We take all of those issues and we combine it into one full committee, and that one full committee will have jurisdiction over the issues that are dealt with as far as the oceans are concerned.

Let us just take commercial fishing activity, for example. Everybody has gone into a store and purchased fish. Everybody has gone into a restaurant and ordered fish. That generates billions upon billions of economic activity. But 75 percent of the commercial fish caught in U.S. waters spawn in tidal estuaries, and one of the problems with tidal estuaries is they are being polluted. They are being fragmented. They are being dammed. They are being degraded in a whole host of ways. And there is not really one single entity in the Federal Government that can work with the State government, the private sector and various groups to take a look at the loss, which is as much as 20,000 acres on an annual basis.

So just on the perspective of an economic agenda I feel confident that an oceans committee, which would be the center for the perspective on developing coordinated U.S. policy on oceans issues, is vital in the next Congress.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues, when this comes up for an issue, to vote favorably in this direction.

ASKING ADMINISTRATION TO URGE A U.S. VOTE AGAINST AZERBAIJAN'S U.N. RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to bring to our attention Azerbaijan's recent introduction of an ill-advised United Nations General Assembly resolution regarding what Azerbaijan erroneously refers to as "the situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan."

This intentionally disruptive resolution directly and significantly threatens efforts towards a peaceful settlement over the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict. Furthermore, it jeopardizes the principles and procedures of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and specifically the Minsk Group mediation effort, co-chaired by the United States, France and Russia, to resolve the Karabagh conflict.

Azerbaijan's proposal represents a hostile declaration against the entire peace process, aimed only at fostering increased divisiveness. Its consideration can only set back the cause of peace.

Mr. Speaker, it is disturbing to note that this resolution was recently approved to be included on the U.N. General Assembly's agenda. Even more alarming is the fact that the United States has thus far failed to compellingly address the resolution, choosing to instead abstain from every vote in which they had an opportunity to halt the advancement of this destructive measure. This failure by the administration now has the potential to undermine U.S. interests and American values in the strategically important Caucasus region.

Mr. Speaker, the vital role the United States plays as an honest broker in the Nagorno-Karabagh peace process is gravely threatened by the administration's continued lack of decisive action. Given our commitment to keeping the parties talking and moving forward, it is necessary for the U.S. to act forcefully against destabilizing steps that will unravel the peace process. Our interests are best served by the continuation of dialogue on the outstanding issues related to Nagorno-Karabagh within the OSCE framework and not by the fragmentation of this orderly process.

Since the beginning of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict, Armenia has been committed to finding a peaceful solution. Moreover, I cannot stress enough the crucial role that the U.S. plays in the negotiations over Nagorno-Karabagh to help the people of this region find a lasting and equitable peace. These actions by Azerbaijan subvert these efforts and seriously complicate our diplomacy in the Caucasus region. A failure on our part to forcefully and