

city to celebrate its history and its heritage.

And Mayor Torigian's commitment to senior citizens has been unwavering. He created the Peabody Community Life Center, a remarkable center for seniors on the North Shore to gather and enhance their quality of life.

All of us in Massachusetts are grateful for Mayor Torigian's distinguished service to the City of Peabody and to our State, and we're grateful for his friendship. We know that his commitment to public service will continue in other ways, and he will be deeply missed.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New York.

THE LOSS OF FLIGHT 587

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise today to express profound sorrow for the loss of life caused by the tragic crash of American Airlines flight 587 in the residential community of Belle Harbor, Rockaway, Queens, and the loss of 246 passengers and 9 crewmembers who were traveling to the Dominican Republic, as well as the loss of life on the ground where the plane crashed. It has added to the immeasurable sadness that New York and America have been forced to bear since the horrific events of September 11.

It is impossible to speak about the destruction that happened yesterday without recognizing the overwhelming sacrifices of the residents of the Rockaways. They have already contributed greatly to the defense of our city and our Nation. The families in this part of Queens have had to attend more funerals in the past 2 months than anyone should have to bear. They have lost many people who worked at the World Trade Center, as well as the numerous firefighters and police officers who make up this close-knit community. The courage and the values of these New Yorkers, these Americans, these public servants, have brought comfort to so many and have stood as a shining example of what is best of America.

I think it is fair to say that our entire country stands in awe of their acts of bravery and self-sacrifice. It was doubly tragic to see the loss of life in this accident and to know that it happened in an area where lives were just beginning to resume some sense of normalcy and then were so horribly disrupted again.

As I walked around the crash area with FEMA Director Joe Allbaugh yesterday, I was able to show him a neighborhood that I think came as a bit of a surprise. Joe has done a very good job, just a terrific job as our FEMA Director, in the time he has been in that position. He responded with just great dispatch and compassion to the World Trade Center attacks.

I think being in Lower Manhattan and seeing the community there was

one view of New York. But being in Belle Harbor, seeing the single-family homes that could be found in so many other communities around our country, was a reminder of the diversity that is New York. We have so many different kinds of neighborhoods. Yet in every one of them we will find people who are stalwart, steadfast, and willing to work hard and play by the rules, and who oftentimes have contributed to the greatness of that city and, in turn, our State and country.

Senator SCHUMER, Congressman WEINER, and I will be asking FEMA to include this tragedy in Queens as part of the presidentially declared disaster. We believe the members of these affected communities, including the Dominican community in Washington Heights, Brooklyn, and elsewhere, and the Rockaway neighborhood where the plane fell to Earth, should have access to the disaster services they need and deserve.

Although all of us in New York and America experienced a terrible shock yesterday upon learning of the crash, we know there was one particular segment of our community that was very hard hit. Initial estimates indicate that anywhere from 150 to 175 of the passengers on board flight 587 were Dominican-Americans, or Dominicans. New York's Dominican community, which is centered in Washington Heights, is a strong and vibrant cultural sector tucked into northern Manhattan, almost on the opposite end of where the World Trade Center once stood.

Our Dominican community, with all of its excitement, its energy, its culture, and colorful history, has contributed greatly to the soul of New York City. Dominican-Americans have made many contributions to business and the arts, to labor and politics, and their contributions are really just beginning. They have also maintained strong ties with the Dominican Republic and the people who live there.

Although it is growing rapidly, New York City's Dominican community is renowned for its smalltown feeling in a city obviously famous for its huge size. But a tragedy such as the one that happened yesterday reverberated across the entire community because virtually everyone knows someone who has lost a loved one.

The community's response to this latest tragedy has been an outpouring of relief. We have seen that a crisis center for families has been already set up in Washington Heights. We have seen Dominican-American elected officials rallying around, serving their constituents. We know the kind of efforts that will be undertaken by the Dominican-American community will bring great comfort and support to those who have lost loved ones.

Now we have to do whatever we can as the larger New York and American

community to stand with and support these families. I spent some time last night at the Ramada Inn, that was set up at JFK Airport for the families to come seeking information and help. It was a grueling and wrenching experience. Many of the families there lost not just one member but several. I met one young man who lost his wife, his daughter, and his mother-in-law because they were going to the Dominican Republic to attend the funeral of a relative.

I met another young man who proudly held the picture of his brother who had just gotten back from his tour of duty on the U.S.S. *Enterprise* in support of our efforts in Afghanistan. He had just come back home and was going down to see friends and relatives. His family was so proud of this young man who had served our country.

There are many stories such as that which we will hear over the days and weeks ahead.

Of course, all that any of us can do is to promise our support and whatever assistance is needed; to offer our thoughts and our prayers; to stand with the government and the people of the Dominican Republic for whom this is a profound and unsettling tragic occurrence; to demonstrate clearly in all that we do that we will stand in the face of whatever comes; that New Yorkers are neither daunted nor beaten down by the continuation of tragedy and challenge; and that our determined spirit as Americans remains undiminished.

I look forward to working with the administration and my colleagues in ensuring that these New Yorkers, like those who were affected on September 11, know that our country stands behind them and with them.

Thank you, Madam President.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that for the next 30 minutes we be in a period of morning business with the majority controlling 15 minutes and the minority controlling 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. NICKLES. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I ask the assistant Democrat leader what the intention is at the conclusion of morning business.

Mr. REID. Madam President, at this stage, there is discussion between Senators DASCHLE and LOTT. They will decide within the next 30 minutes what is going out. I thought rather than bounce back and forth and asking permission to go to morning business that we should go off the bill for half an hour, go back to it, and maybe come back in the morning. The two leaders have been visiting. They will decide what is going to happen later tonight.