

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, November 13, 2001

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WHITFIELD).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 13, 2001.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ED WHITFIELD to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H. Con. Res. 130. Concurrent Resolution authorizing printing of the book entitled "Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Congress".

H. Con. Res. 264. Concurrent Resolution expressing the sense of Congress to welcome the Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, on the occasion of his visit to the United States, and to affirm that India is a valued friend and partner and an important ally in the campaign against international terrorism.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2001, 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 leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

AVIATION SECURITY

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, it has been 2 months since terrorists used our civilian airliners as weapons of mass destruction. Yet we have not made major changes in aviation security here in the United States Congress. A few steps have been taken by executive order, by the FAA administrator, by orders from the President and the Sec-

retary of Transportation. Reinforcement of flight deck doors. We have got people looking over the shoulders of the private security firms, whatever good that does if you do not watch them every second of every day. But the major things that need to be done need to be done by statute, by change in the law. Yet it is not yet done.

How could it take so long? Well, there is a major hang-up and the major hang-up is that the majority whip and the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), are adamantly and absolutely opposed to true federalization of aviation security at the airports, that is, taking the failing private security firms, putting them out of business, which is what they deserve, and bringing in Federal law enforcement just like we have outside the doors of this Chamber and at many other Federal installations to provide security around the country to make certain that people do not bring weapons on board airplanes and smuggle weapons or bombs into baggage and other critical areas of the airports.

They say, well, we will more closely supervise those private firms. Well, the record is pretty miserable. Since September 11, there have been 24 incidents, major breaches of airport security by these same private firms. Twenty-four in 2 months. That is better than they usually do because actually over the last 5 years they have averaged one breach that was finable or prosecutable a day for the last 5 years. So they are doing better. About 50 percent of the days, they are doing a pretty good job, or at least as far as we know.

But the failures are pretty notable: the guy with the seven knives, the stun gun and the mace in Chicago; the honest passenger on board Southwest Airlines who rang his call button and asked the flight attendant to come and take his loaded gun because he forgot it was in his briefcase and opened his briefcase on the plane; the concourses and planes that had to be returned to concourses because people were waved through security. At Logan, one of the Argenbright folks actually saw a weapon go through the screening device, but they were in the middle of their nap or their trance; and the person was long gone down the concourse before they said, oh, wait a minute, I saw a knife or a weapon about 5 minutes ago, and they had to empty out the concourse.

They say they will do better. I do not believe that these firms will do better. They say they will be better super-

vised. What is better supervision than probation? Argenbright, the largest private security firm in the United States of America, owned by Securicor of Europe, was last year convicted, criminally convicted. Unfortunately, none of their executives went to jail. That might have gotten their attention. They did not. But they were criminally convicted of hiring known felons, maintaining known felons on staff, falsifying documents of the Federal Government regarding the training of employees and the background checks of employees. They were fined \$1.5 million and put on probation. Well, guess what? About a month ago, they were found to be in violation of their probation. For doing what? Hiring and maintaining known felons on staff, falsifying Federal documents. They are going to be fined again, and their probation is going to be extended.

This is closer supervision? What closer supervision can you provide, except, as I said, maybe to put some of these executives of these failing private firms in jail, you will get their attention. Maybe that would shape them up. But I think the cleaner way to deal with this is the way we deal with other Federal Government law enforcement functions, and, that is, to admit it is a law enforcement function and put qualified law enforcement personnel in all of the critical places, in all our airports to assure the safety of the flying public.

Two months is way too long to delay. And it will be extraordinary if because of the opposition to Federal law enforcement by a few Members of the majority that this Congress before the busiest travel weekend of the year, Thanksgiving, does not act in the long-term interests of security and the flying public. We have an opportunity this week. The bill must get done.

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S PATTERN OF DISTURBING ACTIONS IN MIDST OF BATTLE AGAINST TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Speaker, I am troubled by the pattern that appears to be emerging within the U.S. Justice Department under the leadership of the Attorney General of deviating from what ought to be the course of action

□ 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.