

## Worn part causes plane to crash

WASHINGTON (AP) — The failure of a severely worn part in a propeller control system was blamed Tuesday for last year's commuter plane crash that killed former Sen. John Tower, 72, Texas, and 22 others.



Tower

The National Transportation Safety Board said that the part's failure made the aircraft uncontrollable.

Atlantic Southeast Airlines flight 2311, a two-engine Embraer 120 built in Brazil, crashed on April 5, 1991, while approaching the Glynn County Airport at Brunswick, Ga. at a height of 2,300 feet. The

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dead included Tower; his daughter, Marian; and astronaut Manley Lanier (Sonny) Carter.

The safety board said the crew was not responsible for the accident and could have done nothing to prevent the crash.

While the board ruled that the malfunction of the propeller-control system on the left-wing engine was the probable cause of the crash, it also faulted Hamilton Standard, the manufacturer, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

The safety board said Hamilton Standard's propeller-control system design was deficient in that it did not anticipate the kind of failure that occurred in the Georgia crash.

The board said the FAA's

approval of the design also contributed to the accident.

A spokesman for Hamilton Standard said the company, a division of United Technologies, could not comment because it is being sued for damages by Tower's estate and the estates of other victims of the crash.

A month after the crash, the FAA ordered an emergency inspection of about 100 airplanes with the same type of propeller.

On at least 10 of the planes, a new type of hard, rough coating on a tube inside the propeller control system was found to have caused excessive wear on a companion part.

The board said the design was flawed because one three-inch part, called a quill, was softer than

the tube in which it was contained. The teeth of the tube became badly worn and essentially lost their grip.

"It acted like a file and over time it wore down the teeth that controlled the propeller unit," said acting safety board chairman Susan Coughlin.

The two parts disengaged, changing the angle of the propeller blades.

The safety board's report said that failure of the system caused a lift and drag condition "that exceeded the capability of the pilots to counteract with the airplane controls available."

Coughlin said the battering air currents "forced the aircraft into a left wing down position."

She said the problem has been corrected in aircraft with similar propeller-control systems.

## Justice department disapproves release of JFK documents

WASHINGTON (AP) — Legislation to release Kennedy assassination documents hit a snag Tuesday as the justice department, in a policy reversal for the Bush administration, came out "strongly" against the proposal.

Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls said in a letter made public Tuesday that the proposed House-Senate resolution "would severely encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information."

Rawls also raised national security concerns, saying that language clearing the way for the release of CIA and FBI documents could endanger intelligence methods and sources. And he said the bill would leave law enforcement and executive branch deliberations open to public scrutiny.

"We strongly object to the resolution in its current form," Rawls said. If passed, the justice department "would give serious consideration to recommending presidential disapproval."

Until Tuesday, top ranking Bush administration officials — including CIA Director Robert Gates and FBI chief William Sessions — had supported the legislation, saying they would cooperate with efforts to make public thousands of secret documents relating to the 1963 slaying of President Kennedy.

Rawls said the justice department is "sympathetic to the concerns" of a public anxious to know more about the assassination. Justice is drafting an alternative version. But the department's bill would broaden the president's power to withhold information and increase his control over the review process.

Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, said the letter from Rawls arrived Monday evening, the night before the committee's Legislation and National Security Subcommittee met to consider the bill.

He said justice department officials declined to attend the hearings. Gates was also invited but could not attend.

The specter of a presidential veto drew immediate criticism from Republicans and Democrats on the panel.

"I have a tremendous concern that we not compromise the bill in order to get something that is veto-proof," said Rep. Christopher Shays, R-Conn. "It's really hard for me to imagine what national security issues are at stake."

Shays' predecessor in Connecticut's 4th District, the late Rep. Stewart B. McKinney, wrote the first bill in the early 1980s proposing the release of assassination documents.

Rep. Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., said that if Bush vetoes the bill the House should act independently to release its classified documents "and set an example for the executive branch."

Under the proposed resolution, the federal appeals court in Washington would appoint a five-member citizen board to review and decide on the release of assassination documents. In cases involving executive agencies such as the FBI or CIA, the president could refuse to release material but only on narrow privacy or national security grounds.

"The thrust of the legislation is to release everything that is releasable," said Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, co-author of the bill and former chairman of the House assassinations committee of the late 1970s.

The review board's independence from the executive branch — the focus of the justice department's objection — is a central element of the bill, Stokes said.

"We thought it best to have an independent agency so that there would be no question of the public's mind" that decisions would be made "out of the realm of politics," Stokes said.

By opposing the legislation the justice department goes against a wave of public pressure.

## Investigators find abuses in state clinics

WASHINGTON (AP) — Private psychiatric hospital abuses — including paying "bounty hunters" to find patients — are among the most "scandalous episodes in the history of health care in America," the chair-woman of a House committee charged Tuesday.

"We cannot allow this kind of unconscionable ripoff to go on," Rep. Pat Schroeder said as she opened her committee's hearing on abuses by facilities in Texas, New Jersey and other states.

Psychiatric hospitals and clinics are milking the government and private insurers of hundreds of millions of dollars annually, Schroeder said.

The House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families has found thousands of cases where patients were hospitalized for psychiatric treatment they did not need, held against their will or wrongly diagnosed for the purpose of inflating billings, said Schroeder, D-Colo.

Patients were also abruptly released when their health insurance benefits expired, and military dependents were targeted for their generous coverage, she said.

The committee heard from Texas state Sen. Mike Moncrief, who is chairman of a Senate committee investigating widespread claims of patient abuse in the Texas psychiatric care industry.

"We have uncovered some of the most elaborate, aggressive, creative, deceptive, immoral and illegal schemes being used to fill empty hospital beds with insured and paying patients," said Moncrief, D-Fort Worth.

## Support for space station increases

WASHINGTON (AP) — Space Station Freedom's supporters in Congress say they are better prepared this year to repel the attack by those wanting to cancel federal funding for the proposed orbiting laboratory.

The space station came close to losing a life-or-death struggle last year, when the House Appropriations Committee slashed \$2 billion from the project. It took an intensive lobbying effort by the Bush administration and supporters to restore the money.

Round Two was due to begin Wednesday, with House consid-

eration of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration authorization bill.

And opponents say they too are prepared, though they realize they have an uphill battle on their hands.

"The space station . . . people have very wisely spread their project across the nation so that many districts benefit from this spending," said Rep. Richard Durbin, D-Ill., a leading space station opponent.

Another opponent, Rep. Tim Roemer, planned to introduce an amendment Wednesday to kill

funding for the space station. The Indiana Democrat opposes the project on grounds that it is too costly and its scientific benefits are too few.

Both sides agree the fight will be a tough one — largely because the space station and a sister science project, the superconducting supercollider, are due to grow at a time when domestic programs overall are shrinking by \$6.4 billion.

President Bush has requested \$2.25 billion for the space station in fiscal 1993, a 10 percent increase over this year.

## Afghan rebels declare Islamic government

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Najibullah, who was forced from power April 16 and hiding in Kabul, lost his grip on power after Moscow cut off arms supplies in January. The mujahedeen seized government positions around the country and then overran Kabul on Saturday.

The Red Cross said fighting killed at least 15 people and wounded nearly 300 by Tuesday morning.

The fighting slackened for a few hours Tuesday, but erupted again as soon as Mojaddidi formally accepted power.

Rocket and machine gun fire shook several parts of the city. The strongest attacks were aimed at Hekmatyar's troops at the Interior

Ministry and on a strategic southern ridge called Martyrs' Hill.

Columns of white and brown smoke rose near the Interior Ministry compound, and at least one office building there was burning. Masood loyalists in a bunker on a hill above town raked the area with heavy fire.

Gunfire and explosions also could be heard from east of the airport, and two large explosions were seen near the TV and radio towers in the southeast. A television cameraman was slightly wounded by shrapnel in a morning rocket attack on the airport.

Mojaddidi said the council was ready to accept Hekmatyar if he met its terms, but said if the radical guerrillas continued fighting, "this government, in accordance

with Muslim law will take action."

Mojaddidi promised amnesty for all sides in the Kabul fighting and in the civil war. When asked whether Najibullah was included, he said the council would let "the Afghan people decide."

Mojaddidi is to govern for two months, then give power for four months to Burhanuddin Rabbani, political leader of Masood's Jamiat-e-Islami party. A council then is to choose an interim government to oversee elections, expected within two years.

"The time has come to join hands and work for the reconstruction of our homeland," Mojaddidi told supporters, who repeatedly chanted "Allah Akbar" during the power-changeover.

## Court indicts former HUD aide

WASHINGTON (AP) — Deborah Gore Dean, a one-time top aide in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, was indicted Tuesday on charges of receiving an illegal gratuity and making a false statement to a Senate committee.

Dean, who wielded considerable power as the executive assistant to former Housing Secretary Samuel Pierce, is a central figure in the investigation of alleged influence-peddling at HUD during the Reagan administration.

A federal grand jury charged

her in a two-count felony indictment with receiving \$4,000 illegally in connection with a private request for HUD funds.

She also was accused of filing a false statement with a Senate committee in June 1987 related to her nomination to be an assistant HUD secretary. The nomination was never confirmed.

"I am innocent of all charges," Dean told reporters at a news conference. She maintained the indictment was "designed to intimidate and coerce me into pleading to a crime I did not do and then

to testify against others," including Pierce.

"I am not saying that there weren't bad apples at HUD," Dean said. "Some people sold influence." She refused to elaborate.

Independent Counsel Arlin Adams said in a statement that his office was continuing to investigate Dean's activities and that the indictment was brought now so the case would fall within the statute of limitations. Her attorney, Steven Wehner, said Dean refused to waive the statute of limitations and would not waive the right to a speedy trial.

Pierce has not been charged but Adams has been authorized to investigate whether he lied under oath to Congress about his work at HUD and whether he showed illegal political favoritism in administering HUD programs.

Pierce served during all eight years of the Reagan administration.

Dean, 37, worked for HUD from 1982 to 1987 and for the three years served as Pierce's executive assistant.

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