

education situation unless we have a critical mass. We need enough. One of the versions of charter schools is supposed to be that they will give competition to the traditional public schools.

What is the difference between charter schools and traditional public schools? It is not the funding base, because they both are supposed to be funded by taxpayers' money, fully funded. Charter schools are to receive a per capita amount, which is the same as the local education agency pays for their children. The only difference between charter schools and the local education agency's traditional schools would be in the governance and management. They would have to abide by all the rules and terms of any State requirements, requirements for integration, requirements for curriculum, everything would still be there for the charter schools. It is a matter of how they are governed and who is in charge of the management and what kind of things can you do if you are out from under the local bureaucracy and how much freedom for innovation will lead to real improvements, real change, and how much your freedom to govern as you see fit and manage as you see fit can allow you to do the things that have to be done to improve the schools without the burden of having to get approvals from people in the hierarchy on top of you. The great challenge is governance and management. Let us go on at the Federal level to create some incentives. Let us have a piece of legislation which provides incentives for charter schools. If the Speaker wants to do something about creating better opportunities for all children to learn, there is one area which there is agreement, charter schools, why do we not do something about it.

Opportunities to learn also involve, of course, children having a decent place to study. It is most unfortunate that the Speaker is concerned about creating better opportunities to learn for children and yet in the budget agreement that was made with the President at the White House, the initiative for construction of new schools and renovation of unsafe schools was taken out. \$5 billion over a 5-year period. That is all they proposed. \$5 billion over a 5-year period to help to renovate and repair and actually construct new schools. It would make a big difference in terms of opportunity to learn for all children. Because across America, according to the General Accounting Office, the GAO, \$120 billion is needed for school construction in the next 10 years, to rebuild the infrastructure of public schools. We are not talking about colleges and universities. Just elementary and secondary schools.

Why can we not have in a situation where we are adding billions to the defense budget, and yesterday we voted to continue the B-2 bomber, while we refused to reduce the budget for the CIA even though the cold war is over,

why can we not have \$5 billion over a 5-year period for school repair, renovation and construction? If the Speaker agrees and if he has on his list of 10 things that need to be done to promote race relations, to provide opportunities for individuals, then why can we not have an agreement to put back into the budget the \$5 billion initiative for school construction?

Another point, and I want to finish the Speaker's points and do justice to his points. Small business. Set a goal for tripling the number of minority-owned small businesses. I agree, Mr. Speaker, let us triple the number of minority-owned small businesses. He wants to bring successful small business leaders together to identify and then eliminate the government imposed barriers to entrepreneurship. That is what he says is the cause of the paucity of small businesses in the minority community. I agree with the goal. We need to triple the number of minority-owned small businesses. I do not agree with his concern about government-imposed barriers. I live in a community where small businessmen struggle all the time. I do not get any complaints about government barriers. The government does more to help than anything else. The complaint is against the private sector capital. They cannot get capital. Or they have to pass scrutiny that other businesses do not have to pass. All kinds of problems I hear about, I do not hear that the government has imposed barriers. That is an ideological blind spot that the Speaker is off into. It is not a minority business problem that we have too much regulation or government barriers. I have heard the speeches a thousand times about what is wrong with America. That has nothing to do with what is really impeding small business development in the minority community.

In summary, I think I have covered all the Speaker's points. His 10 proposals to improve race relations are to create better opportunities for all children to learn, to develop more minority businesses, to create 100 renewal communities, to clear the existing backlog of discrimination cases at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. He wants to make America a country, and I missed this one, he wants to make America a country with equal opportunity for all and special privileges for none by taking away all preferences, set-asides, and government contracts. We disagree on that one. That is clearly one we disagree on. I do not have time to explain why. The background of the history of the descendants of African-American slaves has to be considered when we talk about set-asides and special government programs for minorities. Racial classification is another he added here which I find very strange in this set of proposals. Racial classification. A first step should be taken to add a multiracial category to the census. He thinks that is very important to improve race

relations in America. I have no problem adding a multiracial category to the census. I do not know how it is going to improve race relations, because in the history of America, they have always insisted that anybody who had one drop of black blood was African-American. If you had one drop of black blood, you were deemed African-American. So these race classifications seem to me to be no solution.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I applaud Speaker GINGRICH for his rapid response to the President's challenge. We need more discussion on race relations. We certainly need powerful people like Speaker GINGRICH to make proposals as to what it is we should do, what we should do concretely. There are people out there who are dying because we are not acting fast enough. The death of Marsha Motipersad is just one example of how there is needless suffering because we have rushed into public policies and programs that are harmful to people. It is more than race relations. It is human relations, it is human rights, it is concern for human welfare. All this goes together.

I want to end on a positive note. Overall, I applaud the Speaker. I hope he will continue the dialogue and he will go and meet with the Commission the President has set up and I will come right behind him. I think that there are many areas that we agree on and that the President's initiative has shown that it has paid off already. The dialogue has begun.

IN HONOR OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS, HIS EXCELLENCY IMATA KABUA, AND THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HIS EXCELLENCY PHILLIP MULLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of our colleagues in the Congress to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, His Excellency Imata Kabua, and the Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Phillip Muller. Mr. Speaker, President Kabua and Foreign Minister Muller have been in Washington for meetings with the administration and our colleagues here in the Congress, representing the interests of the good people of the Marshall Islands.

His Excellency Imata Kabua was elected President of the Marshall Islands in January of this year. In his long distinguished career of public service, he has served as Senator in the Parliament or the Nitijela from 1979 to 1996, when he was appointed Minister representing the Ralik Chain of the Marshall Islands. President Kabua

presently occupies the rotating chairmanship of the South Pacific Forum of Nations, the preeminent political organization for the nations of the South Pacific.

His Excellency Phillip Muller was elected in 1984 and has likewise been a long-standing member of the Parliament or Nitijela in the Marshall Islands. He served as Minister and assistant to the President from 1984 to 1986, and 8 years as Minister of Education, until his assumption of duties as Foreign Minister for the Marshall Islands in 1994.

Mr. Speaker, on this occasion of their visit, I am extremely honored to salute these distinguished statesmen and leaders from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, one of our most cherished friends and sister democracies in the Pacific region. The people of the Marshall Islands and the United States share a close relationship that extends back over a half century. Our bonds were forged from World War II, when after heavy fighting in the Pacific, the United States liberated the Marshallese people from Japanese occupation.

For the next 4 decades through a United Nations strategic trust territory, the United States, as appointed trustee, provided for the administration of the Marshall Islands and Micronesia. Under the United Nations trust agreement, it was the obligation of the United States to "promote the development of the inhabitants of the trust territory toward self-government or independence, as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of the trust territory and its peoples of the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned."

Pursuing a desire for self-determination, the people of the Marshall Islands entered into a compact, a free association with the United States in 1986, emerging from the trust territory as the independent Republic of the Marshall Islands. Under the compact of free association, the relationship between the Marshalls and the United States is different from that we have with other governments. The United States agreed to provide development funding to the Marshalls for 15 years, and to provide for its defense and security. In exchange, the Marshalls promised the U.S. exclusive access to its islands for military purposes.

As a democratic government, the Marshall Islands has maintained excellent relationships with our country. In the international arena such as the United Nations, the Marshalls have worked closely with the United States and supported us on most important votes, including the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

Mr. Speaker, during the 5 decades of this extraordinary relationship, the people of the Marshall Islands bore a tremendously high burden of the costs of the Cold War to provide for America's defense and our policy on nuclear deterrence.

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Between the years 1946 and 1958 our Nation tested approximately 66 atomic and hydrogen nuclear bombs at Bikini and Enewetak Atolls in the Marshall Islands. In their destructive capacity the nuclear blasts literally vaporized six islands in the Marshalls.

Mr. Speaker, the most devastating test was the 15 megaton Bravo shot which is approximately over 1,300 times more destructive than the bombs our Nation dropped on Japan and Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. This single nuclear detonation on March 1, 1954, exceeded the combined strength of all weapons ever fired in the history of mankind. On the morning of the test the wind was blowing in the direction of two inhabited atolls, Rongelap and Utrik. Yet despite this knowledge the Pentagon chose not to delay the test. It is reprehensible, Mr. Speaker, that for days after the blast the men, women, and the children of the atolls of Rongelap and Utrik were not immediately evacuated but were forced to bathe unknowingly in the radioactive fallout. It is a sad and tragic chapter in our Nation's history what we did to these simple and innocent human beings.

The legacy of the United States nuclear testing program has resulted in a nightmare of health problems for the Marshallese people, including the elevated rates of thyroid cancer. Cervical cancer mortality rates are 60 times the U.S. rate; breast cancer mortality rates, 5 times greater than in the United States, and reproductive complications involving high rates of miscarriage and deformed stillborn babies.

Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder that half a century later the chain of islands is still considered one of the most contaminated places in the world. The residents of the Marshalls who inhabited Bikini Atoll still await a cleanup of the nuclear test site before they can return to their homes. The residents of Rongelap Island who were forced to abandon their homes since 1954 due to radioactive contamination likewise await cleanup efforts before returning to their island, and the people of Enewetak who have been forced to live in the southern portion of their island await resettlement of the north, which is still radioactive. Although the United States has allotted over \$300 million in cleanup and resettlement efforts for the atolls, the funds are substantially less than what is needed to complete the process.

Mr. Speaker, much of the attention was focused on the residents of Bikini, Enewetak, Rongelap, and Utrik Atolls. The radioactive fallout from the U.S. nuclear testing affected people throughout the rest of the Marshall Islands.

The Nuclear Claims Tribunal was created in 1991 to address these radiation victims. The allocated \$45 million the Nuclear Claims Tribunal has rejected over 4,000 claims while confirming only 1,000 claims. In so doing,

the tribunal has already exhausted its funds and projects valid personal injury claims for cancer and radiation-related illnesses to a total of over \$100 million. And not yet considered by the Tribunal are the claims to losses of properties and lands for our nuclear testing program.

Mr. Speaker, in response to this, I would submit that Section 177 of the Marshalls' Compact of Free Association may need to be invoked. Section 177 provides that the United States may consider additional nuclear test compensation in the face of changed circumstances from the information available to compact negotiators in the 1980's. Certainly, the Department of Energy's announced declassification of documents relating to our nuclear testing program in the Marshalls has shed new light on these issues. Moreover, recent scientific studies show that 15 atolls and islands in the Marshalls were exposed to significant amounts of nuclear test fallout, not just the original four atolls considered during the compact negotiations.

And I might also, Mr. Speaker, it does not even relate to the fact that thousands of our own soldiers and sailors were also exposed directly to nuclear contamination during our period of testing at this time in the Marshalls.

Mr. Speaker, the people in the Marshall Islands have made great contributions and sacrifices befitting the people of the United States and the free world. We will never be able to fully compensate them, as we cannot give them back their health or their lives of their unborn children or return to their traditional culture. Nevertheless the United States owes a moral duty and a serious obligation to the people of the Marshall Islands.

In recognition of this duty, the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, the gentleman from New York, [Mr. GILMAN], my good friend, introduced House Concurrent Resolution 92 of which I am a proud cosponsor along with the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG], the chairman of the Committee on Resources in the House of Representatives to recognize the tremendous sacrifices that the Marshallese people made during World War II and for the 12 years that they were subjected, not of their own choice, to nuclear contamination during our nation's nuclear testing program in Micronesia.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution emphasizes the value of continuing friendly relations between the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Congress intends to maintain a long term military alliance and strategic partnership between our nations. The resolution further recognizes the importance of addressing nuclear testing damages under Section 177 of the Compact of Free Association, the Congress. In reviewing the compact

renegotiations should exercise vigilance in preserving the strategic interests of the United States in maintaining friendship with the Marshall Islands.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge that our colleagues support this worthy measure that underscores the importance of our deep and enduring relationship with the good people of the Marshall Islands, and, Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere hope that in the coming weeks and months I will provide for my colleagues and the American people a series of floor statements to fully explain what took place in that 12-year period of nuclear testing of our nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands and the need for the Congress to do more to properly compensate the Marshallese people for the harm and suffering that we brought to them.

Mr. Speaker, again I would issue my warmest greetings and best wishes to President Imata Kabua and Foreign Minister Phillip Muller on their visit to Washington and other members of their official delegations, and, Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer for the record additional materials to be submitted and be made part of the RECORD:

H. CON. RES. 92

Whereas on November 3, 1986, President Reagan issued Proclamation 5564, implementing a Compact of Free Association between the United States and the newly formed governments of Pacific island areas which had been administered by the United States since 1947 under a United Nations trusteeship;

Whereas the Compact of Free Association was approved by the United States Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support on January 14, 1986, under the terms set forth in the Compact of Free Association Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-239);

Whereas, in addition to providing the multilateral framework for friendly political relations with the new Pacific island nations, the Compact of Free Association established, on a bilateral basis, a long-term military alliance and permanent strategic partnership between the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands;

Whereas for 50 years the Marshall Islands has played a unique and indispensable role in maintaining international peace and security through activities of the United States in the Marshall Islands which were essential to the feasibility and ultimate success of the United States-led strategy of nuclear deterrence during the Cold War era, as well as the United States Strategic Defense Initiative which contributed significantly to the end of the nuclear arms race;

Whereas, the Republic of the Marshall Islands includes Bikini Atoll and Eniwetok Atoll, which were the nuclear weapons proving grounds for Operation Crossroads from 1946 to 1958, as well as Kwajalein Atoll, which was the site of the mid-Pacific missile testing range for intercontinental ballistic missiles fired from the Vandenberg facility, a vital installation of the United States Army's ballistic missile systems command and a key support facility for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and other programs critical to the promotion of vital national interests;

Whereas the people of the Marshall Islands and the United States have a close and mutually beneficial relationship which evolved

from liberation and military occupation at the end of World War II to United States administration under the United Nations trusteeship from 1947 to 1986 and which is now maintained on a government-to-government basis under the Compact of Free Association;

Whereas this relationship was forged through a process of self-determination and democratization which reflects the common values and cross-cultural respect that the people of the Marshall Islands and the people of the United States have developed since the middle of the last century when American missionaries first came to the Marshall Islands;

Whereas the people of the United States and its allies paid a high price, including great loss of life and injuries in the heroic battles for Kwajalein and Roi-Namur, to liberate the Marshall Islands during World War II and again made sacrifices as a result of the Cold War nuclear arms race;

Whereas the people of the Marshall Islands suffered great injury and hardship due to the exposure of individuals to nuclear test radiation and the radiological contamination of the Marshall Islands;

Whereas, in recognition of the unique role of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in supporting the United States during the Cold War, the 104th Congress provided additional assistance, pursuant to the Compact of Free Association Act of 1985, to meet the special need of the people of the Marshall Islands arising from the nuclear testing program, including funding for radiological monitoring, island rehabilitation, and community resettlement programs;

Whereas within the framework of the settlement of all legal claims under section 177 of the Compact of Free Association Act of 1985, the Congress continues to monitor and evaluate measures being taken to implement programs authorized under Federal law to promote the recovery, resettlement, health, and safety of individuals and communities affected by the nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands;

Whereas the special relationship between our nations and our peoples is a bond that has grown strong as a result of our shared history and common struggle and sacrifices in the cause, not of conquest, but to promote international peace and security and secure liberty for future generations; and

Whereas, just as the extraordinary demands of world leadership fell on the United States in this century, among this Nation's allies the Marshall Islands bore an immensely disproportionate share of the burden of the Cold War, and this remote island nation continues to play an important strategic role in the preservation of global peace as well as in the military and scientific programs which promote the United States, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the other people of the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the value of continued friendly relations between the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands;

(2) intends to maintain, through appropriate mutually agreed political and economic measures, the long-term military alliance and strategic partnership defined by the Compact of Free Association as a primary element of bilateral relations between the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the future;

(3) recognizes the importance of ongoing measures to address, in accordance with the legal settlement set forth in section 177 of the Compact of Free Association of 1985, the impact on the Marshall Islands of the nuclear testing program; and

(4) intends, through its oversight responsibilities and the exercise of its Constitu-

tional authority regarding negotiation and approval of bilateral agreements with respect to those provisions of the Compact of Free Association which expire in 2001, in exercise vigilance in preserving the strategic interests of the United States in ensuring that the friendship between the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands is sustained as mutually agreed pursuant to their respective constitutional processes.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA FOR HIS EXCELLENCY IMATA KABUA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

His Excellency Iroijlaplap Imata Kabua was elected President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands on January 13, 1997 following the sudden passing of his cousin, the late Iroijlaplap President Amata Kabua, in December 1996. President Imata Kabua is both Head of Government and Head of State.

President Imata Kabua is the current serving chairman of the South Pacific Forum.

Born on May 20, 1943 on Enmat, Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands, Mr. Kabua first attended the Ebeye Public Elementary School in Kwajalein and later went to Marshall Christian Elementary and Laura Intermediate School, Majuro. Mr. Kabua attended the Kauai Technical School, Honolulu Christian College and later Ventura College, California, USA.

President Kabua began his public service career as principal of the Ebeye Christian Elementary School. Later, he served as Postmaster of Ebeye Post Office.

Mr. Kabua's political career began when he first served in 1976 as senator to the Nitijela under the US Trusteeship, followed by his consecutive election as delegate to the first and second Marshall Islands Constitutional Conventions (MICC) in 1978 and 1990 respectively. In 1994, he was elected to the third MICC as delegate Iroij from Ralik. He then served as senator to the Nitijela under the Constitutional Government in 1979, until 1996 when he was appointed as Minister without Portfolio for the Ralik Chain.

As Iroijlaplap, Mr. Kabua is an active leader in cultural affairs. He is presently one of the four major Iroijlaplaps from the Ralik Chain in the Marshall Islands.

President Kabua continues to lead and guide the development work on his constituent island atoll, Kwajalein, where in the past he served in a range of key positions including as president of the Kwajalein Atoll Corporation (KAC), chairman for Kwajalein Atoll Development Authority (KADA), and chairman for Kwajalein Atoll Joint Utility Resource (KAJUR).

President Kabua's hobbies include tennis, chess, table tennis, checkers and fishing. In 1969, Mr. Kabua was awarded a gold medal each for volleyball and table tennis at the 1969 Micronesian Olympic Games in Saipan.

President Kabua is married to the First Lady Hiromi Konou Kabua. They have 8 children.

President Kabua is a member of the Protestant Church.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.