

which represents less than one percent of the Federal budget and is one of the most cost-effective ways of protecting our interests across the globe. Today, more than ever, our health, security, and prosperity depend on a world in which basic human needs are met, fundamental rights and freedoms are respected, conflicts are resolved peacefully, and the world's resources are used wisely.

In this regard, I commend to my colleagues an excellent op-ed by Sharon Waxman, vice-president of the International Rescue Committee. Her article in *The Hill*, "Don't Let Foreign Aid Fall Off the Fiscal Cliff," outlines the importance of foreign aid in saving lives and easing suffering for millions around the world.

[From *The Hill*, Nov. 30, 2012]

DON'T LET FOREIGN AID FALL OFF THE FISCAL CLIFF

(By Sharon Waxman)

With the presidential election behind us, attention has turned to the impending "fiscal cliff". By New Year's Day, the Obama Administration and Congress must identify \$1.2 trillion in savings between spending cuts, revenue increases and entitlement reform. Otherwise, most federal programs will be cut by a staggering 8.2 percent.

On the chopping block is foreign assistance, which provides lifesaving aid to millions of vulnerable people, including Syrian refugees fleeing horrific violence and seeking safety and help in neighboring countries. The consequences of having the budget axe fall on foreign aid at this time could be dire.

The Syrian conflict is in its 20th month and displacement into Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq has more than tripled during the last three. By year's end, it's estimated that 700,000 Syrian refugees will be spread out across the region, overwhelming the communities hosting them and fueling a humanitarian crisis.

Last week, I visited a hospital wing in Amman, Jordan, filled with Syrian refugees. There, I met a father from Homs who had been out buying bread when his neighborhood came under siege. Now he is paralyzed from the chest down from shrapnel wounds. His wife and eight-year-old son keep vigil at his hospital bed, day and night. Their alternatives are few. They either move to a refugee camp, a grim prospect as winter approaches, or become part of a massive, underserved and desperate urban refugee population.

Meanwhile, other large-scale humanitarian emergencies have worsened or unfolded in the past year.

An estimated 18 million people are food insecure in Africa's Sahel region because of chronic poverty and crushing drought, and four million children are malnourished. In Mali, conflict in the north, which has caused the displacement of some 400,000 people, has exacerbated its food crisis. Violence in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states of Sudan has forced 175,000 refugees to flee to South Sudan and an additional 65,000 to Ethiopia.

Violence continues to spiral in eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo, where fighting repeatedly uproots communities, disrupts food production and shuts down health services. And whenever conflict escalates there, so does violence targeting women. Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, a humanitarian crisis has worsened, with unrest and natural disasters uprooting more than half a million people.

All told, more than 44 million people are currently displaced by conflict around the world—the highest number in 15 years.

My organization, the International Rescue Committee, is on the ground in these and other conflict and disaster zones, responding

to pressing humanitarian needs. We see firsthand how foreign assistance is saving lives and easing the suffering of countless people.

The need for the United States to respond to global humanitarian emergencies is increasing exponentially at the very time that across-the-board cuts may go into effect.

While we appreciate the daunting budget decisions ahead, foreign aid represents less than one percent of all federal spending, and non-war foreign assistance has already been cut by 15 percent over the last two years. An additional 8.2 percent reduction in foreign aid will undoubtedly cut the very programs that enable the United States to respond to human suffering and foster economic growth and stability. It will put millions of lives at risk and set the U.S. back years in its effort to lift people out of poverty and reduce dependency. Such cuts would be shortsighted and would not solve America's fiscal woes.

America's continued leadership in foreign policy and foreign assistance is critical, but it cannot happen on a shoe-string budget. The U.S. government must have the right tools at its disposal to conduct effective diplomacy, encourage development and provide humanitarian assistance to effect positive change in areas where it's desperately needed.

In the weeks ahead, we hope the Administration and Congress will reach an agreement that moves America off this precarious fiscal cliff while preserving America's leadership in foreign assistance and its commitment and ability to protect the world's most vulnerable.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. Speaker, due to a family matter requiring my presence in New Mexico, I was not able to be present for a number of votes on the House floor this week.

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 627, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4606, to authorize the issuance of right-of-way permits for natural gas pipelines in Glacier National Park, and for other purposes, as amended, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 628, on motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 3193, the Barona Band of Mission Indians Land Transfer Clarification Act of 2012, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 629, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6504, the Small Business Investment Company Modernization Act of 2012, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 630, on motion to suspend the rules and agree to the Senate Amendment on H.R. 3783, an act to provide for a comprehensive strategy to counter Iran's growing hostile presence and activity in the Western Hemisphere, and for other purposes, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 631, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6621, to correct and improve certain provisions of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act and title 35, United States Code, as amended, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 632, on motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 3642, the Theft of Trade Secrets Clarification Act, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 633, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6672, to reauthorize certain programs under the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to public health security and all-hazards preparedness and response and for other purposes, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 634, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1845, the Medicare IVIG Access Act, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 635, on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 668, to refer H.R. 5862, a bill making congressional reference to the United States Court of Federal Claims pursuant to sections 1492 and 2509 of title 28, United States Code, the Indian trust-related claims of the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma as well as its individual members, as amended, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 636, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6655, the Protect Our Kids Act, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 637, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 3564, the Public Interest Declassification Board Reauthorization Act, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 638, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 6016, the Government Employee Accountability Act, as amended, I would have voted "aye."

RECOGNIZING COLONEL MICHAEL J. MEESE

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Colonel Michael J. Meese, Professor and Head of the Department of Social Sciences at West Point. Colonel Meese is retiring January 18, 2013 after over 31 years of long and distinguished service.

As Head of the Social Sciences Department at West Point, Colonel Meese teaches economics and national security courses and leads the 70 military and civilian faculty members who teach political science, economics, and terrorism-related courses. He also leads the Combating Terrorism Center, the Office of Economics and Manpower Analysis, and the Conflict and Human Security Studies Program whose personnel both teach cadets and conduct nationally significant research in terrorism, Army personnel policy, and cultural studies. He serves as the Co-Chair of the Strategic Planning Working Group, developing the 2013–2019 Strategic Plan, which is critical to the long term future of the Academy. Previously he chaired the Academic Excellence Subcommittee of the NCAA Accreditation, which was instrumental to continued intercollegiate athletic participation. He chaired the Superintendent's Planning Team that examined the military program and developed the most significant recent changes to the military program at West Point: The consolidation of military science courses, the creation of the

MX400 Officership course, and the creation of Cadet Leader Development Training (CLDT).

Colonel Meese graduated from the United States Military Academy on 27 May 1981 and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Field Artillery. After being an honor graduate of the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course at Fort Sill, he reported to his first duty assignment with the 1st Battalion, 79th Field Artillery (later designated 6th Battalion, 8th Field Artillery) at Fort Ord, California. He served as a company Fire Support Team Chief, Battery Executive Officer (during which time his Battery received the Gilmore Award as the best firing—battery in the 7th Infantry Division), Battalion S-1/Adjutant, and Battalion Fire Direction Officer. During this period he assisted with the conversion of the artillery to the Infantry Division (Light) configuration and participated in training deployments to Japan, Panama, Minnesota, Idaho, and other locations in California. In 1985, he attended the Field Artillery Officer Advanced Course, where he was the distinguished graduate, and then was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 6th Field Artillery (later designated 4th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery) in Hanau, Germany from 1985–1988. He served as the Battalion Assistant Operations Officer, interim Battalion S-3, and firing Battery Commander of a 155mm M109A1 SP howitzer battery with a contingency mission in support of the 3rd Armored Division's General Defense Plan in Germany's Fulda Gap. In this position, he was designated as the MacArthur Leadership Award Nominee for V Corps and was selected for early promotion to major.

Colonel Meese attended the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University from 1988–90, earning an M.P.A., an M.A. and completing all requirements for his Ph.D., except the dissertation, which he would later complete coincident with other duties. He was assigned to the United States Military Academy as an instructor and assistant professor in the Department of Social Sciences from 1990–1993, where he taught the advanced economic principles course, microeconomics, macroeconomics, and economics of national security. He was an honor graduate of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and in 1994–1996 he was assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas. He became the Operations Officer of 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery, coordinating the battalion's operations on a no-notice deployment to fight wildfires in Montana and on an NTC rotation. He later served as the Deputy G3 of the 1st Cavalry Division, including commanding the Division Assault Command Post during its deployment to Korea as part of Exercise Foal Eagle in 1996.

The Academic Board selected Colonel Meese as an Academy Professor in the Department of Social Sciences, and he returned to become the Director of Economics in 1996. In 2001, he was selected to become a Professor, U.S. Military Academy, was confirmed by the Senate in 2002, and became Deputy Head of the Department of Social Sciences. Since June 2005, he has served as the Professor and Head of the Department of Social Sciences, U.S. Military Academy.

During over 19 years serving at West Point, Colonel Meese has personally supervised the execution of one of the leading political science and economics programs in the Nation, ensuring that cadets achieve the highest

standards, are enthusiastic about their education, and eagerly anticipate their service in the Army. This includes continually ensuring that the Social Sciences curriculum reflects the changing economic, political, and cultural environment that graduates will face and incorporates the latest teaching in terrorism, national security, and post-conflict studies to better prepare cadets. As a result, every USMA graduate has a core understanding of Social Sciences and over 200 cadets every year studied political science or economics in depth. This study has significantly prepared graduates to anticipate and respond effectively to the uncertainties of a changing technological, social, political, and economic world that they face as commissioned leaders of character in the United States Army. He has exemplified teaching by teaching a minimum of two sections every semester at West Point.

Colonel Meese has inspirationally led the professional development of Social Sciences faculty, supported the research needs of the Army, and advanced the fields of economics, political science, and national security policy. As a result of his leadership, Social Sciences faculty have been routinely included in the ongoing analysis of economics and national security policy issues, both as individuals and through the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC), the Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis (OEMA), and the Center for Human Security Studies (CHSS). He robustly supported scholarship by senior military and civilian faculty who have routinely presented or published papers at least once annually and nearly every military faculty presented or published at least once during their USMA tour. He personally exemplifies scholarship, resulting in over two dozen invited presentations, including testimony to a U.S. congressional committee; twenty book chapters, conference papers, major conference reports, or journal articles; and two full length books: *American National Security and the Armed Forces Guide to Personal Financial Planning*.

At West Point, Colonel Meese has been a critical leader of strategic thought among his faculty, throughout the Academy, and within the Army. This includes his leadership of conferences on topics including: "Toward an Army Officer Corps Strategy," "Bridging the Cultural Divide: NGO-Military Relations in Complex Environments," "The Professional Military Ethic in an Era of Persistent Conflict," "Public Diplomacy: Messages, Process, Outcomes," and "The Army Profession." As a result of these efforts and his ongoing encouragement of dynamic faculty members conducting leading-edge research, the Social Sciences Department has become one of the leading repositories of innovative thought within the Army. In 2006, the Department was recognized for its contributions with the presentation of the Army Superior Unit Award. During 2003–2004, Colonel Meese was the USMA Fellow at the National War College, where he graduated from the National War College while exemplifying teaching excellence on their faculty.

Beyond West Point, Colonel Meese has been called on numerous times to address some of the most challenging strategic political-military problems facing the Nation and the Army. He deployed for a full year from 2010–2011 as the Assistant Chief of Staff for the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, where he was instrumental in integrating the 1,500-person ISAF staff working

for General Petraeus to supervise a comprehensive civil-military counterinsurgency campaign. In December 2009–January 2010, he deployed to Afghanistan leading a flag officer/ambassadorial interagency team to improve U.S. detention policy and establish Combined Joint Task Force 435. In January–March 2009, he deployed to assist General Odierno and Ambassador Crocker as they developed the "Responsible Withdrawal of Forces from Iraq" plan for the Obama Administration. He had previously deployed to Iraq from June–September 2007, assisting General Petraeus' assessment and testimony; from January–March 2007, to develop "the surge" campaign plan; from June–August 2003 in Mosul, Iraq to help establish governance and stability immediately after the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom; and from January to July 2002 to Bosnia as the Executive Officer to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations for the NATO Stabilization Force. In sum, he has deployed to combat zones for over 31 months since 2001 in support of ongoing military operations.

In addition to combat deployments, Colonel Meese has assisted the Army's strategic decision making in many other areas. He served as the Executive Director of the Secretary of the Army's Transition Team in 2005; was the co-director of the Department of Defense Panel on Commercialization and Globalization (the Dawkins Panel) in 1999; served as a member of the Defense Science Board Improved Explosive Device Task Force (2007–2009); and was a member of the 2001 Army Science Board Team developing the redesign of the Army Headquarters staff. He participated in the assessment, training, and education of the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) in 1998 to fundamentally transform the SANDF after their post-apartheid transition of government. He has participated as a presenter, organizer, or author in nine different NATO or Partnership for Peace conferences that have supported effective partnerships with NATO and non-NATO partners.

Colonel Meese's distinguished career reflects the vision, demonstrated leadership, and extraordinary service of a proven leader. His service, unwavering dedication to duty, and the life-long impact he has had on the careers of faculty members and graduates of West Point have contributed immeasurably to the status of the United States Military Academy and to the achievements of Army officers. In fact, I was one of those officers who had the privilege to serve with and learn from COL Mike Meese, and I am at once humbled and honored at this moment to congratulate him on a career of exceptional service to the Army and the Nation. I wish him, Ramona, and their family all the best as they transition to civilian life and continue to serve in other ways.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during the rollcall vote No. 623, on December 12, 2012. I would have voted "no."