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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. CHENEY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

May 1, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable LIZ CHENEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

THE PAGO PAGO DECLARATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my appreciation and that of the Samoan people for the April 23 visit of Vice President MIKE PENCE, who was accompanied by the Second Lady and their daughters to my home district, the United States Territory of American Samoa, upon the conclusion of his historic 10-day visit to strategic Asian and Pacific partners. Upon his arrival to Pago Pago, the Vice President remarked that he was glad to be back on American soil.

This historic visit to American Samoa marks only the third time a sitting Vice President has graced our shores and follows in the footsteps of past visits from Vice Presidents Quayle in 1989 and Biden in 2016. Previous visits to our beautiful islands from White House dignitaries include First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt in 1943, President Lyndon Johnson in 1966, and President Jimmy Carter's son, Jeffrey, who represented his father at the inauguration of our first elected Governor in 1977, who happens to be my father, Peter Tali Coleman.

Madam Speaker, pursuant to legislation I introduced in February, which was enacted by Congress and signed into law by President Trump on May 31, the Vice President came to American Samoa at my humble request to dedicate our veterans clinic to the memory of the late former representative of American Samoa, Congressman Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, with whom the Vice President served the entirety of his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2003 to 2013.

While in American Samoa, the Vice President also reviewed the troops comprised of Reserve companies who are part of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry of the U.S. Army based in Hawaii. Headquartered at Ft. Shafter in Honolulu, the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry is the only infantry unit in the entire United States Army Reserve. Samoan soldiers who are part of the battalion have fought and served bravely in conflicts from Desert Storm to Afghanistan and Iraq, and others, since the companies were relocated to American Samoa in 1980.

Madam Speaker, American Samoa takes particular pride that Vice President PENCE was able to celebrate with us the 109th anniversary of the establishment of the United States Army Reserves, which just happened to line up perfectly with his visit.

While the Vice President's journey was well covered by international and

domestic media, most outlets outside of the Pacific failed to report a significant statement he made, which I have called the Pago Pago Declaration. This important statement made on our soil was well noted and well received in the Pacific Islands.

Specifically, the Vice President spoke of the challenges the U.S. faces in Asia and the Pacific and confirmed to the audience assembled that, as quoted by Radio New Zealand International and broadcast region-wide: "We're here to stay, we're here for peace, we're here for the prosperity of all of our people, and we are proud the American flag flies in American Samoa."

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD this Radio New Zealand International story.

[From Radio New Zealand, Apr. 25, 2017]

AMERICAN SAMOANS TOLD US IS COMMITTED TO REGIONAL PEACE

The United States Vice President has told American Samoans that his country is committed to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mike Pence made a brief stopover in the US territory yesterday where he was greeted by Governor Lobo Matalasi Moliga his wife, the Lieutenant-Governor Lemanu Peleti Mauga, Chief Justice Michael Kruse, House Speaker Savali Talavou Ale'a and congresswoman Aumua Amata Radewagen.

Secret Service agents restricted access and only a few leaders were allowed to shake hands with the Vice-President. Governor Lobo apologized to traditional leaders who weren't able to conduct a traditional ceremony because of security restrictions. Mr Pence, who was with his wife Karen, thanked American Samoans for their support and prayers.

He said it was an important time for the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr Pence said he was in the territory on behalf of President Donald Trump to symbolise the US commitment to the area.

"We're here to stay, we're here for peace, we're here for the prosperity of all of our people and we are proud the American flag flies in American Samoa," he said.

□ 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.



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Mrs. RADEWAGEN. The People's Republic of China and other external powers are gaining visibility and influence in the region, including the neighboring Independent State of Samoa. Due to the new influence of foreign interests in the region, members of American Samoa's territorial legislature, the Fono, just days prior to the Vice President's arrival, expressed to me, during my appearance before a special joint session, their concern about the rise of foreign influences in the region. I am certain the Pago Pago Declaration will help to allay their concerns and will be welcome in capitals across the Pacific from Port Moresby to Papeete, Tahiti.

Moreover, Madam Speaker, I anticipate that the Pago Pago Declaration will be a component of the evolving Trump doctrine that is under development by the administration, which I expect will be fully articulated when the U.S. participates in the Port Moresby APEC summit in November of next year.

Madam Speaker, we, in American Samoa, recognize the strategic importance of our location in the center of the Pacific Ocean and are proud of the contributions we make to our Nation's security.

As always, we stand ready to do our part to advance the spirit of the Vice President's Pago Pago Declaration, which I expect will have a long lasting and positive effect on the region.

I want to, once again, thank the Vice President and the administration for their attention to the Pacific territories, a region that too often goes unnoticed in Washington.

McGOVERN-DOLE INTERNATIONAL FOOD FOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. McGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the George McGovern-Robert Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, one of America's signature child nutrition and food security programs.

Established by Congress in the 2002 farm bill, over the past 15 years, it has provided life-saving meals in school settings to over 14 million of the world's most vulnerable children.

Administered by the Department of Agriculture, this bipartisan-supported program provides U.S. and international organizations with U.S. commodities, grants, and technical assistance to strengthen child nutrition and education.

It receives a modest \$201 million each year. Regrettably, the President's FY 2018 budget would cruelly eliminate the entire program.

McGovern-Dole is named after two Senators who worked in a bipartisan way during their long tenures in the Senate to end hunger, especially

among children in the United States and around the world. They continued their work together after leaving the Senate. They are models for what can be accomplished when Members of Congress actually put petty partisanship aside and make the welfare of children and families become your number one priority. And even though George McGovern is no longer with us, Bob Dole continues to champion this cause.

On March 20, in a statement to *The Washington Post*, he said: "Eliminating the McGovern-Dole program would have a disastrous effect on the planet's most vulnerable children. Without a reliable source of nutrition, these children face a lifetime of stunted physical and mental development and unrealized opportunity. This global school meals program remains one of the proudest achievements of my lifetime. It embodies the very best of America's values. Saving this program means saving lives. It's as simple as that."

Madam Speaker, working through partners like the U.N. World Food Programme, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, Save the Children, Counterpart International, and many more, McGovern-Dole has reduced the incidence of hunger among school-aged children. It has increased school enrollments and attendance. It has increased the support of families and communities for education, especially for girls. It is a proven success.

Instead of eliminating it, we should be strengthening and expanding it. Now, I have had the privilege of visiting some of these programs around the world. In Colombia, I visited a program in Soacha, on the outskirts of Bogotá. On barren hillsides, surrounded by shanties housing thousands of internally displaced families, children were receiving a school breakfast and lunch. Mothers and grandmothers were training as cooks preparing the meals. Clearly visible in the cafeteria were USAID bags of grains, beans, and lentils.

One mother came up to me and said: "Please thank the American people when you go back home. I couldn't feed my children. I couldn't send them to school. I was afraid my son was going to join the paramilitaries or guerrillas just to get food. Now my son is getting fed and he is staying in school. Please tell the American people thank you."

In Nairobi, Kenya, in the largest slum in the world, I went to a McGovern-Dole breakfast and lunch program. The school principal showed me how they store and prepare U.S. commodities that feed her students and how all the students know that this program is from the American people. I ate porridge made from yellow peas grown by American farmers. The kids dug into this food like it was manna from Heaven. One little boy would take a bite and then scoop a small amount out of his bowl and put it in his pockets. He was taking food home to his younger siblings who don't get anything to eat.

Outside of Nairobi in Maasai country is a school for girls where McGovern-Dole provides a hot lunch. I helped cook and serve the meal of U.S. bulgur wheat and locally grown vegetables. One student told me how grateful she was to be able to go to school every day and eat every day. She grew up in a village over 100 miles away.

When she was 12, her father told her that she had to marry a much older man. She refused. Her father ordered her to go to her uncle's house and get his machete and bring it back to him. She knew that he was going to kill her.

She ran away, walking alone for days, because she had heard of this school. And when I met her, she was 15, healthy, and well fed, and at the top of her class. I knew I was talking to someone who will some day be a leader in her country. In the very best way, she will never forget us.

And when we take food away from children, families, and schools, those communities will never forget us either. They won't forget that we took away their children's future. I wouldn't forget it if it were my child. Would you?

Madam Speaker, there are many ways to advance U.S. national security and economic interests abroad. Education and child nutrition are very much at the top of the list. So I urge my colleagues to visit McGovern-Dole programs when they travel abroad and to support continued funding of the program in FY 2018. It is yet another way that we can all work together to end hunger now.

ATTEMPT TO REPEAL AND REPLACE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, this morning, the American public woke up to news accounts that the Trump White House and Republican leadership in Congress is going to again this week make another attempt to try and repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act.

Republican Majority Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY gave a speech in Texas a few days ago on Saturday where he promised that this is the week that the Republicans will repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act.

For those of us who were in the Chamber here just a short time ago in March when the first attempt was made to butcher the healthcare system with the so-called American Health Care Act, what we saw was the culmination of a process that was hyperpartisan starting in January in which the committees rushed through a piece of legislation without even giving the Congressional Budget Office a chance to analyze the cost and the impact in terms of the uninsured rate in America.

And then finally, as the hour approached when a vote was scheduled to