



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 108<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 150

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2004

No. 6

## House of Representatives

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

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
January 27, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JO BONNER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

### MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, 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 Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

### THE U.S. MUST DO MORE TO FIGHT CHILD HUNGER

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on December 11, 102 Members of Congress sent a bipartisan letter to President Bush asking him to restore the original funding level for the George McGovern-Robert Dole International Food for Education Program when he submits his fiscal year 2005 budget next week.

The McGovern-Dole program began as a \$300 million pilot program in 2001. It provided at least one nutritious meal each day to nearly 7 million children in 38 countries. The catch? These children

had to attend school in order to get the meals.

Providing food to malnourished children in schools is one of the most effective strategies to fight hunger and poverty. Where programs are offered, enrollment and attendance rates increase significantly, particularly for girls. Instead of working or searching for food to combat hunger, children have the chance to go to school. Providing food at school is a simple but effective means to improve literacy and help poor children break out of poverty.

The McGovern-Dole program helps us to achieve many of our foreign policy goals and communicates America's compassion to those around the world. And at the end of the day, it will ultimately triumph over poverty and terror.

One year ago, in February 2003, the U.S. Department of Agriculture evaluated this program, and the conclusions were overwhelmingly positive. In addition to significantly reducing the incidence of hunger among school-age children, the program was also found to promote educational opportunity, especially for girls, among some of the poorest populations in the world.

Sadly, in fiscal year 2003, McGovern-Dole received only \$100 million in funding, reducing the number of children served to scarcely more than 2 million worldwide in just 28 countries. In fiscal year 2004, President Bush only asked for \$50 million, and acting under severe budget constraints, this is what Congress provided. In brief, for fiscal year 2004, the United States will literally be taking food out of the mouths of yet another 1 million hungry children and forcing many of their families to remove them from school.

The senior Senator from Kansas and the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, PAT ROBERTS, has stated on a number of occasions his belief that the McGovern-Dole program

serves our national security interests by attacking the breeding grounds of terrorism, hunger, poverty, ignorance, and despair, while at the same time ensuring that children are fed in settings where they receive a quality education rather than hate-filled indoctrination. But rather than expanding this program to reach even more school-age children, to help stabilize communities devastated by HIV/AIDS, and to support HIV/AIDS orphans so that they might contribute to the future of their nations rather than burden them, we cut this program once again.

On November 26, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization released its 2003 report on hunger. It found that after falling steadily during the 1990s, hunger is again on the rise. In the developing world, the number of malnourished people grew by an average of 4.5 million a year for the past 3 years. The report also found that hunger exacerbates the AIDS crisis, drives rural people into the cities, and forces women and children to trade sex for food and money.

Yet over the past 3 years, we have cut funding for the McGovern-Dole school feeding program so that it is now one-sixth of what it once was. This means that 84 out of every 100 children we were feeding and schooling under this program in 2001 have been cut off from this food source. They now either go to school hungry or have once again dropped out of school.

Mr. Speaker, this is a disgrace, plain and simple.

Mr. Speaker, we are going in the wrong direction, not just for the children of the world, but for the security of our Nation. If as a nation we are committed to defeating terrorism, then we must increase and fully fund programs like McGovern-Dole, along with other food aid and development programs.

If as a nation we are committed to addressing hunger, poverty, illiteracy,

□ 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.



Printed on recycled paper.

H101