

Mr. Speaker, what were these brave Texans fighting for? Up to this point, it was simply to restore the Mexican Constitution of 1824, which had been suspended by Santa Anna.

On the night of March 1, a group of five men stayed up late into the night drafting the document that would be approved the next day by the full convention, a document that echoes the lines of its American counterpart, the Texas Declaration of Independence.

It started off in much the same way, with the words, "When a government has ceased to protect the lives, liberty and property of the people." It spoke of the numerous injustices inflicted upon the settlers of the state of Coahuila y Tejas: the elimination of the state's legislative body, the denial of religious freedom, the elimination of the civil justice system, and the confiscation of firearms being the most intolerable, particularly in Texas.

Finally, it ended with the declaration that, because of the injustice of Santa Anna's tyrannical government, Texans were severing their connection with the Mexican nation and declaring themselves "a free, sovereign, and independent republic. . . fully invested with all the rights and attributes" that belong to independent nations; and a declaration that they "fearlessly and confidently" committed their decision to "the Supreme arbiter of the destinies of nations."

Over the next 2 weeks, a constitution was drafted and an interim government was formed, despite daily reports from the front detailing the collapse of the Alamo and subsequent advance of the Mexican Army through Texas. On March 17, 1836, the government was forced to flee Washington-on-the-Brazos on the news of the advance of General Santa Anna.

Just over a month later, however, independence would be secured in the form of a victory over that same army by Sam Houston, a delegate at the very convention, and his courageous fighters at the battle of San Jacinto.

Mr. Speaker, let me remind folks from Tennessee that Sam Houston served in this Congress from the State of Tennessee. I have at times kidded my friends from Tennessee saying, "The best of Tennessee immigrated to Texas in the 1830s."

From that point on, Texas was firmly established in the community of nations; and for 10 years she stood and remained an independent nation, until President James K. Polk signed the treaty admitting Texas to the United States in 1845.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the Congress and the whole country will join us today on March 2 in a day that in Texas we celebrate, our schoolchildren celebrate, Texas Independence Day.

GOOD EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN WILL ENSURE AMERICA'S FUTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ran for Congress, and I am here today, because I believe that our children's education must be the number one priority in this country. We must prepare all of our children for the high-skill, high-wage jobs that will ensure America's leadership in the world marketplace and, at the same time prevent dependency on welfare here at home.

Public education is the backbone of our country. It is why we are a great Nation. Public education must be available to all, and it must be the best in the world. Public education does not discriminate; and it must be strengthened, not weakened.

This Congress, we have an opportunity that comes along only once every 5 years, and that is the opportunity to review and update the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, ESEA.

ESEA is best known for Title I, the education for the disadvantaged. ESEA is known for the dollars it sends to schools. Title I is important because it helps disadvantaged children achieve along with their more fortunate peers, and it helps poor and impacted schools and school districts keep up with the more advantaged schools and school districts in this Nation.

Title I must be supported; and, as well, we must ensure that every child gets individual attention in the early grades to build a solid foundation for future learning. We can do this by making the administration's initiative to reduce class size permanent. This initiative helps school districts recruit, hire, and train enough qualified teachers to reduce class size to an average of 18 in grades 1 through 3.

Current research findings prove what parents and teachers have known for years: Kids who are in smaller class sizes learn better, especially in the lower grades. Our schools need 100,000 new, well-trained teachers.

We also know how hard it is for children even in small classes to learn in trailers or in old school buildings that are crumbling around them. I support the President's proposal to make it easier for school districts to fund needed schools and to build new ones by providing interest rate subsidies for school construction bonds over the next 2 years. Is it not time to show all of our children that their school is as important as a shopping mall or as a prison?

While I certainly support the current emphasis on ending social promotions, ESEA is also the place to assist all schools in preventing students from failing in the first place. Title XI of ESEA lets school districts spend up to 5 percent of their Federal education funds on coordinated services, services that will bring schools and their local communities together to make sure that, every day, every student comes to school ready to learn. Services such as health care, before and after school

care, and tutoring ensure that no child is doomed to fail before they even enter the classroom.

There are wonderful examples all around the Nation of schools and communities working together to lift children and their families out of an endless cycle of failure and into a future of success.

Students who are ready to learn need well-trained teachers who are experts in their subjects. They need a challenging curriculum and up-to-date technology to prepare them for the sophisticated world we live in. Every student, regardless of family income, race or gender must have access to the most modern technological education available.

In addition, teachers as well as students must have mentors; and they must have support for learning to use technology so that they will be comfortable and knowledgeable in a technological environment.

As a member of both the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Committee on Science, I am excited to have this significant opportunity to make positive changes in our children's education; to remove any economic or gender gap in science, math and technology; to ensure small classes with well-trained teachers; to provide funding for modern, safe schools; and to give all students a world-class education.

Mr. Speaker, children are only 25 percent of our population, but they are 100 percent of our future. A sound public school system is how we protect that future. A good education for all of our children will ensure America's future.

CONGRESS MUST HELP THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN SUDAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak on the issue of Sudan. But, before I do, I want to just pay tribute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) for taking his time and getting involved in a very important issue with regard to slavery in Sudan.

I also want to congratulate the students at Highline Community School in Aurora, Colorado. They have done an amazing thing with regard to getting people who were in slavery in southern Sudan free.

Mr. Speaker, I have been in Sudan on three different occasions. The world does not know it, but these students in Colorado know it. There is slavery going on in Sudan, and these students are making a tremendous effort. Because of them, 1,000 slaves have been released, and I just want to take out this special order in tribute to them.

Mr. Speaker, for the past several months, the students of Barbara Vogel's fourth grade class have been raising money to help free slave children as part of the public awareness

campaign called S.T.O.P., Slavery That Oppresses People. These young people, modern-day abolitionists, are an inspiration to many. If my colleagues saw the CBS Dan Rather show, one of the youngsters I believe called himself a modern-day abolitionist. If only the Congress could follow their lead or if the administration could follow their lead.

Almost 2 million people have died, 2 million have died in Sudan in the past 15 years. More have died in Sudan than have died in Somalia, in Kosovo, in Rwanda and in Bosnia combined. The most recent statistics available put the number dead at 1.8 million, but that does not cover the 200,000 who have died from the famines this past summer.

Mr. Speaker, millions of people are starving in southern Sudan, kept alive only by the brave efforts of international humanitarian organizations like World Vision, Save the Children, Catholic Relief, UNICEF, and others. Millions are being displaced. An entire generation has been lost, and another generation is ready to be lost.

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The word "genocide" is now used with regard to what is taking place in Sudan. In the Numba Mountains, the Christians and Muslims are being persecuted. The Sudanese government are persecuting these people because of their faith. The government planes use high-altitude bombings to demolish civilian targets like hospitals and terrorize the population.

We know that women and children from Southern Sudan are being sold into slavery; and today, March 2, 1999, Sudanese women and children are being bought and sold as we sit and stand here today. They are kidnapped by slave raiders who sweep into the destabilized regions following the government attacks. They capture the women and children and then they take them off for slavery.

I want to commend my colleagues' attention to this excellent booklet which hopefully will be sent to every Congressional office from the U.S. Committee For Refugees. Tomorrow they will announce a nationwide public awareness campaign about Sudan. I urge the Members of this body to get a copy of this booklet.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) for his coming here quickly, getting started on a very powerful, very important issue. This may be the major human rights issue of the world. Two million people have died. Also, the students of Highline School are trying to help to save one life at a time by raising money to free women and children from the trading block.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, I received letters from the youngsters which I would like to put in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Nicole Limino said to me, "Dear Congressman Wolf, it makes me feel so sad

that people just like me are being treated like animals. This needs to be stopped. Someone needs to take a stand. Please help eradicate slavery by writing the government and telling them something needs to be done."

Doni Tarplus said, "Will you please help us abolish slavery? The President isn't helping even when he promised to make the world a better place."

A boy who identified himself as Melvin said, "I'm Melvin. I'm demanding you ask people if they want to help. The United Nations isn't doing anything about slavery in Sudan. I was broken-hearted when I found that 409 people were found and brought from slavery."

David Walker said, "You are a congressman so you can help. Millions of lives are in danger and you can get the government to help. Slavery is going on and we need to stop it."

Then there are many other letters which I would like to put in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

In closing, slavery is a problem. Starvation is a problem. The United States can do more to help. We can appoint a special envoy. He can go back and tell the students from Highline Community School that the Clinton administration has a special envoy. They appointed an envoy, Senator Mitchell, who deserves a Nobel Peace Prize for bringing people together in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Southern Ireland.

Let us appoint a Sam Nunn, a Senator Nunn to be the special envoy to bring peace in this region and stop the slavery, stop the suffering, stop the agony and the pain.

The students from the area of the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI), from Highline Community School, are, frankly, I hate to say this, they are doing more than the Congress is doing, both parties, Republican and Democratic Party, they are doing more than both parties. Lastly, they are doing much more, much more than the Clinton administration is doing.

I just hope that their effort as a witness by what they are doing will sensitize this administration whereby President Clinton, within the next week or so, will appoint a special envoy who will go to Sudan and go back and forth and mediate between the warring parties whereby these people will know that they can have a future for their children and grandchildren, and slavery will stop, and people will not be persecuted because they happen to accept Christ and they happen to be Christians, because of their faith.

Mr. Speaker, the letters that I referred to are as follows:

HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 22, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WOLF: I know you are also a freedom fighter and this is one reason we need you! We need your strong caring voice to help us end slavery in Sudan. Please hear the cry for freedom that these beautiful, young, Americans put to their government! The media is giving a lot of attention to these young voices can you help us too?

In Freedom,

BARB VOGEL.

HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: At the beginning of the year I found out that slavery was still going on. I also found out that the class before us had started a campaign called S.T.O.P., S.T.O.P. stands for Slavery That Oppresses People. It makes me feel terrible that people just like me are being treated like animals. This needs to be stopped. Someone needs to take a stand. Please help us eradicate slavery by writing the government and telling them something needs to be done. If you have any questions please call us at (303) 364-7657 or look for information at www.anti-slavery.org.

Help Them,

NICOLE CIMINO.

HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: Slavery should not be going on: It should be eradicated. A few weeks ago on February fourth, 409 people were put into slavery. That makes me really mad! I am Doni Tarplus in Barb's fourth grade class. I am an abolitionist, an abolitionist is a person who wants to free slaves.

Will you please help us abolish slavery? The president isn't helping when he promised to make the world a better place. For more information please call us at, (303) 364-7657 or try our website at www.anti-slavery.org.

Thanks,

DONI TARPLUS.

HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: I'm Melvin and I'm demanding you ask people if they want to help or you help because the United Nations aren't doing anything about slavery in Sudan! Barb's old class made S.T.O.P. but we're continuing this campaign. S.T.O.P. stands for Slavery That Oppresses People.

I was broken-hearted when I found out that 409 people were found and brought into slavery. If you want to do a donation, you can contact Christian Solidarity International, American anti-slavery group, or visit us on the web at WWW.anti-slavery.org.

Sincerely,

MELVIN.

HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: You are a congressman so you can help. Millions of lives are in danger and you can get the government to help. Slavery is going on and we need to stop it that is why we started a campaign called S.T.O.P. It stands for Slavery That Oppresses People. We started this campaign because the government won't take a stand. Please help us eradicate slavery.

Sincerely,

DAVID WALKER.

P.S. On February 4, 1999 John Eibner gave the south of Sudan an urgent appeal about the north attacking them but they didn't listen so now 409 women and children are in slavery.

HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WOLF: Hi! My name is Alex Persinger and I feel like a dead hog, because on February 4, 1999, on that day 409 people were enslaved! Please give the government awareness about slavery. People like us work all day because of lazy people.

Please remember the urgent appeal by John Eibner. I love to help but I can only tell so many! People like you can make a difference.

Love,

ALEX PERSINGER.

HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: My name is Thomas Turner, an adolescent abolitionist that is trying to eradicate slavery, but that is not the reason I'm writing you. The reason is because a man named John Eibner had urgently appealed the U.N. to take a stand about the slavery issue, but they all probably sat lazier than ever and because of that 409 people are enslaved in modern day slavery. We'll get up and take a huge stand right now! You can contact us at www.anti-slavery.org or 1-800-884-0719. Make a difference.

Love,

THOMAS TURNER.

—
HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: I am an abolitionist in a campaign called S.T.O.P. S.T.O.P. stands for Slavery That Oppresses People. We heard a very disappointing thing about some slaves. John Eibner, a man who works for a humanitarian group called C.S.I sent a urgent appeal to the government about this and that the soldiers were going to raid the villages, but they didn't do anything. On February 4, 1999 four hundred nine innocent people were taken into a miserable life being treated like animals. When I found out about this, I was heartbroken to know that so many people could be taken into bondage. The good news is that we freed 850 slaves.

Join us to eradicate and abolish slavery. Please help us by writing to people that are important. If you have any questions you can reach us at (303) 364-7657.

Please help us,

LINDY DE SPAIN.

—
HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WOLF: I'm Miriam a concerned youngster in the STOP campaign it stands for Slavery That Oppresses People. This is a human rights campaign, we try to end slavery. I thought slavery had been eliminated. We freed slaves last week but Sudan was attacked and four hundred-nine people were put into slavery it was shocking. We need your help and spread the word that slavery exists please help us! The government has sat idly by, for years and years. John Eibner works for CSI he goes to Sudan and frees slaves. He had sent an urgent appeal that Sudan was being attacked to the United Nations but no response, they ignored this awful issue and they ignored this awful issue too often!

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HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WOLF: Hi! I am Josh Hook, an abolitionist. I have some devastating news to tell you. A few days ago John Eibner went to Sudan and he was told that the north was ready to fight. So John told the U.N. but they ignored him. Then four hundred nine people were put in slavery. Just because the government did not do a single thing!

We started a campaign called S.T.O.P. S.T.O.P. stands for slavery that oppresses people. Will you use your voice to tell your fellow colleagues or contact C.S.I. or A.A.S.G.

Love,

JOSH HOOK.

—
HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: Hi! My name is Dong, this is devastating news! On February 4, 1999 four hundred nine people were put in slavery! John Eibner sent a urgent appeal to the United Nations, but they

did nothing. Right now I feel distraught. Please help us! Please join our S.T.O.P. campaign and help us free slaves! Women and children just like me are now put in slavery. I demand you to help us! My heart is frowning because this is going on, my heart is crying. I forgot to tell you that the north attacked a village. John Eibner warned them but they did nothing. Also S.T.O.P. stands for Slavery That Oppresses People. Please help us abolish slavery and please bring awareness to the world!

Sincerely,

DONG CHA.

—
HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: I'm so furious at the government for not listening to us. Last Week 409 people were enslaved because the government did not listen to us. Just like you and me enslaved. Women and children are enslaved. The bad part too is that the government ignored John Eibner's warning. He found out that the soldiers were going to raid them. He also sent an urgent appeal to the United Nations.

P.S. We will eradicate slavery.

Love,

JOSHUA FLEMING.

Highline Community School,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: My name is Alphonso Terell McDonald and I am nine years old. I am a young abolitionist and I am writing to you because I want to tell you about what happened just recently, four hundred-nine slaves were captured and were brought back into slavery because the government is sitting idly by instead of taking a stand. We would like to know if you'd contact the United States Government and let them know what is going on. We would be so grateful if you did this because we want people to be aware of this so they can help us.

The quote that is on the back of our shirts "The greatest sin of our time is not the few who have destroyed, but the vast majority who have sat idly by."

Love,

ALPHONSO.

—
HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: I want to tell you what just happened, there were 409 nice, beautiful, innocent, people put into to slavery.

I almost cried; but I realized if I'm a abolitionist, I can put a stop to this slavery issue! This should not be happening to these people! "These are our people we should stop this slavery!" You can help us by writing letters to the government and tell them to put to a stop like all of the abolitionist like Frederick Douglas, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,

Love,

CYNTHIA JURANGO.

—
HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: Hi! My name is Heather Pedigo, with a strong urge to fight for freedom of other people! I want to tell you something because of the governments act of turning their back on the issue of slavery, because of that, on February fourth, four hundred and nine people were put into slavery! Just think all of those scared and hurt women and children. We are very ashamed. Please contact us at WWW.Anti-Slavery.org, or you can call us at 1-800-804-0719.

Sincerely,

HEATHER PEDIGO.

HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK: Hi, My name is Christina Manalastas. On February 4th, four hundred nine slaves went into slavery. I'm not happy about what is going on all around the world! It is, of course, the moral thing, when seeing a other human being suffer, to look after them. The person Dalai Lama had said that quote. Here is my quote, "We care about happiness, we care about sadness but we just want to help."

Sincerely,

CHRISTINA MANALASTAS.

P.S. Will you please join us.

—
HIGHLINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
Aurora, CO, February 17, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF: Hi! From Barb's class. Im a young abolitionist and a fourth grader at Highline. I am in a group that is called S.T.O.P. S.T.O.P. is Slavery That Oppresses People. Just last week 409 people went into slavery. The United Nations did not help! I felt so bad! I'm going to eradicate slavery this year! As I was saying on the fourth of February, 1999 John Eibner went to Sudan to warn them about people coming and taking them from their homes. So stand up and do what is right! I will not give up will you? Will you help us stop slavery?

Love,

STACY CARUSO.

DO NOT FORGET ABOUT THE KASHMIRI PANDITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the world witnessed an exciting event last month when India's Prime Minister Vajpayee met with his Pakistani counterpart, Prime Minister Sharif, to inaugurate a new bus service between the two countries.

I applaud Prime Minister Vajpayee's courage in visiting his neighboring country with whom relations have been tense, to put it mildly. But amidst the celebrations about the meeting between the India and the Pakistani prime ministers, a disturbing development from the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir reminds us of what is at stake in the conflict that has hung over the subcontinent for decades.

As the New York Times reported, "On the eve of Mr. Vajpayee's visit to Lahore, Islamic militants, whom Indians generally believe are backed by Pakistan, massacred 20 Hindu civilians in three places in Jammu, part of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, apparently in an attempt to derail the peace efforts. In one case, they opened fire on a wedding party, killing eight celebrants." This is from the New York Times, February 23.

The article noted that Prime Minister Vajpayee did not publicly address the massacres during his visit to Pakistan, perhaps understandable in light of the positive atmosphere that the meeting of the two prime ministers was intended to generate. But Prime Minister Vajpayee stressed that he had warned his Pakistani counterpart that