

REPORT CONFIRMS SUDAN'S USE
OF SLAVERY

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 6, 2002

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you the findings from the report of the International Eminent Persons Group that was created out of the agreements negotiated by special envoy for Sudan, former Senator John Danforth. This group was invited to Sudan by both parties to the conflict in Sudan, the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army, to investigate the occurrence of slavery and abduction there.

The report indicates that the group found sufficient evidence during its investigation that the Government of Sudan uses slavery as a part of a "counter-insurgency strategy pursued by successive governments in Khartoum."

These actions include incidences of abduction and associated abuses that occur in conjunction with attacks by pro-government militias known as murahaleen on villages in SPLA-controlled areas . . . the Government of Sudan and its predecessors have been responsible for arming murahaleen groups, for using them as auxiliary military forces and for allowing members of such forces to enjoy impunity for a wide range of serious crimes committed in the course of attacks. They burn villages, loot cattle, rape and kill civilians, and abduct and enslave men, women and children.

As this report shows, the government in Khartoum has used slavery as a strategy and as a weapon for years. It is time for Khartoum to end this horrible practice and for the world to condemn Khartoum for this atrocity.

As the Bush Administration and the international community press for peace in Sudan, ending the form of slavery practiced by Sudan needs to be at the forefront of the discussions.

FINDINGS

Finding 1. Changes in the international environment and within Sudan itself have raised hopes for progress toward peace in Sudan.

Finding 2. The United States, other concerned governments and international institutions should engage this possibility with energy on the one hand and rigorous conditionality on the other. Progress in dealing with human rights abuses is a key element in the establishment of a just and durable peace in Sudan.

Finding 3. Many observers note an improved political climate in Khartoum, characterized by a renewed dialogue among political parties and the return of representatives of some northern political parties to Khartoum. The Sudanese Government's acceptance of, and cooperation with, the mission of Senator John Danforth, and with our own mission, may be regarded as reflections of this change. Recent initiatives by the SPLM/A to encourage the institutions of civil society are also examples of favorable political developments.

Finding 4. Despite these positive signs, the people of Sudan continue to be subjected to a range of serious and sustained human-rights-abuses. These abuses have been extensively documented in numerous human rights reports, including those of Human Rights Watch, Anti-Slavery International, the Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights on Sudan and other credible observers. They include denial of

rights of expression and association, restrictions on press freedom, harassment of certain opposition political groups and independent religious bodies, arbitrary arrest and detention, cruel and unusual punishment and arbitrary interpretation and application of laws.

Particularly serious abuses have occurred in connection with the current civil war. To one degree or another, all of the warring parties have engaged in such practices as the forced displacement of civilian populations, intentional attacks on civilians, abductions, the forcible recruitment of children and other civilians as soldiers and forced laborers, hostage taking, rape, looting, destruction of food supplies and the denial of access to humanitarian assistance. Women and children have suffered especially, both from abduction and sexual violence. All these practices are prohibited by international covenants and conventions.

The causes of these abuses are far-reaching and complex and must be understood and addressed as a whole.

Finding 5. Our Group's mandate called upon us specifically to examine slavery, abduction and forced servitude. We found a wide range of economic relationships between northerners and persons from the south who have either been displaced or have migrated to the north. Such relationships range from debt bondage to benign relations of sponsorship or adoption. The majority of these relations, while they may involve economic exploitation, do not fall under the rubric of slavery. However, we also found evidence of exploitative and abusive relationships that, in some cases, do meet the definition of slavery as contained in international conventions, which Sudan has signed. This evidence is confirmed in interviews conducted by the Group, which is consistent with reports and interviews carried out by other credible agencies and organizations.

Of particular concern is the pattern of abuses that occurs in conjunction with attacks by pro-government militias known as murahaleen on villages in SPLA-controlled areas near the boundary between northern and southern Sudan. These are characterized by: capture through abduction (generally accompanied by violence); the forced transfer of victims to another community; subjection to forced labor for no pay; denial of victims' freedom of movement and choice; and, frequently, assaults on personal identity such as renaming, forced religious conversion, involuntary circumcision, prohibition on the use of native languages and the denial of contacts with the victims' families and communities of origin.

Many of those who are abducted and enslaved remain with their abductors in the areas of South Darfur or West Kordofan; some escape or are returned; and others are sold or transferred to third parties. The Group was unable to establish the extent of the onward sale of slaves. It received no information that would confirm the existence of actual slave markets. The Group also found evidence of ways other than abduction in which persons are put into conditions of slavery, which include being lured by false promises of employment. There are reports, which the Group was unable to confirm, that some abducted children are detained in institutions misleadingly described as Koranic schools.

In Ed Da'ein the Group interviewed a number of Rizeigat men, women and children who had been detained after the SPLA capture of Yei. We concluded that these particular individuals were not victims of abduction.

Finding 6. The Group was not able to establish the number of persons who have been abducted and/or enslaved. There are vast

divergences among available estimates. (See table under Research Priorities in the Supporting Analysis section.) The Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A have obstructed efforts by independent organizations from within and outside Sudan to investigate the problem of contemporary slavery and related issues.

Finding 7. The resurgence of slavery in contemporary Sudan differs both from the historical slave trade of the nineteenth-century and from the small-scale inter-tribal abduction (or "hostage-taking") that is endemic among many pastoral peoples in East and North-East Africa. The pattern of slave taking that has developed since the start of the civil war is, to a substantial degree, the product of a counter-insurgency strategy pursued by successive governments in Khartoum. This strategy involves arming local militias from northern Sudan. These militias attack villages in SPLA-controlled areas, principally along the boundary between northern and southern Sudan. They burn villages, loot cattle, rape and kill civilians, and abduct and enslave men, women and children. Such attacks are frequently carried out by militia members while employed by the government as auxiliary guards on military rail convoys traveling through SPLA-controlled areas.

Finding 8. The government acknowledges that abduction of civilians occurs. Its 1999 decision to create the Committee for the Elimination of Abduction of Women and Children (CEAWC) was a significant step in its recognition of the problem and its effort to address the plight of abducted persons. (See the discussion of CEAWC, including concerns about its effectiveness, in the Supporting Analysis section.) However, the government has failed to acknowledge its own responsibility for acts committed by militias and other forces under its authority. The lack of judicial control and appropriate structures of military accountability means that militia members are able to act with impunity.

Finding 9. The challenges of dealing with the issues of slavery, abduction and forced servitude are made much greater by an absence of democratic institutions and practices, both in areas controlled by the government and in those controlled by the SPLM/A and other armed groups. Specifically, there is an absence of pluralism, the rule of law, freedom of the press and other means of exchanging information, accountability in government and public administration, and independence of the judiciary. In government-controlled areas, this lack of transparency and accountability has severely limited the ability of citizens to voice grievances or seek judicial redress for a range of abuses, including abduction, slavery and forced servitude. In SPLM/A controlled areas, the lack of democratic governance, the obstruction of free inquiry, and the constraints imposed on civil society have hampered the ability to learn, the truth about alleged abuses of human rights, and to obtain remedies for them.

Finding 10. The Group notes with alarm recent reports from credible sources, including the Special Rapporteur on Sudan of the UN Commission on Human Rights, regarding increasing levels of fighting in areas of oil development in Western Upper Nile. The Group, while not able to visit this area, interviewed persons displaced in 2002 from Western Upper Nile. They report a pattern that includes the use of militias, attacks on civilians, forced displacement of large local populations, abduction and associated abuses. (See Selected Bibliography).

Finding 11. Bringing about an end to the practices of slavery, abduction and forced

servitude will require Sudan's national political and military leaders to speak out forcefully and to act vigorously against these practices. Denials of the existence of slavery and rationalizations for its existence may be interpreted by some as indifference or, worse, license to continue these abuses.

AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL GUARD OFFICERS

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 6, 2002

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that would authorize the appointment of National Guard officers as commanders of units composed of both active duty military personnel and National Guard troops in nonfederal status.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I support many of the transformation initiatives our military is undertaking. Through the vision and leadership of Secretary Roche and General Jumper, the Air Force has been a leading proponent of transformation. The Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System, or JSTARS, and the 116th Air National Guard unit at Robins Air Force Base are a prime example of a transformational mission. These unique units are on the verge of becoming even more transformational as they blend Air National Guard personnel into the active JSTARS unit. Currently, the 116th numbers more than 1,100 Air Guardsmen dedicated to defending our country. The 116th has been and will continue to be an Air National Guard unit that is the pinnacle of professionalism and honor; and will continue to be ready Anytime-Anywhere.

The Air Force has long been the model of full and seamless integration of the Reserve Components. Its Guard and Reserve associate programs are long-term success stories that maximize weapon system utilization while leveraging the expertise of Guard and Reserve personnel. In addition, active duty officers have successfully commanded Air National Guard fighter units.

My bill will provide another mechanism with which to further integrate active duty and National Guard members into blended units. At the same time, it preserves the unique non-Federal status of the National Guard officer while enabling that officer to command a unit of active duty and National Guard troops. This legislation is another step on the road of transformation.

REPEALING SUNSET OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TAX RELIEF REC- ONCILIATION ACT OF 2001 WITH RESPECT TO EXPANSION OF CERTAIN ADOPTION PROGRAMS

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 2002

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4800, a bill to repeal the sun-

set provisions in current law for adoption tax credit and adoption assistance programs. As a member of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, and more importantly, as the father of two adopted children. I want to encourage my colleagues to support this meaningful legislation.

As an adoptive father, I know from personal experience that expanding opportunities for adoption is not only good tax policy, but good family policy. My own family was forever changed and enriched by the adoption of our two children from Korea. Through that firsthand experience, I am able to share with my colleagues my personal realization that adoption links children who need homes to families who will love them.

In the past, however, the prohibitive cost of the adoption process has threatened the opportunity to bring children in need together with would-be families who have modest incomes. It may come as some surprise to my colleagues to know that families can often spend between \$8,000 and \$30,000 in the course of adopting a child. Earlier this session, Congress recognized the importance of removing financial hurdles to adoption by raising the limit on the adoption tax credit to \$10,000 for all adoptions and, in effect, opening thousands more homes and hearts to the miracle of adoption. Mr. Speaker, incentives for bringing families together should not be time limited and that is why I support this bill to repeal the sunset provisions on these tax credits.

I think it is particularly fitting that we consider this bill after recently celebrating Mother's Day, and so close to Father's Day. These two days have been set aside for us to thank our parents for raising us, for giving us a sense of security and independence, and for offering us their unconditional love. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all parents who know that there is no more important, more difficult, and ultimately more rewarding undertaking than raising a child.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting adoptive parents today by repealing the provisions that would end these important tax incentives.

URGING INCREASED FEDERAL FUNDING FOR JUVENILE TYPE 1 DIABETES RESEARCH

SPEECH OF

HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 2002

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Madam Speaker, as co-chair of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus I commend the House of Representatives for passing H. Con. Res. 36. This bill declares that Federal funding for diabetes research should be increased as recommended by the Diabetes Research Working Group, DRWG, so that a cure for juvenile diabetes can be found. Increasing funding for Type 1 diabetes research is vitally important to the well being of our country.

Like many Americans across the Nation, I have a personal attachment to diabetes—my

daughter has type 1 diabetes. This disease is one of the fastest-growing and most deadly diseases in the United States. Each year an estimated 800,000 new cases of diabetes are diagnosed. Diabetes currently costs the United States approximately \$100 billion and kills approximately 200,000 people every year.

With these severe economic and health costs in mind, I am pleased that the House of Representatives has supported this legislation to increase funding for Type 1 diabetes research. Diabetes research at the NIH comprises less than 4 percent of the NIH budget. Although, diabetes affects over 16 million Americans and individuals with diabetes account for one out of every four Medicare dollars spent. An investment in research that results in a cure for diabetes would save our Nation billions of dollars and would also prevent millions of individuals from ever acquiring the disease.

In 1997, I was proud to introduce legislation in the House to authorize the establishment of a Diabetes Research Working Group, DRWG. The DRWG was comprised of a group of outstanding scientists and experts knowledgeable about diabetes. As cochair of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus, I saw the need to permit researchers to take a step back and attempt to better focus the Federal Government's efforts to establish a long-term plan to put us on track toward curing diabetes.

We have fallen drastically short of the funding levels suggested by the DRWG. In FY 2001 the NIH devoted \$590 million to diabetes research, while the DRWG recommendation for funding was \$1.07 billion. H. Con. Res. 36, passed by the House yesterday, supports the recommendations of the DRWG for \$1.5 billion in research funding for FY 2003 at the NIH.

I fully support ensuring that all the recommendations of the DRWG are implemented. While we recognize the limitations of the budget, the momentum in the diabetes scientific community is too promising to slow our progress. Clinical trials involving the transplantation of insulin-producing cells into individuals with Type 1 diabetes has brought us within reach of a cure. Of the approximately 70 patients who have received these transplants, 80 percent no longer need to take insulin. As dramatic as these results are, several obstacles must still be overcome before this research can be made available to all individuals who suffer from diabetes.

H. Con. Res. 36 is a step in the right direction to support the NIH's extraordinary efforts and I urge the House of Representatives to consider the cost that diabetes inflicts on our Nation both in human and economic terms when considering funding for diabetes research and prevention later this year. The promise of diabetes research at this time is too great for us not to increase our commitment to the Americans who suffer from this devastating disease.