

Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1145

REGARDING EFFORTS TO ABOLISH SLAVERY AND OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN SUDAN

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 194) regarding the importance of international efforts to abolish slavery and other human rights abuses in the Sudan, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 194

Whereas the efforts of the government of Khartoum to subjugate the peoples of the southern Sudan have led to the death of more than 2,000,000 persons and the displacement of another 4,000,000 persons;

Whereas the Department of State's "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2001" estimates that between 5,000 and 15,000 Dinka women and children have been abducted during the past 15 years, and that between 10,000 and 12,000 persons remain in captivity;

Whereas credible observers report that some of the abductees were sold into slavery and others were used as forced labor or drafted into the military, including children;

Whereas the Department of State's "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2002" notes that persons held in government controlled "Peace" camps for internally displaced persons were reportedly subjected to forced labor;

Whereas the Special Rapporteur for Sudan to the General Assembly of the United Nations concluded, on November 4, 2002, that the dire human rights situation in Sudan had not significantly changed;

Whereas the United States Civilian Protection Monitoring Team (CPMT) reported in February 2003 that militia allied with the Government of Sudan and supported directly by Government of Sudan troops continued to abduct civilians in the western Upper Nile region of Sudan;

Whereas subsequent to the February 2003 report of the Civilian Protection Monitoring Team, the Government of Sudan restricted the movements of the CPMT and prevented it from carrying out its mandate;

Whereas the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights declares "[n]o one shall be held in slavery or servitude: slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms";

Whereas numerous human rights organizations, including Christian Solidarity International, the Center for Religious Freedom of Freedom House, and the American Anti-Slavery Group have demanded an end to slavery in all its forms and, in particular, to the abuses practiced by the Government of Sudan;

Whereas the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People adopted, in May 1995, a Resolution to Combat Modern Day Slavery stating that slavery in Sudan was an "irrefutable fact, corroborated by numerous sources," and pledging that "we will not rest until these slaves are freed";

Whereas the House of Representatives has repeatedly decried human rights abuses in Sudan and called for the abolition of the slave trade and of chattel slavery in Sudan;

Whereas the House of Representatives committed itself to practical measures to suppress the slave trade and chattel slavery

in the Sudan by the passage, by a vote of 359-8, in the 107th Congress of H.R. 5531, the "Sudan Peace Act", and the Senate passed a similar measure, S. 180, unanimously;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights conducted its 59th session in Geneva from March 17 through April 25, 2003;

Whereas the head of the United States delegation to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, declared in her opening address that "[t]he Commission has the solemn duty to speak for those who are denied the right to speak for themselves";

Whereas Human Rights Watch and many other concerned persons and organizations have called upon the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on human rights for Sudan, and to condemn gross abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law by the Sudanese Government and rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) forces; and

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, by a vote of 26 to 24 with 3 abstentions, refused to classify Sudan as an "Item 9" country, one in which grave human rights problems justify the appointment of a Special Rapporteur to investigate abuses and to report on them: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) slavery, under any circumstances, is an unconscionable practice;

(2) the subjection inherent in slavery inevitably leads to other abuses, including torture and rape;

(3) human rights abuses and slavery in Sudan remain a matter of the most profound concern;

(4) the United States must condemn attempts to ignore or condone these outrages;

(5) the United States must make clear to all members of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights that the refusal to condemn slavery in Sudan undermines any moral authority that the Commission might seek to exert in other areas;

(6) the United States must work to re-classify Sudan as an "Item 9" country, requiring a Special Rapporteur at the next session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights; and

(7) the United States should encourage the United Nations to consider reinstating sanctions against Sudan and should urge the European Union, the African Union, and all others who express concern for human freedom and dignity to be engaged in activities that will convince Sudan to abolish slavery and respect human rights.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. QUINN). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

To start, I would like to commend the author of this resolution, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO), and I would like to commend the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), the ranking member of the Africa Subcommittee. The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) is also one of the original co-sponsors of this resolution, and they are a few of the many Members who have worked diligently to keep attention on the human rights situation in Sudan.

The conflict in Sudan, pitting the National Islamic Front Government against armed forces in the south struggling for political autonomy and with religious freedom has brought incomprehensible suffering to the people of Sudan. The numbers are truly staggering. There have been over 2 million Sudanese who have died over the past 2 decades alone due to war-related causes. Twice that number have been displaced.

In March of 2001, Secretary of State Colin Powell told the Committee on International Relations "... there is perhaps no greater tragedy on the face of the Earth today than the tragedy that is unfolding in the Sudan." Those were the words of our Secretary of State.

It is the Sudanese government that bears most all of the responsibility for this human rights disaster. Khartoum has long been responsible for marauding militias with notorious human rights abuses against southerners, including taking slaves and forcing conversions to Islam. These and other human rights abuses including blocking emergency food deliveries have rightly earned the Sudanese government widespread condemnation for these acts. In appointing former Senator John Danforth as his special envoy to Sudan in 2001, President Bush said, "For nearly 2 decades, the government of Sudan has waged a brutal and shameful war against its own people. And this is not right and this must stop." Such condemnation was also made by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights until this year.

The Commission had classified Sudan as an "Item 9" country, denoting its grave human rights problems. This brought needed international attention to these abuses primarily through the appointment and work of a Special Rapporteur to Sudan who was doing valuable human rights reporting on the ground in Sudan. Yet in April, the members of the commission representing individual countries in a 26 to 24 vote made the incomprehensible decision to end this status for Sudan. This was done despite the Special Rapporteur's judgment that the dire human rights situation in Sudan had not significantly improved and all the violations that respected human rights organizations have reported. This decision mars the commission, and it needs to be reversed.

House Resolution 194 states that "human rights abuses and slavery in

Sudan remain a matter of the most profound concern” and that “the United States must work to reclassify Sudan as an ‘Item 9’ country, requiring a Special Rapporteur at the next session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.” And this is the honest thing to do. It is also the just thing to do. It is the right thing to do in defense of victimized Sudanese who are suffering, and it is the right thing to do in memory of those who have perished. Designating Sudan a human rights special case is also a constructive step in support of the peace process in Sudan. We gain nothing by being blind to human rights abuses in Sudan.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of this resolution. First of all, Mr. Speaker, let me commend the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO) for introducing H. Res. 194 concerning the ongoing problem of slavery in Sudan. This resolution keeps Congress on record in opposition to this inhumane practice. I also would like to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), chairman of the Africa Subcommittee, for his support of this resolution and for his continued good work as it relates to the problems on the continent of Africa; and with his leadership we have been able to have many hearings and to discuss many of the problems there. I would also like to compliment the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) for his interest and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), ranking member, for the strong support that he has given these resolutions.

In spite of the universal condemnation of the practice of slavery in Sudan, the government has stonewalled on issues of slavery, claiming it is a matter of rival tribes engaging in hostage-taking over which it has little control. Prior to this, they actually denied the fact that there was any kind of engaging of people in slave trade. Now they admit it, but say it is just a traditional thing.

Mr. Speaker, between 5,000 and 14,000 children have been abducted in Sudan since 1983. Millions of girls have been forced into domestic service worldwide while boys have been trafficked to the gulf to work as menial laborers. Yet the Government of Sudan only takes half measures to convince the international community that it is taking the crime of slavery seriously. While they claim that there are laws in their country that prohibit slavery, there is no aggressive enforcement of those laws and no special courts dedicated to this singularly heinous practice against children.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress has never wavered in its demand to end slavery. With this resolution, we urge the administration and all international bodies to continue pressure to end this practice of slavery.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the sponsor of this resolution, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO).

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), ranking member; the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE); and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for bringing this matter to the floor on this issue and for their great leadership on this issue and many other issues relative to the issues around the world, particularly with regard to the continent of Africa.

I want the people at home listening to understand what we are talking about. The word “slavery” just kind of rolls off the tongue, and in many ways I think people sometimes think we are talking in a figurative manner. We are talking about literal slavery, old-fashioned slavery where the government of one country either directly sanctions or indirectly allows one group of people to enslave another, to put them up on an auction block and sell them as I would sell a bicycle. It is not figurative. It is not some hyperbole. It is actual real textbook slavery that I think most Americans, if we ask them, would think has been gone from the face of this Earth since the middle of last century. It is not gone and this is a government, a country, not just a few renegades. This is not a criminal activity that uses women for sex slaves and uses children for forced labor; this is not that. This is an actual government who allows this to continue and in many cases participates in it indirectly. That is what we are talking about here.

What we are asking for is the United Nations to stand up. Just yesterday we took two votes on the United Nations. I pride myself on being a supporter of the United Nations, and I consider myself an internationalist. I think this country and the world is better off if we can talk to each other. I think the United Nations plays a valuable role. Yet the United Nations itself, a committee of the United Nations, said slavery is okay. I cannot be more offended than by that vote. I think it should be noted that the Chair of that commission is the country of Libya. An amazing coincidence. An amazing coincidence.

This administration, the Bush administration, has done a good job on this, and I do not agree with them on many things. On this issue they have stood up tall and been right, and I appreciate that and I congratulate them for that. This resolution and my message on this resolution is to the United Nations. If they want people like me to continue to support them, I do not think it is a very high bar to say to them that they need to stand up against slavery. How is that a high

bar? I cannot imagine an any lower bar. Yet they have not. Honestly from a United Nations perspective, I cannot think of another vote that they have taken that has more offended me particularly in modern times.

This resolution is simple, and again I congratulate and thank the leaders of the Committee on International Relations for bringing this forward. This is really a message to the U.N. to get back on their game, stand up, stand up for the easiest issue in the world. If they do not, they jeopardize support from people like me and I think they undermine their credibility on every other issue around the world; and I find that to be absolutely the opposite of what the United Nations, what the United States stands for and our support for the United Nations.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for those comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), who has worked very hard on this issue herself.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

And I must thank the gentleman for his continuous hard work on this issue. He and I came to the floor several years ago when slavery in Sudan had never been mentioned on this floor and did a 1-hour Special Order. We were the first to raise the consciousness of this House, and it is very gratifying to see that that consciousness remains raised. I know the gentleman has gone to Sudan and as a member of the Committee on International Relations continues to press this matter forward, and we need the whole House and we need the whole country to do so.

President Bush has just been to Africa and declared that slavery is a crime, and of course he meant slavery involving African Americans; but I am sure he meant it worldwide as well, and I thank the President not only for that trip but for his own initiatives on Sudan, still a largely unknown, a little recognized issue in our country. We have a nation, 70 percent are Sunni Muslims, 25 percent are Animists; Christians, 5 percent. We have come to the floor again and again with resolutions similar to this, and this resolution is very mild. It just asks the United Nations to consider reinstating sanctions.

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The United States has also instituted sanctions under President Clinton; and it calls upon others, our allies, to express the same concern essentially that we have expressed: the African Union, which should be taking leadership here, the European Union. We need allies on this matter, and we need them desperately. Because, if the truth be told, almost no progress has been made. That is the sad truth that we must face.

There is still widespread institutionalized slavery, according to the

most recent report on Sudan. There is still massive dislocation and wholesale discrimination against the non-Muslim population.

The administration has made efforts, as we had Foreign Minister Ismail come to this country for consultations with the State Department, a delegation to come with consultations. I am not sure what comes out of these consultations, however, nor am I sure what we use as guideposts to determine whether progress is being made. And we understand the role Sudan plays as a possible center of terrorism. Terrorism has been strongly associated with Sudan, so we have extra reason to press forward.

Comprehensive sanctions, however, were put forward in 1997 as early as the Clinton administration, but they were our comprehensive sanctions. We are one country. There is a lot of oil in this country, and others continue to ignore slavery in Sudan. We have a humanitarian crisis. We need what the resolution calls for.

We need more as well. We need to increase assistance using religious and other nongovernmental organizations to distribute food and assistance on a nondiscriminatory basis. We need the United States to take the initiative in the United Nations so that sanctions go beyond a few nations like our own and so that we put a goalpost out here so that we can judge Sudan by whether there is an end to the bombings of civilians that keeps food from getting to them and into slavery and into the war itself.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the Congress continue to keep this matter in its sights until we see some progress at last.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume just to conclude by thanking the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, 2 million people have died as a result of the practices of the government of Sudan; 4 million have been displaced. We have had the EGAT nations attempt to come to a conclusion, a solution to this problem. We continually push this issue of slavery. It must be abolished, and other human rights abuses in Sudan must end.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Sudan peace process is, frankly, entering a very critical period. Some have described the next few months as the end game. There are elements in the government of Sudan who appear to desire peace. General Lazaro Sumbeiywo, the Kenyan mediator, has optimistically announced that he expects to have a peace deal by mid-August.

One thing is sure, though. If peace is to have a chance in Sudan, the U.S. and others will have to aggressively monitor any peace agreement, including paying close attention to human rights conditions. Should a peace

agreement be struck, the Special Rapporteur would have an important role to play in ensuring that the new government respects the rights of all Sudanese. There is no reason in the world for the Special Rapporteur to be sidelined now. This resolution says Sudan is a human rights case that demands an international human rights spotlight.

It is critical that all parties in Sudan, especially the government, understand that there will be consequences for those who shun peace and perpetuate human rights abuses in Sudan. The Sudan Peace Act, signed into law last year, provides for such consequences.

Today, the House of Representatives is going on record with another stern warning that slavery and other gross human rights abuses in Sudan are intolerable and that the U.S. is watching. That is the message of this resolution which I urge my colleagues to support.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, as you are keenly aware, the road to peace for the people of Sudan has been long and perilous. Yet the prospect for a lasting peace may finally be at hand. Negotiations among the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) have been ongoing over the past ten months under a renewed commitment to peace and with a determination to resolve the important issues that remain.

I observed today, the debate on H. Res. 194 regarding the importance of international efforts to abolish slavery and other human rights abuses in Sudan. Mr. Speaker, I share the concerns of my distinguished colleagues and their desire to see an end to slavery and human rights abuses, be it Sudan or elsewhere in the world. But while we cannot condone or even forget the past, in my view the interests of the people of Sudan are best served by focusing on the future and finding lasting peace and stability for the region.

On April 21, 2003, President Bush, in his presidential determination under the Sudan Peace Act, certified that the government of Sudan and the People's Liberation Movement (SPLM/A) are negotiating in good faith. This historic event underscores the government of Sudan's commitment to peace and sets the stage for a negotiated peace agreement and the chance for dignity, prosperity and a better way of life for the people of Sudan, especially for Sudanese children.

Mr. Speaker, there will be those who will criticize the President's decision and who will focus on past history while giving little recognition to the positive events of the past year. The tragedy of such criticism is that it promotes a policy of divisiveness instead of unity which would enhance the prospects for peace and stability to the region. Even more troublesome is that such criticism shifts the focus from the real prospects for peace that now exist. While progress on the peace front has not been without setbacks, positive developments have and continue to occur and should not be ignored.

Mr. Speaker, the release of special envoy John Danforth's April 2002 report "Outlook for Peace in Sudan" put in motion the events to date that have helped reestablish the present framework for peace. Following the Danforth

report, an important first step towards peace was the signing of the Machakos Protocol, on July 20, 2002, resolving the major issues of self-determination for the south and the separation of state and religion. In September 2002, peace talks resumed under a negotiated ceasefire agreement and in October, 2002, the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to allow unimpeded humanitarian access to all areas and to people in need, in accordance with the Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) agreement.

In addition, an addendum to the October 2002 MOU on cessation of hostilities was signed to add new mechanisms to strengthen implementation. Later in February, the human rights group Amnesty International was invited to visit Sudan for constructive dialogue on human rights issues.

On March 4, the mandate of the Civilian Protection Monitoring Team (CPMT) was extended for another year. Later in March, the ceasefire agreement was extended to June 30, 2003. Most recently, on May 1 the United Nations secured the opening of a new corridor in southern Sudan to enhance humanitarian access to the region.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my distinguished colleagues will view these developments as testimony to the government of Sudan's commitment to achieving a lasting peace for the benefit of all our people.

While these and other events give hope for peace and a permanent end to hostilities, there are many of my colleagues who remain skeptical.

There remain roughly 90 days before the next "Determination" under the Sudan peace act must be made. I would call on my colleagues to join me in support an NGO-sponsored fact finding delegation mission to Sudan and an accompanying report on the findings to assist in fully understanding the current situation in the Sudan with regard to allegations of slavery, human rights abuses and religious persecution.

Mr. Speaker. The situation in Sudan is the product of nearly a half-century of conflict and political divisiveness. While we must never forget the past, the interests of the Sudanese people will be best served by focusing on the future and achieving lasting peace.

We look forward to the day when peace is at hand and when U.S. sanctions can be lifted and Sudan removed from the state terrorist sponsors list. Only then will the people of Sudan be able to receive the benefits of American ingenuity, technology and investment for their sustained growth and economic prosperity.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LINDER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 194, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.