

I was a young woman in my twenties serving in the Louisiana State Legislature when Justice O'Connor was appointed to the Supreme Court, and I remember that day very clearly. I always knew I wanted to serve the people of my country, and on that day I realized that there was no limit to what one woman could do.

And today, 24 years later, I am a woman standing on the floor of the U.S. Senate while the number of women in the Louisiana State Legislature has grown from 2 to 24. We all owe a great debt to pioneering women like Sandra Day O'Connor who broke the judicial glass ceiling and paved the way for me and for millions of other women.

But O'Connor's legacy is not limited to the barriers she broke. Throughout her 24 years of service, Justice O'Connor has proven herself to be one of our Nation's leading legal scholars, consistently putting the rule of law ahead of politics. She has been a champion of the law, a champion for our rights, and a champion for our country.

Finding an appropriate successor to such a dedicated jurist is a heavy task indeed.

To protect the rights and liberties of all Americans, there is perhaps no more important decision a President makes than nominating a Justice to the Supreme Court. I strongly urge President Bush to rise above the partisan politics that have gripped recent judicial confirmations and to reach out to both Republican and Democratic Senators as he selects a nominee to succeed Justice O'Connor.

It is the Senate's constitutional duty to provide advice and consent. To provide real advice and to grant real consent, every single Senator must weigh the nomination carefully and consciously.

Senators from both sides of the aisle must come together to ensure that the next member of the Supreme Court will uphold the rights of the American people and base his or her decisions on the law and the Constitution—not on political ideology.

I hope President Bush will join us in this partnership and allow us to provide real advice at this historic time.

Working together, I am confident that we can find a suitable Justice who will follow the great precedent of Sandra Day O'Connor.

DESTRUCTION IN ZIMBABWE

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I call attention to and condemn the current tragic actions by the government of Zimbabwe.

At present, more than 200,000 people have been made homeless as a result of "Operation Restore Order"—a 5-week-old government campaign to destroy informal dwellings and businesses in Zimbabwe's cities. Alternatively, the operation is also being called Operation Murambatsvina—meaning operation "Drive Out Rubbish."

Whatever the name, this operation is horrific. It is appalling. And it must end.

As a State Department spokesman affirmed last week—"it's uncondonable, inexcusable, and we will continue to speak out and act diplomatically to achieve justice for those who have been so senselessly disadvantaged." That is why I speak today.

The targets of this ongoing campaign are Zimbabwe's very poorest citizens—individuals who are already suffering from 80 percent unemployment, 600-percent inflation and widespread food shortages. An the true reasons for this campaign have not been made fully clear.

Zimbabwe's President, Robert Mugabe, says the crackdown is designed to "restore sanity" in urban areas—areas which he says have become overrun with criminals.

But Zimbabwe's cities are also the centers of opposition political activity.

Due to the worsening situation in the urban areas, including a lack of fuel and a diminishing food supply, the government may be moving poor people out of the cities in an effort to increase control over the population.

Unfortunately, because of Mugabe's government controls, there has been a severe lack of verifiable information coming out of Zimbabwe. But daily dispatches are telling us of people being forced into labor on state-run farms, and young people being sent to youth militia camps. Most disturbing are the tragic reports that children are being crushed and killed in these raids.

Last Friday, these events led 10 United Nations special rapporteurs on human rights to issue a strong statement of concern about the "recent mass forced evictions in Zimbabwe and related human rights violations."

I briefly read a portion of this statement, which was issued through the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner on Human Rights:

Since 18 May 2005 Zimbabwean authorities are reported to have forcibly evicted an estimated 200,000 people from Harare and 29 other locations across Zimbabwe, with some reports stating that up to a million people may face eviction if the operation continues. . . . These evictions have targeted . . . informal traders and families living in informal settlements, including women with HIV/AIDS, widows, children with disabilities. Many evictees, including women, are reported to have been beaten up by police. The evictees have been given no prior notice, no opportunity to appeal and no opportunity to retrieve property and goods from homes and shops before destruction . . . With the exception of a few inadequate transit camps, there is no evidence that the Government has explored any alternatives to the evictions or offered adequate alternative housing and many evictees have been left completely homeless.

I find this situation to be alarming at the very least. These demolitions sound a lot like political retribution and forced human displacement. And the deliberate destruction of the homes is a clear violation of fundamental human rights.

In light of this alleged, sustained and deliberate destruction, I commend Kofi Annan's recent decision to send Ms. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka as his Special Envoy to Zimbabwe to further investigate and respond to this tragedy.

Anna currently serves as the Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of U.N. HABITAT, and is a good friend.

This past Sunday, Anna arrived in Harare as the head of a seven-member delegation to investigate the true impact of Mugabe's so-called "cleaning" operation.

Sending Anna and the delegation is a very positive step, and I am encouraged by the visit. And I urge President Mugabe to continue to allow Anna and her team full access to impacted areas. I look forward to hearing about and reading the delegation's findings.

At the same time, I want to commend international leaders, including British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Australian Prime Minister John Howard, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, as well as over 200 international human rights and civics groups for publicly condemning these continued atrocities and human rights abuses.

As an international community, we share a collective responsibility to assist the people of Zimbabwe and bring about a meaningful end to this man-made tragedy.

But I also echo international calls for Zimbabwe's neighbors to step forward and put pressure on the Mugabe government. I urge Zimbabwe's African neighbors to take effective action and intervene. In particular, I urge the African Union to take meaningful action.

The fact is, the latest demolitions are part of a larger, sustained pattern of human rights violations being carried out by President Mugabe and his government.

As the 2004 State Department Human Rights Report relates, and I will read a brief paragraph directly:

President Mugabe and his party used intimidation and violence to maintain political power. A systematic, government sanctioned campaign of violence targeting supporters and perceived supporters of the opposition continued during the year. Security forces committed at least one extrajudicial killing. Ruling party supporters, with material support from the Government, continued their occupation of commercial farms, and in some cases killed, abducted, tortured, intimidated, raped, or threatened farm occupants. Security forces, government-sanctioned youth militias, and ruling party supporters tortured, raped, and otherwise abused persons perceived to be associated with the opposition; some persons died from their injuries.

I remind my colleagues that this very same government is also a current member of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights—which is yet another travesty.

But the immediate issue facing us today is the current government campaign to demolish Zimbabwe's urban areas. We cannot ignore this continued destruction and abuse. We simply cannot look the other way.

As Secretary Rice outlined in her confirmation hearing before the Foreign Relations Committee earlier this year, Zimbabwe remains one of the outposts of tyranny.

And as Secretary Rice rightly remarked, "America stands with oppressed people on every continent."

At the time, she referenced Natan Sharansky and what he calls the "Town Square Test," saying that the world should apply that test. To quote the Secretary directly, "if a person cannot walk into the middle of the town square and express his or her views without fear of arrest, imprisonment, or physical harm, then that person is living in a fear society, not a free society. We cannot rest until every person living in a 'fear society' is living in a 'free society.'"

These remarks are even more relevant in light of current events. The people living in Zimbabwe's cities are clearly living in a society of fear. Their town squares are literally being torn down—the rubble crushing the people of that country.

I look forward to working with the Administration, and supporting international efforts to provide meaningful assistance to the people of Zimbabwe.

CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I rise to speak a moment about why I am strongly opposed to the Dominican Republic/Central American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Bill, or CAFTA it is often referred to. CAFTA threatens a proud heritage and a way of life in Louisiana that dates back more than 250 years. Our great-great-great grandfathers were raising cane long before our country was even born. Since 1751, Louisiana sugar cane farmers have been farming the fertile soil of our great State. Before the marble Walls of Congress were ever erected, Louisianans built an industry that would weather hurricanes, the Great Depression and even the Civil War.

These farmers have good reason to be proud. American sugar producers are among the most efficient in the world. Two-thirds of the world's more than 100 sugar-producing countries produce at a higher cost than the U.S. And in my State of Louisiana, farmers produce about 20 percent of the sugar grown in the United States and currently rank fourth in the Nation in production of sugar, producing an average revenue of \$750 million per year.

But today, we are prepared to deal this proud industry a death blow. We are talking about undoing centuries of tradition and stripping away jobs from efficient Louisiana farmers. As passed, this trade agreement would have a serious and harmful effect on sugar producers in my State: CAFTA will equal job loss and financial despair for 27,000 Louisiana sugar workers and farmers. Along with additional bilateral trade agreements, CAFTA could cost my

State \$750 million in direct sugar sales, as well as \$2 billion in industry-related revenue each year.

In any trade negotiation, there are losses and there are wins. Oftentimes we are willing to accept the impacts these deals might have on our domestic producers because in the long run the good outweighs the bad. But that is not the case. CAFTA is a relatively small trade deal with a group of countries whose combined economies are smaller than that of New Haven, CT. Nearly half of all Central Americans earn less than \$2 a day, and they simply cannot afford the meats or crops we have to sell. That is why the Louisiana Farm Bureau has joined other State farm bureaus, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, and numerous national farm groups in opposing CAFTA. Even our own Government's economic estimates say that CAFTA will mean little to agriculture or to our country as a whole; and these are known to be quite optimistic estimates. That is because as the administration points out time and time again—we already dominate the import market of this poor region.

According to estimates by the U.S. International Trade Commission, CAFTA would actually increase our trade deficit with Central America while benefiting our economy by less than one-hundredth of 1 percent. That is worth repeating again. The administration's economists say that CAFTA will increase our trade deficit with the region while boosting our own economy by less than 0.01 percent.

This same study concluded that for other farmers CAFTA would have "a negligible impact on total U.S. production and employment." Why then are we talking about dismantling my State's sugar industry? U.S. farmers and ranchers get little in return for sending thousands to the ranks of the unemployed.

So what we have here is another raw deal for Louisiana sugar. I urge my colleagues to take a long, hard look at our country's current agricultural trade agenda. This year, the USDA says America will import as much food as we export. The agricultural trade surplus that stood at \$27 billion less than 10 years ago is now gone. The promises made to farmers during the NAFTA debates have come up flat. And the promises that will be made today about CAFTA are contradicted by the administration's own estimates.

In closing, let me say I support free trade, so long as it is fair. Fair free trade requires that all players operate on as equal and level a playing field as possible, accountable to the same labor laws, environmental standards, and governmental intervention. To sacrifice even one job for a trade deal that will deepen our agricultural trade deficit is a travesty. And, having to tell thousands of hard-working farmers in Louisiana that they must look for work, because sugar was used as a bargaining chip, is unacceptable.

ZIMBABWE

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise to express my shock and alarm over the most recent turn taken in Zimbabwe's deepening political and economic crisis. As my colleagues know, the ruling regime in Harare recently launched a massive campaign to destroy the homes of hundreds of thousands of urban Zimbabweans, evicting men, women, and children—in at least one case reportedly evicting even AIDS orphans—under the auspices of "driving out the rubbish."

Many analysts believe that the Government is attempting to forcibly relocate the urban population—which tends to support the political opposition—to rural areas in order to diffuse resistance to its repressive policies. The ruling party may also be attempting to revitalize the agricultural sector, which has been devastated by its policies, through this campaign of forced relocation to rural areas. What is certain is that this kind of deliberate displacement of people in a country where 3 to 4 million already need food assistance is an absolute outrage.

Sadly, this is what we have come to expect from President Mugabe and his cronies. This same government has refused food assistance for hungry people; manipulated available food assistance for political purposes; systematically attacked the independence of the judiciary; silenced independent media voices; and created, often through coercion, brutally violent youth militias to terrorize civilians.

I commend Chairman MARTINEZ for speaking out so forthrightly on this issue. I am pleased to join him here today. I have also joined with my colleague, Senator DURBIN, in working to encourage U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to treat this crisis with the urgency it deserves, and I also thank him for his leadership. And I recently joined with Senator MCCAIN to assure Secretary of State Rice of the strong, bipartisan support that exists here for an energized Zimbabwe policy.

But we can and must do more to oppose this campaign of abuse. We must continue to speak plainly to Southern African leaders about the toll that their silence about this ongoing crisis takes on their credibility, and about the loss of investor and donor confidence in the region that is a consequence of Zimbabwe's ceaseless downward spiral over the past 5 years.

The administration has spoken out commendably regarding the Zimbabwe crisis, but more could be done to take action that would bolster their tough talk. Targeted sanctions could have more bite, and the U.S. and other key donors could more clearly link support for laudable initiatives such as the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development to restoration of respect for civil and political rights and the rule of law in Zimbabwe.

Those of us who have followed the crisis in Zimbabwe often feel a sense of frustration as we watch so much of