

In times of dissonance, inequality, and injustice, great leaders like Lincoln have reminded us of our Nation's true purpose: equality.

On Lincoln's birthday, let's rededicate ourselves to our Nation's unfinished work. Let's ensure that women get equal pay for equal work. Let's recognize all love as equal and extend marriage rights to all of our citizens once and for all. Let's strengthen the Voting Rights Act to guarantee that no one is disenfranchised and all Americans have access to this fundamental right.

Let's finish the work the Senate started and pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill. Let's pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act so that no American can be fired simply because of who they love or who they are. Let's allow our neighbors and friends who put in a full day's work, whether in the mailroom or the boardroom, to provide their families with a living wage.

Lincoln modestly believed that "no one would long remember" his address that day at Gettysburg, but we do remember and strive to honor all those who have sacrificed and struggled—and continue to struggle—for equality because we believe, as Dr. King spoke of on the steps of Lincoln's own sacred memorial, "that one day this Nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

WORLD IS SILENT AS SUDAN RENEWS GENOCIDAL ATTACKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. McGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation inside Sudan. Regrettably, as the attention of the world has been pulled in many different directions, the people of Sudan have been forgotten.

For over a year and a half, the situation inside Sudan has been getting worse and worse. It happens quietly, out of the limelight, but the suffering of the Sudanese people is not silent. Their cries are deafening to those trying to help.

On July 22, 2004, the House of Representatives adopted House Concurrent Resolution 467 by a vote of 422–0. That resolution declared that the crimes of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir in Darfur constituted genocide.

Over a decade later, the Sudanese government has renewed and increased its genocidal attacks in Darfur. As humanitarian agencies withdraw from the region, unable to carry out their missions in the face of unrelenting attacks, the civilian and displaced populations of Darfur are left without protection and without witnesses.

In the past weeks, the government-supported Janjaweed—now reincar-

nated as Bashir's Rapid Support Forces, or RSF—have intensified their scorched earth campaign of attacks, bombings, rape, displacement, and destruction.

According to the Satellite Sentinel Project and the Enough project, these forces are "better equipped, centrally commanded, and fully integrated into the state's security apparatus, with legal immunity from prosecution."

According to reports by United to End Genocide, since January 1, at least 20,000 innocent civilians have been forced to flee their homes in Darfur. President al-Bashir is bombing civilians, blocking the investigation of the reported mass rape of over 200 Darfuri women and, in the midst of the sharpest increase in violence in years, demanding the removal of U.N. peacekeepers.

On January 6, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that 115 villages have either been abandoned or burned to the ground in North Darfur. Attackers have forced women, children, and the elderly to leave their villages with nothing to survive on, often looting everything belonging to civilians.

It is clear that the RSF and their masters in Khartoum are engaged in a campaign to strip the people of Darfur of everything they own, anything that might keep them alive, and condemn them to increasing poverty displacement, starvation, and death. And the world—including Congress and the U.N. Security Council—remains silent.

In the border states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, defenseless civilians in the Nuba Mountains face a relentless bombing campaign by the Sudanese Air Force and ground attacks by the Sudanese Armed Forces. On January 20, a hospital in South Kordofan run by Doctors Without Borders was deliberately targeted by an aerial bombing campaign, depriving the local population of lifesaving care.

In the past few months, under the auspices of the African Union, countries from the region, as well as the United States and Europe, have sought to bring the Bashir regime and various rebel forces to the table in order to negotiate a cessation of hostilities and promote an inclusive national dialogue. This is a worthy effort with worthy goals, but while such talks meander, Khartoum continues its genocidal campaign to impose military solutions to the political crisis facing Sudan.

President Bashir has no political solution to Sudan's problems. As the people of Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile know only too well, displacement, starvation, and death are the only strategies being pursued by the government in real time and in real life.

It is unconscionable—it is shameful—that these horrors are taking place inside Sudan in complete silence. The lack of response by the United States, by the Europeans, by the nations of the

region only serves to provide Bashir with a green light to continue the killing.

Over 10 years ago, Congress called these very same actions acts of genocide and crimes against humanity. At the end of this month, I intend to reintroduce an updated version of my bipartisan bill, the Sudan Peace, Security, and Accountability Act, and demonstrate to the suffering people of Sudan—especially those in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile—that we hear their cries and that this House intends to take action.

I ask all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in this effort.

[From United to End Genocide, Dec. 9, 2014]

WILL 2015 BE THE WORST YEAR FOR SUDAN?

(By Daniel Sullivan)

Sudan's impunity and intransigence have taken a sharp turn for the worse. That's a pretty high bar considering the country's track record since the genocide in Darfur started more than a decade ago. But even measured against a long history of abuse, Sudan's recent actions led by President Omar al-Bashir are a particularly harsh slap in the face for the international community.

In recent weeks, the Government of Sudan has newly bombed civilians in Darfur and the Nuba Mountains, blocked the investigation of a reported mass rape of over 200 Darfuri women, and, in the midst of the sharpest increase in violence and displacement in years, called for the removal of UN peacekeepers.

These new bold actions must be met with equally bold measures by the United States and the rest of the international community.

The facts are astounding. More than 430,000 people newly displaced in Darfur in 2014, the highest number since the height of the genocide. Over 2,000 bombs dropped in South Kordofan and Blue Nile since fighting began there in 2012. And new bombings in Darfur are in clear violation of UN Security Council Resolutions.

"Increased criminality" and "prevailing insecurity" cited in the latest report of the UN Secretary General on Darfur including fifty-five cases of violence, nearly half by government forces, in recorded by UN peacekeepers in the last 90 days. Serious allegations of mass rape that the UN Secretary General and highest UN peacekeeping officials have insisted must be investigated.

Yet, the Sudanese government is blatant in its denial. Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, wanted on charges of genocide by the International Criminal Court, accused the UN peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID) of being a "security burden" and blamed foreigners for fabricating rape allegations to "confuse the improvement of the situation in Darfur".

To make matters worse, this is not just an escalation of the kind of posturing the Sudanese regime has practiced in the past. Bashir is also getting new support from Russia. In a recent visit, the Russian Foreign Minister announced plans for increased military support for the Sudanese regime and the Sudanese government said that Russia supports its position on removal of UNAMID.

The irony is that as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Russia is among those responsible for failing to support UNAMID.

On paper, the Council has given UNAMID a strong mandate, backed by the strongest authorizations under Chapter VII of the UN Charter including the use of force to protect civilians. But in reality, Sudan has been allowed to intimidate UNAMID and there has

been little accountability from the international community when the mission fails to report or act to protect civilians.

The way to address these problems is not play into the hands of the perpetrators and to remove the imperfect last line of defense for many civilians, but rather to reinforce the peacekeeping mission so that it can carry out the mission that has been set out for it.

The UN Security Council, including Russia, must live up to its own commitments in terms of justice and accountability. The year 2014 will close with the latest briefing of the UN Security Council on Darfur by the Chief Prosecutor to the International Criminal Court (ICC) Fatou Bensouda. Amazingly, this is the 20th such briefing since the Council referred the case of Darfur to the ICC.

In her last such briefing, Bensouda admonished the Security Council for its failure to take action in the face of “total impunity” in Darfur and called for “a dramatic shift in this Council’s approach to arresting Darfur suspects”. Six months later little has been done to support the court.

Sadly, the only dramatic shift has come on the part of the Government of Sudan whose latest intransigence is mind-bogglingly being met with more welcome than condemnation. For the sake of past victims of genocide and those now in the cross-hairs of the sharpest uptick in violence in nearly a decade, the Security Council must respond.

DEAR MADAM, DEAR SIR, DEAR COLLEAGUE, Please find below a statement released today by Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) regarding the aerial bombing of a hospital operated by MSF in Sudan on January 20, forcing the suspension of medical activities.

You may find the full statement below, and on the website.

Sincerely,

MANUEL LANNAUD.

SUDAN: MSF HOSPITAL BOMBED IN SOUTH KORDOFAN

NEW YORK/PARIS, January 22, 2015.—A hospital operated by the international medical humanitarian organization Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) was directly targeted in an aerial bombing in Sudan on January 20, forcing the suspension of medical activities, MSF announced today.

The hospital, located in the Nuba Mountains village of Frandala in the South Kordofan region of Sudan, was bombed by the Sudanese Air Force (SAF). Repeated and targeted bombings in the region prevent the safe operation of medical activities, depriving the local population of lifesaving care.

“We condemn in the strongest terms the bombing of the Frandala hospital,” said Marc Van der Mullen, MSF head of mission. “With more than 100 patients present, we were very lucky not to have more casualties because people simply had no time to seek protection. Everyone is shocked and frightened of further attacks.”

Approximately 150 patients and staff were in the hospital when a SAF fighter jet dropped a cluster of 13 bombs, two of which landed inside the hospital compound. The others struck just outside the hospital fence. One MSF staff member and one patient were injured. The property also suffered damage.

The attack is part of an indiscriminate bombing campaign in South Kordofan, a feature of the war between authorities in Khartoum and rebels groups in the Nuba Mountains. Health facilities are not spared, adding to the suffering of the population created by the bombing raids.

The Frandala hospital was previously bombed in June, 2014. That attack took place despite the Sudanese government’s knowl-

edge of the hospital location and its activities, which had been previously communicated to the authorities by MSF. One patient was killed in the attack and several others were wounded. The hospital also sustained significant damage. MSF publicly condemned the attack and demanded respect of medical facilities.

“Today there can be no doubt that this was a deliberate and targeted bombing on a civilian hospital structure and part of a strategy to terrorize the community,” said Van der Mullen. “MSF again calls on Khartoum to respect assistance provided to the population. Despite this latest setback we will try to find a way to continue to provide care to the population caught in this largely undocumented war.”

MSF is one of the few health care providers in South Kordofan. The MSF facility in Frandala, featuring outpatient and inpatient wards, began operating in 2012. Nearly 80,000 consultations have been performed, along with close to 4,000 hospitalizations.

FUND HOMELAND SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, the President has issued an AUMF, which is the authority to determine the questions of war and peace, particularly in light of the dangers we face with ISIS. In spite of that, we are holding hostage the funding of the armor of security for this Nation, the Department of Homeland Security, the committee upon which I have sat since the horrible, heinous act of 9/11.

We take our work very seriously. We know that we oversee the national security of this Nation, along with the very important aspect and leadership of our Defense Department. Every day, we are mindful of the roles that individuals play who are a part of the Department of Homeland Security.

Rather than looking to be concerned about the dangers of unaccompanied children, as our Republican friends seem to be, challenging the President’s thoughtful executive actions within the context of his constitutional authority, we are now using those reasons for holding hostage the very armor of domestic security.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you, the TSA officers that I see as I travel around this country are front liners. I speak to them all the time. They have protected this Nation from various attacks—or potential attacks, might I say—stopping threats that many of us are not even aware of. These very faithful workers, along with border security workers, will have to work without pay. There will have to be a reordering of the strategies of the Secretary of Homeland Security.

Mr. Speaker, 40,000 Border Patrol agents; 50,000 TSA personnel; 13,000 Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, officers; 40,000 Coast Guard; and 4,000 Secret Service officers will be threatened by this.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I demand that we do the right thing, with 8 legislative days left. Fund the Department of

Homeland Security. Speak in a tone that is that of America. Defend our Nation. Protect our Nation. Stop this politicizing of the funding of the Department of Homeland Security.

I ask the Republicans to join me in an important patriotic effort. Fund the Department of Homeland Security.

TRIBUTE TO ERNIE BANKS, AMBASSADOR FOR BASEBALL, MR. CUB

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate African American History Month, I rise to acknowledge and pay tribute to one of the most outstanding athletes in the history of baseball but also one of the most congenial personalities in public life, Ernie Banks, also known as Mr. Cub, Mr. Chicago, and Mr. Ambassador for Baseball.

Ernie Banks was indeed a superior athlete, playing 19 years for the Chicago Cubs, named MVP in 1958 and 1959, named to the All-Star team 12 times, hit .274 with 512 home runs, voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame on his first year of eligibility. But it was actually his cheerful attitude and his love of the game that made him such a popular player.

Ernie was always the absolute optimist. You could always count on him to express a most positive attitude:

Everyday was a good day; let’s play two.

No matter what the Cubs’ record, this was the year that they could win the pennant and become World Series champions.

After his playing days were over, Ernie became a coach and was active in the community. He founded a charitable organization, became the first Black Ford Motor Company dealer in the United States, and even ran unsuccessfully for the Chicago City Council.

A few years ago, Ernie approached me about an effort he had underway to get young athletes who grew up in the inner city and depressed communities to pool some of their resources and reinvest in the rebuilding and redevelopment of these neighborhoods. He was an inspiration to stars like Magic Johnson, Isaiah Thomas, and others who are doing just that.

In 1997, he was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame; in 1999, he was named to the Major League Baseball All Century Team; and in 2013, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama.

Ernie Banks, we salute you, Mr. Cub, Mr. Chicago, Mr. Ambassador for Baseball, but most importantly, Mr. Cheerleader for Life and Positive Living.

CONGRESS IS A COEQUAL BRANCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIP-TON). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 5 minutes.