Mr. Speaker, this

evening I would like to address the

House about a problem that has been

around for the last 40 years at least in

the country of Sudan, and that is the

question of slavery, chattel slavery,

out and out selling of men, women, and

children in that part of the world.

First of all, let me just say that

there are throughout the world problems

as they relate to the abuse of children

and the practice of slavery. We see

it in Nepal, we see it in Burma, we see

it in Bangladesh and Mauritania. But

there is a tremendously extreme practice.

They are all bad, they should all

be corrected; but tonight I would like

to deal with the country of the Sudan.

The Sudan, one of the richest countries

in the world with natural resources,

but one of the most impoverished countries

because of the practice of its government,

a government which has been

a brutal dictatorship, the al-Bashir

government and Turabi, but ever since

the independence of Sudan. Actually

the first African nation to become

independent on the continent back in

January of 1956, even prior to its independence,

there was a problem between

the north and the south and from these

many years of struggle, this question

of slavery continued on, and today it

continues. It is actually a travesty

today to think that as we move into

the new millennium, we have slavery

being practiced in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity

to visit Sudan on a number of

occasions. My first visit to Sudan was

in 1993 when I visited there with Harry

Johnston, a former Member who then

chaired the Subcommittee on Africa,

and we traveled to the south to the

Sudan to explore and to see firsthand

this problem. I have been back many

times since. We saw the conditions

there. In my recent trip just in June of

last year with the gentleman from Colorado

(Mr. TANCREDO) and Senator

BROWNBACK when we traveled to Loki

in Kenya, which is a Sudanese refugee

camp in Kenya, and then into the south

of Sudan to Yei and Labone in southern

Sudan to see again the terrible conditions

by the NIF-lead government,

the National Islamic Front government

of al-Bashir and Turabi.

So we thought that we would have a

dialogue this evening about this particular

situation. I will begin by yielding

such time as she may consume to

the gentlewoman from the District of

Columbia, and then she can yield back

to me as I will continue on; and I am

sure that she may have some additional

comments as we move through

almost in a colloquy, but to bring this

dastardly situation to the attention of

the public of the United States and the

world, because we cannot live in the

new millennium and have practices

that go back to medieval days.

So at this time I yield to the gentlewoman

from the District of Columbia

(Ms. NORTON).

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate

the gentlewoman from the District

of Columbia for her many years of

work. As she has indicated, she has

been involved for many, many years,

and of course her outstanding record as

she lead the civil rights movement in

this country, and the tremendous

amount that she has contributed, not

only to civil rights but to the rights of

women. It is certainly indeed an honor

for me to be joined by her this evening.

As I have indicated, the Congressional

Black Caucus has been looking

at this problem for some time. After

my 1992, 1993 visit to southern Sudan,

we had at my international affairs

brain trust, which I conduct every year

with a number of members of the Congressional

Black Caucus at our annual

legislative conference, we had the question

of slavery in the Sudan as a major

issue. We had people who are slaves

who showed their backs where they had

been whipped. We had the outstanding

well-renowned model from southern

Sudan Alex Wek, who last year came

and talked about visiting her village,

seeing her grandmother for the first

time in many years and talked about

the abuse of the government. As we indicated,

the colonial administration

did very little investment in trying to

bring this country together and when

the colonial powers left, there was this

split between the north and the south.

The al-Bashir government today continues

its war policy in southern

Sudan, unmercifully condones slavery,

and it is the number one supporter of

State-supported terrorism.

As we know, Dr. Martin Luther King

said that injustice anywhere is a threat

to justice everywhere, and I think history

will judge what we do or do not do

here in order to free the slaves and in

order to bring this question to the attention

of the American people. A decade

ago, a radical faction took power in

Khartoum and forced and turned Africa’s

largest nation into a killing field.

It conducted a self-declared holy war

by preventing food deliveries to starving

people, bombing villages, and taking

slaves.

Slave-raiding is the terror weapon of

choice. Arab militias storm African

villages, killing the men, taking the

women and children. Escaped and redeemed

slaves tell of being ripped from

their homes, roped by the neck, and

forced to march in columns north

where they are raped, branded, and

forcibly converted.

The Sudan government, like Stalin

and Pol Pot’s use of famine to kill its

enemy, has been one of the real tragedies.

The government of Khartoum

uses food as a weapon. It has been estimated

that close to 2 million people

have died in Sudan, catastrophes that

make Kosovo and Chechnya look like

just small incidents. Two million people

died of starvation, malnutrition,

because of this government in Khartoum.

Actually, in 1998, tens of thousands of

Africans died a slow death when Operation

Lifeline failed to break the food

blockade and allow food to go into the

south of Sudan. There is a U.N.-operated

Operation Lifeline Sudan, OLS.

But in order for food to pass through,

the government of Khartoum must give

permission for the food to be delivered.

When they want to wreak more havoc

on the people of the south, where the

civil war is raging, they simply will

not allow the U.N. and humanitarian

organizations to bring the food to the

south.

Dr. John Garang, who has been fighting

with the south Sudanese liberation

movement, SPLA, has asked that food

be allowed to come in without the approval

of the government. But that is

still, working through UNICEF and the

Coalition of Food Agencies, Operation

Lifeline, Sudan, that is the only way

that food can get into the south of

Sudan. A hostile government that is

hostile against its own people makes

the determination.

Then we have heard about the bombings,

where these old Russian planes,

Antonovs, fly over the villages. Only 2

months ago, while our envoy was in

Khartoum, Special Envoy Harry Johnston

was meeting with the al-Bashir

government, bombs were dropped on a

hospital killing 16 people, mainly

women and children.

When I visited at my last trip, we

had to look and listen to hear whether

the Antonovs were coming. We came in

from the south, and they say if they

come, there is a little place you can

dive into a hole. The people in the villages,

they look at the chickens, because

the chickens actually are the

first to be able to detect that the

planes are coming. When the chickens

start to react, then the children begin

to run and move around in a kind of

frenzied way.

That is when the adults, the elderly,

the other people, know that the bombs

are coming. Is that not a horrible way

to spend day after day; peaceful villages

trying to scrape out an existence,

a life, have to keep their eyes on the

chickens because the children watch

the chickens, and then you watch the

children because then you know that

they may be raining bombs on you. It

is, as I indicated before, it is even

premedieval behavior from the government

that sits in Khartoum.

What we have done, we have started

an educational system there. There are

youngsters all over the country who

are starting to learn things. As a

former teacher, I know that one of the

strongest elements is to get this information

in the hands of children.

There is a class out in Denver that

has raised $100,000. The class, and I

have spoken to them on the phone and

her name will come to me soon, but

they know who I am talking about.

They call themselves the Little Abolitionists,

and that is how they got involved.

That is one of the reasons the

gentleman from Colorado (Mr.

TANCREDO), who is their member, who

heard about this at a church and then

knew about Mrs. Fogel’s class, he

heard about what they were doing and

got involved in this issue.

There are students from over 100

schools around the country. As a matter

of fact, this little school from Denver

got letters from Japan, people writing

them asking them about how to get

involved. Then in Newark, we started

to introduce this throughout the country.

Black churches in Los Angeles and

Newark have started to raise their

voices in a chorus of outrage, and are

talking about this question of Africans

being enslaved today.

There is a national divestment campaign,

and we were very pleased that at

Paradise Baptist Church, actually as

we talk about Dr. King, and this was

the infamous day, the day he was

struck down in 1968, and as a matter of

fact, Dr. King had just visited Newark,

New Jersey. This was the last visit he

made on his way back to Atlanta and

on to Memphis.

I was with him that morning at a

school that I had taught at, then the

South Side High School, where he came

and spoke to the students in 1968. Then

that evening at Abyssinia Baptist

Church, when Dr. King left and went

back home and then to Memphis, we

know what happened then.

But on January 16, celebrating Dr.

Martin Luther King’s life, I was invited

by Reverend Jethro James at the Paradise

Baptist Church in Newark to come

to his church. Rather than talk about

domestic issues and civil rights in this

country, and the question of affirmative

action and the talk about police

misconduct, the issue was about slavery.

I was very pleased to be asked to

deliver the sermon at that Sunday

morning.

From that morning, we have had a

move on this national divestment campaign.

See, there is a company called

Talisman Energy, a Canadian company.

They are drilling oil in Sudan.

They are in partnership with the Malaysians

and the Chinese.

What this oil is doing, now that they

have completed the oil lines, is to

bring more money to the government.

Black gold is like blood oil.

This company, the Talisman Energy,

a Canadian company, has investments

all over the country. We have started a

divestment program in this country. I

was proud, as we pressured the State of

New Jersey, that they sold 850,000

shares several weeks after the attention

and the news media and the newspaper

accounts of that Dr. King program,

where various persons came and

spoke and talked about this terrible

travesty that is going on in the world

today.

We are saying that we should target

companies. Just as we have had this divestment

program in South Africa with

apartheid, the Dellums bill, and the

gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL)

and Bill Ray had the divestment,

we are saying this Talisman Energy

Company should be targeted and they

should be penalized for cooperating

with a pariah government that wreaks

havoc on its own people.

We can go on about that, but I will

ask the gentlewoman from the District

of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) if she has

any other comments she would like to

make at this time. I yield to the gentlewoman

from the District of Columbia

(Ms. NORTON).

I thank the gentlewoman

very much.

The points that the gentlewoman

from the District of Columbia brings

out are very, very cogent points. We

are encouraging Comptroller Carl

McCall to take a look at the State of

New York and the expanse of investments

that that State has, and also the

teachers’ annuity funds nationwide.

Teachers have probably the largest

annuity and pension funds, and we

want those representatives to take a

look at their portfolios, because we

need to let people know that there is

no profit in dealing in human misery.

You cannot have a bonus by virtue of

your behavior in dealing with an unjust

system.

So as we target the Talisman Company,

we will continue to, one, generate

more involvement from the

church movement throughout the

country. We will continue with Mr. Jacobs

and his antislavery movement,

which has printed material, has become

involved in getting material to

children, to schools, to churches, and

has done a very good job.

The gentlewoman does bring up an

issue that UNICEF and the antislavery

movement have had a debate about,

whether to purchase the slaves is the

right policy. We who want to see the

policy ended do not want to get good

groups battling each other about what

is the right way to go. We should focus

on the pariah government and determine

ways that government should be

brought down UNICEF wants to do it,

the antislavery group wants to. I support

all of the efforts that are going on.

I do believe, though, that in the legislation

recently passed, in the Sudan

Peace Act, there was a provision that

we put in that would enable the President

to block American investment in

Sudan and also to break the food

blockade to feed starving southern Sudanese.

There has been some controversy

about having food go into Sudan in

ways other than the Operation Lifeline

Sudan, but we think that that is an imperfect

way. We think that food should

be made available from whatever

means necessary, and that food should

get to the people in the South who are

starving. There has been some opposition

to having food go into the country

in ways other than the established

OLS, but we think that that is really

not working and, therefore, something

else should happen.

As we have seen in Bosnia recently

and in Serbia with the arrest of people

for war crimes, people being brought

before the International Court of Justice,

we have seen in Arusha, the

Rwandan genocide trials going on by

the United Nations, we think that the

Khartoum government must cease in

its criminal acts or it needs to be held

accountable for its actions.

We are holding Milosevic accountable

in the Balkans for his war crimes, and

the al-Turabi and al-Bashir governments

must also be judged accordingly

as crimes against humanity. We need

to take a look at an indictment of

these people who have continued the

plight, as I mentioned, of 4 million people.

As I mentioned, 4 million people

have been displaced, and 2 million people

have died over the course of 40

years.

Although these gentlemen have only

been involved in the last decade or so,

we need to start holding heads of state

accountable. We saw what happened in

Europe as related to Argentina’s

former dictator, where until his health

became an issue there was an indictment

being charged against him.

I think that the time has come that

we need to tell criminal heads of state

that they are going to be held accountable,

that they are going to be indicted,

and they need to be brought to

trial.

It makes no sense that we tolerate

this. Up to now, we just had Band-Aid

approaches to fix some of these problems

and so if we are going to be effective

we must go to the root causes and

the root cause is the government of the

north.

Now, I do have to applaud the administration

for applying sanctions almost

two years ago on the government in

the north, and they have held to most

of the sanctions. Of course, many corporations

are opposed to sanctions but

I think that in this extreme situation

that that is the least that these corporations

can do. Invest somewhere

else until we change that government.

We cannot reward this government for

its continued use of these terrible practices.

In addition to what they have

reeked on their own people, Sudan has

also destabilized her neighbors. In

Uganda, the Sudanese government

gives direct support to the Lord’s Resistance

Army, a rebel base group that

kills and tortures its own people. The

Lord’s Resistance Army abducts children

also, sort of the same practice of

what is allowed by the Khartoum government.

They will go in and they will

kidnap children and then make these

children in the front line of any attack

that is coming. So the Army of Uganda

that is trying to stamp out this group

is confronted with the fact that there

are children sort of shielding the soldiers

of the Lord’s Resistance Army.

This is condoned by the government of

Sudan.

We have had allegations of terrorism,

and terrorists are harbored there in

Sudan.

Back, as I indicated, to my visit to

Sudan in 1992, 1993, when I returned I

introduced the first piece of legislation

that I did on slavery in the Sudan. I

cannot even believe that it has been almost

7, 8 years ago but I introduced

legislation on slavery in Sudan and

that legislation called for the State Department

to list all covert and overt

forms of slavery in the region. It also

called for the U.S. to cut off aid to

countries that aid in selling or buying

any Dinka men, women or children.

The Dinka tribe is the tribe in the

south, basically Christian.

Many of them are animists, as has already

been indicated by the representative

of the District, that there is just a

small number of people who are in

other religions, and this has been

where we have seen the north reap its

vengeance on these people in the south.

That legislation also called for the administration

to report to Congress

within 3 months about the U.S.’s efforts

to end slavery and it called on the

United Nations Security Council to impose

an arms embargo on the government

until they condemn the enslavement

of innocent civilians and take appropriate

measures against the perpetrators

of the crime.

Let me just say that removing it to a

new millennium, as I said, we have

human beings still being enslaved,

branded like cattle, used as chattel and

property. Sometimes children are sold

for as little as $15 apiece. The government

tolerates, if not condones, the

kidnapping and enslavement of these

women and children. They have ways

of brutalizing where a child is afraid to

try to escape because if they catch one

they will cut his foot or sever his

Achilles tendon, or brutal things that

will just prevent the next one from trying

to leave. Even in some countries,

some of the oil rich countries, young

boys are brought to their countries as

slaves for camel racing, because they

need light-weight persons to be the

jockeys on the camels.

This is another inhumane situation

that goes on today and is tolerated by

heads of state. So we have a very serious

situation. We have been trying to

work at peace in Sudan. We have had

President Moi who heads a group called

the IGAD group which are made up of

states in the Horn, Ethiopia, Eritrea,

Egypt, countries in that region to try

to work out some solution with the

government in Khartoum in ending the

bombings and stopping the safe raids

but to date they have been unsuccessful.

I have to commend President Moi

who comes under criticism in his country

for things that are happening

there, but I have to commend him for

his attempt. I spoke to him face-toface

just a month and a half ago about

the problem in Sudan and he is very

troubled by it and he is also troubled

by the lack of progress that has been

made as he has been attempting to

have a change of heart with the government.

So we certainly will continue to

fight. We will continue to raise this

issue. We will continue to bring this

issue before the persons of this Nation,

before the children of our schools, before

the churches in our communities.

We have seen people become interested.

We get phone calls from people who

want more information and we send

them or we refer them to an organization

like the Anti-Slavery Movement

or other groups that are working with

this issue, but I must say that we are

growing in numbers.

I used to say before the gender question,

start me with ten who are stouthearted

men and I will soon give you

10,000 more. Of course, today I will say

10 who are stout-hearted men or

women, and we will see this grow until

we have an army of people of goodwill

that will say we will no longer tolerate

these injustices. Start me with 10 and I

will soon give you 10,000 more, and that

is what is going and they said shoulder

to shoulder we grow bolder as we meet

this foe, that must be taken out.

I once again appreciate the interest

of the gentlewoman from the District

(Ms. NORTON). As she indicated, she saw

me in the hall and said we just have to

talk about it; it is on my chest. We

have to get it off. Let us just discuss it,

and that is what we are doing here at

this time.

Since we have maybe 15 minutes left,

I will yield to the gentlewoman and

then I will conclude after she completes

her remarks.

Mr. Speaker, let me

thank the gentlewoman from the District

of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for that

very moving and personal report of

people who have simply told it like it

is. I think that we have to remember

that no one is free until everyone is

free, and that the government has lied

that truth.

Of course, the earth will rise again,

because no lie can live forever, and, finally,

that the arch of the moral universe

is long, but it bends towards justice.

As we look at the situation there, as

we look at the continent and we see

this year 2000, hopefully a settlement

to the tragic conflict. For example, in

Ethiopia and Eritrea with two good

leaders, like Prime Minister Meles and

President Isaias who are intelligent,

bright men, will hopefully continue to

cease-fire and come up with a peace

plan.

We are hoping that the Kabila government

would move towards elections

in the Democratic Republic of the

Congo, and that those folks who are on

other sides, Uganda with Museveni and

Rwanda with Kagame and Burundi

with Buyoya, on one side, fighting

against Zimbabwe, Mugabe’s group and

Namibia with Sam Nujoma and Angola

with President dos Santos, that that

cease-fire will hold.

We are seeing Sierra Leone, the brutal

mutilation by the RUF, but that

government hopefully having a government

of reconciliation, and that brutality

will end there. We hope that

Cote D’Ivoire will have an election this

spring after the cue that recently took

place.

We have some bright spots. We see

the government of Senegal who just

had an election and had a positive

transference of government. We have

seen South Africa move from Mr.

Mandela to Mr. Thabo Mbeka.

We have seen Botswana that has been

very stable for decades with the new

President there, Festus Mogae. We see

positive movement on the continent,

still very difficult, still a long way to

go, but we are seeing, at least, an attempt

and some positive steps.

As we conclude, we must also expect

to see some positive results in Sudan.

We must not continue to allow children

to be sold and to be raped and to be

beaten and to be tortured. We can no

longer let governments sit in high

places without having to pay the consequences.

We can no longer allow leaders to feel

they can do what they want any time

they want to and go above the law. We

have to have the prosecutions by the

International Court of Justice. We can

no longer allow medieval times in our

supersonic era. These things must stop.

We will continue to fight.

We are on the right side. We know

that we are going to win, but it is

going to be the work of all of us, the

children, the church people, the politicians,

the investors, the housewives,

just everyone saying that enough is

enough.

I cannot thank the gentlewoman

from the District of Columbia (Ms.

NORTON) enough for her joining me in

this colloquy-type special order. The

fact that we are now moving forward to

see victory, I think, is the right way to

go, the right direction.

Once again, I thank the gentlewoman

from the District of Columbia (Ms.

NORTON) and the gentleman from Virginia

(Mr. WOLF), the gentleman from

Ohio (Mr. HALL), Senator BROWNBACK,

the gentleman from Colorado (Mr.

TANCREDO), the gentleman from Louisiana

(Mr. COOKSEY), who has a very

strong interest, the gentleman from

California (Mr. ROYCE), chairman of

the Subcommittee on Africa, who has

done tremendous work, the gentleman

from California (Mr. CAMPBELL), who I

have traveled with in the South of

Sudan, these are people who are saying

enough is enough, and the gentleman

from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and the

gentlewoman from California (Ms.

LEE), those who are on our committee.