Mr. President, the

guard told the story of a father, a

mother, a son, and a daughter who

were stripped naked and led into a

room together. The room was made of

glass, ten feet wide, nine feet long, and

seven feet high. Leading into the glass

room where the family stood was a

metal injection tube. Outside the room,

a group of scientists waited with pens

and note pads. The guard recalls that

the gas began to flow through the tube

into the glass room. At first, the gas

collected along the floor. The family

stood together in the middle of the

room. Then, as the cloud of gas rose

from the floor of the chamber, the son

and the daughter began to vomit and

then to die. The mother and father

tried to save them. They stood as high

as they could to gasp the last clean

breaths of their lives, to breathe that

air into the lungs of their children, and

to preserve their lives for a few more

moments. Soon, the parents, too, began

to vomit and die. One by one, all four

succumbed and collapsed into the cloud

of gas. Eventually, the father, the

mother, the son, and the daughter all

lay dead on the floor of the gas chamber.

The story I have just told you did not

happen decades ago in Nazi Germany.

It happened recently, and there is

every reason to believe that things just

like it may continue to this day, perhaps

at this very moment. They happened

in a country with which our diplomats

are talking about granting full

diplomatic relations and all of the mercantile

and diplomatic privileges of

membership in the civilized world.

This story happened to forgotten people,

in a forgotten part of a forgotten

country. You have probably never

heard of it, yet it is the scene of crimes

against humanity whose scale and depravity

rival those of Mauthausen,

Tuol Sleng, or Srebrenica. The place is

called ‘‘Camp 22.’’ It lies in the far

northeastern corner of North Korea.

Camp 22 is not history than we can

condemn from the safe distance of

time. Yet too many of us refuse to confront

it, perhaps because we are afraid

that confronting the crimes of Camp 22

would also require us to confront its

moral imperatives. We cannot say that

we act according to our values when we

invite mass murder into the community

of civilization, with all of its diplomatic

and mercantile privileges. It is

to horrors like these that we must say

‘‘never again,’’ and mean it, and act.

It is a massive place, perhaps hundreds

of square miles in area. Former

guards say that 50,000 men, women, and

children are confined there. Camp 22 is

a killing field where guards murder

children for scavenging garbage to eat,

where prisoners are publicly stoned to

death and disemboweled, and where entire

families are slaughtered for no

more reason than to serve as examples

for other prisoners. It is a place where

torture, starvation, and disease kill 20

percent of the prisoners every year,

and where children die because their

parents are accused of thought crimes.

Camp 22 is only one of an archipelago

of concentration camps in North

Korea. The U.S. Committee for Human

Rights in North Korea estimates that

400,000 people have been murdered in

these camps. Survivor Kang Chol Hwan

describes spending ten years in another

camp, Camp 15, where each spring

brought a grim new harvest of deaths

from starvation and disease.

The only people who have ever seen

Camp 22 are its guards, its victims

(none of whom has ever escaped), and

the thousands of dead whose corpses

and bones are strewn in its hills, fields,

and ravines. Kim Jong Il’s regime still

denies that these camps exist. No foreigner

has ever been permitted to go

near them. Until North Korea allows us

to go to the camps to prove or disprove

these reports, we cannot know for certain

what is happening there. Still,

commercially available satellite imagery

allows us to look upon Camp 22

for ourselves and verify what the survivors

tell us in detail. Google Earth

has made witnesses of us all. In these

times, anyone with an Internet connection

can look down into hell at Camp

22 and witness Holocaust Now.

I would like to thank the Rev. Chun

Ki Won, whom many have dubbed the

‘‘Schindler of the East.’’ Reverend

Chun himself has led hundreds to safety

and himself spent nearly nine

months in a Chinese prison when he

was caught trying to get into Mongolia

with a group of refugees. The floor

charts of satellite photos I am about to

show were vetted by refugees, both victims

and guards, he is in touch with in

Korea and elsewhere. They identified

the details of these gulags and confirmed

their existence.

I want to show you Camp 22 today. I

want you to see its fence lines, its

gates, and moats. I want you to see the

huts where its prisoners live, the coal

mines where men are worked to death,

and the forests and fields where the

dead are discarded. I want you to be

haunted by these things when you consider

how we should deal with Kim

Jong Il’s regime, and when you are deciding

what kind of a country we will

be. I ask that you hear what I have to

say while there is still time to stop

this, and before our government surrenders

the last pressure it may have

to stop it. In Camp 22, it is forbidden to

mourn the dead. Mourning them will

not bring them back, but it may save

others who still suffer.

Using Google Earth’s highest resolution,

it is possible to trace the camp’s

circumference perhaps hundreds of

square miles. Unfortunately, only the

western half of the camp can be seen in

publicly available high-resolution imagery.

The alleged gas chamber is outside

of this area.

Tracing the camp’s boundaries is not

difficult. The camp is surrounded by

electrified barbed wire fences from

which vegetation has been cleared

away. The sharp corners in the fence

lines make them impossible to confuse

with roads. At regular intervals, there

are guard towers or distinctive guard

posts.

In North Korea, fence lines like these

are the distinctive mark of concentration

camps, with a few exceptions, such

as Kim Jong Il’s palaces, and certain

nuclear sites. For example, there is the

fence line of Camp 14, the so-called

‘‘life imprisonment zone’’ at the headwaters

of the Taedong River, from

which no prisoner is supposed to leave,

dead or alive.

Another camp that can be identified

by its fenceline is Camp 15, made infamous

by Kang Chol Hwan in his gulag

memoir, ‘‘The Aquariums of

Pyongyang.’’ Kang was sent to that

camp at the age of nine. It was not

until his release 10 years later that he

learned why he and his family were

sent there. His grandfather had come

under suspicion for having lived for

many years in Japan. Kang and his

family were arrested one night and

taken to Camp 15 in accordance with

the North Korean doctrine that class

enemies must be rooted out for three

generations.

Former guard Kwon Hyuk claims

that the fences around Camp 22 are 21⁄2

meters high, and electrified with 3,300

volts of electricity. He also says the

camp is surrounded by spiked moats in

places. Photographs from Google Earth

also reveal trenches, railroad gates,

and guard posts. In some pictures, you

can even make out what appear to be

clusters of people in the camps.

The farmers who live outside the

gates of the camps cannot pretend not

to know what goes on beyond the

fence. One recent defector, who lived in

this area, described living near Camp 22

to his English teacher, who wrote

about them in the Washington Post.

According to this young North Korean

refugee, because food and alcohol are

scarce in the countryside, the camp

guards sometimes went to his house to

drink, usually heavily. In their intoxication,

the guards would confess to

their sense of remorse.

When American soldiers and news

cameras reached the gates of Dachau in

1945, we and millions of men and

women of conscience throughout the

world made a simple, solemn promise:

‘‘never again.’’ Who among us today

questions the righteousness of that

promise? And who among us doubts

that much of its meaning lies buried in

the mass graves of Tuol Sleng, Rwanda,

and Darfur? Why have we not done

better? Perhaps the civilized world

erred by making a promise it could not

keep. We cannot solve all of the world’s

problems or suppress the worst impulses

of humanity. Still, ‘‘never

again’’ was, and is, a promise worth

keeping if we read it as a promise,

first, to speak the truth; second, to do

no harm; and third, to find ways within

our means to stay the hand of the murderer.

We find ourselves in the possession of

information not unlike that which was

in our possession in 1943. Our government

had aerial photographs of Auschwitz,

Dachau, and Buchenwald, too,

and the accounts of the survivors were

there for us to act on or disbelieve.

Perhaps all of the evils of Camp 22 and

these other camps are fictions. If that

is so, let Kim Jong Il open them to the

eyes of the world. Let him refute me

and all of us who believe that it is beneath

our nation to collaborate with

evil of this depth.

I am aware that some in Washington,

including many in our State Department,

would prefer to hear even less

discussion of the atrocities in North

Korea for the sake of a diplomatic

process that has taken decades to get

us nowhere. I was deeply ashamed this

year when I read in the Washington

Post of how our State Department’s

East Asia Bureau had tried to pressure

the authors of this year’s human rights

country reports to airbrush the section

on North Korea, invoking ‘‘the Secretary’s

priority on the Six-Party

talks’’ and asking the authors to ‘‘sacrifice

a few adjectives for the cause.’’

Perhaps this diplomat was guided by a

sincere but mistaken belief that there

will be time to deal with North Korea’s

atrocities when its disarmament is negotiated

first. For those who are suffering

and dying in these camps, this

year, there may not be a next year.

With all due respect to Secretary

Rice, I have come to doubt that our

State Department is as serious about

ending these atrocities as it is about

pretending that we have progressed toward

disarming North Korea. Why,

more than 3 years after this Congress

unanimously passed the North Korean

Human Rights Act, are American consulates

in China and other countries

still refusing to let North Korean refugees

in their gates? Under Assistant

Secretary of State Christopher Hill,

who tells us that he intends to make

human rights one of many issues to be

addressed through a ‘‘normalization

working group’’ within the six-party

talks, now says that America can raise

its objections to these atrocities ‘‘in

the context of two states that have diplomatic

relations.’’ Some of us had observed

years ago that Ambassador

Lefkowitz, our Special Envoy for

Human Rights in North Korea, has

been sidelined and silenced. Recently,

we watched with embarrassment how

he was treated when he dared to make

the obvious connection between Kim

Jong Il’s malice toward his own people

and his malice toward us.

After all, the basis of any negotiated

disarmament or peace must be a shared

interest in the preservation of human

life. What does it tell us that Kim Jong

Il holds human life in such low regard

as to run places like Camp 22, and then

lie so flagrantly as to deny its very existence?

What lessons can we take from

the fact that he left two and a half million

North Koreans to starve to death

while he expended his nation’s depleted

resources on nuclear weapons and luxuries

for himself and the elites? What

does it tell us that, according to multiple

witnesses, this regime kills newborn

babies of refugee women returned

from China in the name of protecting

North Korea’s racial purity? Does this

regime value human life including

North Korean life—as we value it? If

not, isn’t it reasonable to conclude

that neither a desire for peace nor good

faith will motive Kim Jong Il to keep

this latest agreement?

And finally, what does it tell us that

China, the guarantor of that agreement

and host for the six-party talks, greenlighted

North Korea’s nuclear test in

2006? Or that it has just announced a

new plan to undermine the U.N. sanctions

that followed that test by letting

the regime’s officials hold accounts in

Chinese banks, in Chinese currency? Or

that it has flagrantly violated the U.N.

Refugee Convention for years by offering

bounties to people who catch and

turn in North Korean refugees, so that

it can string them together like fish on

lines, with wires through their wrists

and noses, as it leads them back to the

death camps and firing squads? Or that

it has bullied the UNHCR into refusing

asylum to North Korean refugees? And

what do we have to say about China’s

efforts to cleanse its territory of North

Korean refugees to ensure that this

year’s Olympic games will be free of

the wretched refuse of its tyrannical

satellite?

Do not misunderstand my words. I

am certainly not advocating war. After

all, if we wish to rid the world of this

repellent regime, we need only stop

sustaining it. Kim Jong Il has already

ruined North Korea’s economy. He cannot

sustain his misrule without the

cash he receives from other nations,

through aid, trade, and crime. Recent

reports by economists and NGO’s tell

us that North Korea’s regime has never

been in greater economic distress, and

that it has lost even the capacity to

feed its elite. As Kim Jong Il shows

stubborn contempt for our diplomatic

efforts, we must relearn the lesson that

diplomacy only influences evil men

when it is backed by pressure. In the

case of North Korea, the threat of economic

pressure will gain power in the

coming months . . . but only if we do

not throw it away.

Nor do I fail to grasp that our idealism

must sometimes find ways to conform

to our immediate interests. But

those who say that America should

stand only for its pecuniary interests

and abandon its values have forgotten

how America built the treasures it now

seeks to protect. We have always been

a nation of ideas of values. What else

unites us? We differ in our ethnicities,

faiths, and even in the climates and

cultures of our vast country’s regions.

If our values no longer guide us, we are

nothing more than another color on

the chessboard, and we have ceased to

be a beacon for the world’s hopes, a

model for its development, and a magnet

for its talents. What a tragedy that

would be for a nation that, as De

Tocqueville said, is great because it is

good. I do not say that we are perfect;

after all, our tendency to revel in our

own imperfections has made our society

far more just and good. And with

greatness, and with goodness, come obligations

to conform the pursuit of our

interests to the pursuit of our values.

Here is an occasion when our values

and our interests both demand that

Kim Jong Il be given a stark choice:

transparency or extinction. Let us resolve

that we will not allow Kim Jong

Il to plunge North Korea into famine

again this year. Let all nations of conscience

join to deny the Kim Jong Il

the means—through trade or unrestricted

aid—to perpetuate his rule and

his luxurious lifestyle while the North

Korean people suffer and starve. America

should stand ready to help the people

of North Korea, if and only if we

can verify that every last citizen, soldier,

peasant, and prisoner—including

the prisoners in Camp 22—can share

equally in the aid we should offer generously.

If Kim Jong Il refuses the just

terms on which we must condition our

assistance, then why should we extend

the misery of his people by delaying his

meeting with the ash heap of history?

That is why I am resolved to oppose, to

the last breath in my body, adding this

country to the list of Kim Jong Il’s

benefactors and abettors until the prisoners

of Camp 22 are fed, healed,

housed, and freed.