

June 13, 2001

Statement before the House of Representative regarding intervention in Sudan

Mr. Speaker, with HR 2052, the Sudan Peace Act, we embark upon another episode of interventionism, in continuing our illegitimate and ill-advised mission to police the world. It seemingly matters little to this body that it proceeds neither with any constitutional authority nor with the blessings of such historical figures such as Jefferson who, in his first inaugural address, argued for "Peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations -- entangling alliances with none." Unfortunately, this is not the only bit of history which seemingly is lost on this Congress.

Apparently, it is also lost on this Congress that the Constitution was a grant of limited power to the federal government from the citizens or, in other words, the Constitution was not designed to allow the government to restrain the people, but to allow the people to restrain the government. Of course, the customary lip service is given to the Constitution insofar as the committee report for this bill follows the rule of citing Constitutional authority and cites Art. I, Section 8, which is where one might look to find a specific enumerated power. However, the report cites only clause 18, which begs some further citation. While Clause 18 contains the "necessary and proper" clause, it limits Congress to enacting laws necessary and proper to some more specifically (i.e. foregoing) enumerated power. Naturally, no such foregoing authority is cited by the advocates of this bill.

Without Constitutional authority, this bill goes on to encourage the spending of \$10 million of U.S. taxpayers hard-earned money in Sudan but for what purpose? From the text of the bill, we learn that "The United States should use all means of pressure available to facilitate a comprehensive solution to the war in Sudan, including (A) the multilateralization of economic and diplomatic tools to compel the Government of Sudan to enter into a good faith peace process; [note that it says "*compel* . . . good faith peace"] and (B) the support or creation of viable democratic civil authority and institutions in areas of Sudan outside of government control." I believe we used to call that nation-building before that term became impolitic. How self-righteous a government is ours which legally prohibits foreign campaign contributions (again with no constitutional authority to regulate campaigns) yet assumes it knows best and,

hence, supports dissident and insurgent groups in places like Cuba, Sudan and around the world. The practical problem here is that we have funded dissidents in such places as Somalia who ultimately turned out to be worse than the incumbent governments. Small wonder the U.S. is the prime target of citizen-terrorists from countries with no real ability to retaliate militarily for our illegitimate and immoral interventions.

The legislative "tools" to be used to "facilitate" this aforementioned "comprehensive solution" are as frightening as the nation-building tactics. For example, "It is the sense of the Congress that . . . the United Nations should be used as a tool to facilitate peace and recovery in Sudan."

One can only assume this is the same United Nations which booted the United States off its Human Rights Commission in favor of, as Canadian Sen. Jeremiah S. Grafstein, called them recently, "Those exemplars of human rights nations . . . Algeria, China, Saudi Arabia, Uganda, Armenia, Pakistan, Syria and Vietnam."

The bill does not stop there, however, in intervening in the civil war in Sudan. It appears that this congress has found a new mission for the Securities and Exchange Commission who are now tasked with investigating "the nature and extent of . . . commercial activity in Sudan" as it relates to "any violations of religious freedom and human rights in Sudan." It seems we have finally found a way to spend those excessive fees the SEC has been collecting from mutual fund investors (read: retirees) despite the fact we cannot seem to bring to the floor a bill to actually reduce those fees which have been collected in multiples above what is necessary to fund this agency's previous (and again unconstitutional) mission.

There is more, however. Buried deep within the bill in Section 9 we find what may be the real motivation for the intervention -- OIL. It seems the bill also tasks the Secretary of State with generating a report detailing "a description of the sources and current status of Sudan's financing and construction of infrastructure and pipelines for oil exploitation, the effects of such financing and construction on the inhabitants of the regions in which the oil fields are located." Talk about corporate welfare and the ability to socialize the costs of foreign competitive market research on the U.S. taxpayer!

Yes, Mr. Speaker, this bill truly has it all -- an unconstitutional purpose, the morally bankrupt intervention in dealings between the affairs of foreign governments and their respective citizens in our attempt to police the world, more involvement by a United Nations proven inept at resolving civil conflicts abroad, the expansion of the SEC into State Department functions and a little corporate welfare for big oil, to boot. How can one not support these legislative efforts?!

Mr. Speaker, I oppose this bill for the each of above-mentioned reasons and leave to the ingenuity, generosity, and conscience of each individual in this country to make their own private decision as to how best render help to citizens of Sudan and all countries where human rights violations run rampant.