

Tonight, I am on the floor to give an example of what is happening in our military. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, in the 3 years that I have talked to chaplains from the Navy, from the Marine Corps, from the Army, Air Force, that there is a prohibited rule that they should not pray in the name of Jesus, if they happen to be of the Christian faith, outside of their church.

Give you two examples. Last year, I spoke to a Navy chaplain in Hawaii who had been asked to pray at a remembrance service for Marines killed in Afghanistan and Iraq. At the close of his prayer, he closed in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. About an hour later, he got a phone call from a Marine Major that asked him to please, in the future, outside of his church not to pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

He was so upset, Mr. Speaker, that he went to a Jewish rabbi who was a friend of his, and he asked the Jewish rabbi, are you offended when I pray in the name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? The Jewish rabbi said, absolutely not. This is your faith and your tradition, and you should pray as you see fit.

Mr. Speaker, 3 weeks ago, I spoke to a chaplain in Iraq. His name is Jonathan Stertzbach. He happens to be an independent Baptist. He is a chaplain, and he was asked by a commander of a unit to pray over the grave of a shoulder who professed to be a Christian who had been killed in battle. It so happens in the Army that this chaplain had to submit his prayer in writing to the senior chaplain. The senior chaplain, Mr. Speaker, struck through the words Jesus Christ. The young chaplain whose name is Jonathan Stertzbach, I talked to him by telephone, said, Congressman, I could not pray if I could not pray as I thought my Lord wanted me to pray. It so happens that the company commander, before he removed himself, asked him if he was going to be at the service and if he was going to pray. And he said, sir, I have asked to be removed because my prayer has been struck down. The Major told him, you go to the funeral. You are going to pray as you see fit.

Since that time, it so happens that a newspaper in America called Chaplain Stertzbach and he did comment about what happened, and so now he has been removed from his chapel in Iraq.

I have written to the Inspector General, General Stanley Green. I have asked him to look into this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I would be on the floor of the House tonight if this was a Jewish rabbi, if it was a Muslim cleric, and protect their rights to pray as they see fit. That is what America is all about, is the first amendment rights to pray, to speak as we see fit.

I hope that my colleagues in the House will join the 76 of us who have signed this letter and say to the President of the United States, protect the first amendment rights.

We are not talking about having altar calls. We are just talking about

in certain ceremonies and services that they pray as they think their faith and tradition asks them to pray.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask, as I close, God to please bless our men and women in uniform and ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform and ask God to please bless America.

DARFUR RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this evening I introduced a bipartisan resolution expressing the disapproval of the Arab League's decision to hold its 2006 summit in Khartoum, Sudan. The resolution also calls on the Arab League, the government of Sudan, the Sudanese rebels and the world community to do all they can to end acts of genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Recently, the Arab League announced its decision to hold its annual summit in Khartoum. Doing so will only lend credibility to a country that is currently under sanction by the United States. The Sudanese government continues to allow acts of genocide to occur in the Darfur region and deliberately obstructs the African Union's ability to stabilize the region.

Mr. Speaker, the current situation in the Darfur region of Sudan is dire. The U.N. estimates that as many as 180,000 have died, many of starvation and disease, and up to 2 million have been displaced.

The Darfur conflict is an ongoing conflict in the Darfur region of western Sudan, mainly between the Janjaweed, a government-supported militia recruited from local Arab tribes, and the non-Arab rebels in the region. The Janjaweed has been implicated in a campaign of murder, rape and intimidation sponsored by the government of Sudan.

Mr. Speaker, I do not need to remind this House of the horrors that we have turned a blind eye to in the past. The U.S. still will not recognize the Ottoman Empire's genocide of over a million Armenians from 1914 to 1921.

It took us far too long to join the fight against the systematic state-sponsored persecution and genocide of the Jews of Europe during World War II by Nazi Germany. And of course our shameful disregard for the 937,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus that died at the hands of organized bands of militias during the Rwandan genocide.

As the leader of the free world, we have a moral obligation to do all we can to stop genocide in all its forms. It was in 1998 when President Clinton said, and I quote, never again must we be shy in the face of evidence describing the failed U.S. response to the Rwandan genocide. Well, here we are, 8 years later, standing on the sidelines once again in the face of undisputable evidence.

So in light of the current situation, why would the Arab League decide to have their annual summit in Sudan? I understand that the site of the Arab League summit is determined by an alphabetical order rotation. However, genocide calls for more than business as usual, and that is the attitude that the Arab League is now using.

If there is one organization that has influence over the Sudanese government it is the Arab League. Member countries have a responsibility to rein in the Sudanese government and to do everything in their power to stop this genocide now.

I believe the Arab League's decision to hold this 2006 summit in Khartoum constitutes an economic and symbolic reward and could even encourage the government of Sudan to continue to allow acts of genocide and other mistreatment against the people of Darfur.

Mr. Speaker, the Arab League has a choice to make. Ignore a genocide and go forward with their planned summit or break the alphabetical tradition and send a message to Khartoum to do all it can to end the acts of genocide, to allow international peacekeepers to protect the innocent and to hold the Arab militia responsible for these acts accountable. This is an opportunity for the Arab League to lead. It is time for them to send the right message to the Sudanese government.

I would urge my colleagues to join my resolution. It is bipartisan, expressing disapproval of the Arab League's decision to hold its 2006 summit in Khartoum. It is time to send a strong message that the Sudanese government should be reprimanded, not rewarded for their support of genocide.

DORIS MILLER—TEXAS SAILOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I have talked much on this House floor about our veterans, both those of today and those of the past. Tonight I mention another one of them.

Doris Miller was born in Waco, Texas, on October 12, 1919. He was the youngest of three sons born to Henrietta and Connery Miller. He was a good kid. He enjoyed playing with his brothers and was always helping around the house, especially in the kitchen. In school, Miller was a good student. He was also a fullback on the football team at A.J. Moore High School in Waco, Texas. They called him the raging bull because of his size. He was 5 foot 9, but he weighed over 200 pounds.

Growing up, Miller worked on his father's farm until he enlisted in the United States Navy at the age of 20 as a Mess Attendant, Third Class. He quickly advanced to Mess Attendant, Second Class and First Class, and subsequently he was promoted to Ship's Cook.