

possible. As the program concludes, the decision on where the orbiters will be displayed has been given to NASA Administrator Charles Bolden. Houston and the Johnson Space Center are intrinsic to human space flight, and we are asking Administrator Bolden to give one of the orbiters a final home in Houston.

I grew up in the Clear Lake area of Houston, where the Johnson Space Center is located. I spent my childhood living with astronauts and wanting to be one when I grew up. I attended college at Rice University in Houston, where John F. Kennedy made his famous declaration that this country would be the first on the Moon. While many things have changed since I was young, children in Clear Lake still have similar dreams. They learn about the history and the importance of NASA and they are inspired by NASA's achievements every day. Their parents, coaches, and Sunday school teachers are the engineers and scientists who are the backbone of our space program. Some of them are even astronauts who have to miss a game or a parent-teacher conference because they're taking a trip to the International Space Station.

A few weeks ago, I enlisted the help of students in the Clear Creek Independent School District from kindergarten through high school to explain to Administrator Bolden why one of the retiring orbiters should be placed in Houston on permanent display. Thousands of children from the Clear Lake area responded to the challenge and wrote letters to Administrator Bolden. The letters were funny and heartwarming. They expressed a maturity beyond their years and a firsthand knowledge of the Houston area's unique and lasting contributions to the achievement of NASA. I was amazed by the passion and dedication and their longing to have one of the orbiters make its home in their neighborhood. Each of these children wrote of their personal connection they feel towards our space program and the joy and pride they'd feel when they called their friends and family from all over the country and invited them to come to Houston to see one of the space shuttles.

Mari Archambault wrote, "With so many in the community involved, it only makes sense to have a shuttle retired in a place where so much of the training related to it takes place. Houston deserves that." Savannah Finger thinks it would be "a good feeling to be standing feet away from a retired shuttle, which really went into space." Allyson Stromer drew this picture to show Administrator Bolden how beautiful the shuttle would look in Rocket Park. Bill Kontonassios asked how, "Space City can be complete without a space shuttle." Chloe Molina, from League City, reminded Administrator Bolden what the tragic loss of the shuttles Columbia and Challenger meant to the Houston community. "Viewing a

shuttle orbiter will remind them of the brave crews of Columbia and Challenger. It would be a fitting memorial, for although our Nation lost 14 heroes, the people of Houston lost coworkers, neighbors, friends, and family members in those tragedies." Faith Matthews knows that having a shuttle "will inspire the youth of Houston to become the astronauts of the future so dreams and wishes could take us to Mars." Marisol Hernandez, the daughter of an astronaut, knows that "if Texas is the home of one of the retired space shuttles, I could remember my father's launch."

The contributions and achievements of the Houston area make our home a logical and appropriate steward for one of the space shuttle orbiters. Houston is "Space City USA," and there's no better place for a shuttle to be.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask Administrator Bolden to hear the requests of these students, not just in housing an orbiter in Houston, but in providing them with a future in space worthy of our great past.

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

(Mr. POSEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FINDING A VOICE ON SUDAN

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

Mr. WOLF. "If President Obama is ever going to find his voice on Sudan, it better be soon." These were the closing words 2 weeks ago of columnist Nicholas Kristof.

Having first traveled to Sudan in 1989, my interest in this country has spanned the better part of 20 years. I've been most recently there in July of 2004, with Senator BROWNBACK. We were the first congressional delegation to visit Darfur, where genocide has taken place. We saw the same scorched earth tactics from Khartoum in the brutal 20-year civil war with the South where 2.1 million people perished. I remain grateful for President Bush's leadership in bringing about an end to the bloodshed with the historic signing of the CPA. But that peace is now in jeopardy.

Fast forward to 2009. I was part of a bipartisan group in Congress who called for the appointment of a special envoy shortly after President Obama was elected. What was once a successful model for Sudan is not having the desired effect today. And I'm not alone in that belief. Last week, six respected NGOs ran ads in the Washington Post calling for Secretary Clinton and Ambassador Rice to exercise "personal and sustained leadership on Sudan" in the face of a "stalemated policy."

Today, I join the chorus of voices in calling on the President to empower Secretary Clinton and Ambassador Rice to take control of this languishing policy in Sudan. They should oversee quarterly deputies' meetings to ensure options for consequences are on the table. In fact, I call on the President himself to exercise leadership in this regard, consistent with the explicit campaign promises he made about Sudan—promises which, to date, ring hollow. There is a pressing need for renewed and principled leadership at the highest levels—leadership which is clear-eyed about the history and the record of the internationally indicted war criminal at the helm in Khartoum.

In addition to the massive human rights abuses perpetrated by the country's leader, Bashir, Sudan remains on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. The same people currently in control in Khartoum gave safe haven to bin Laden. Bin Laden lived in Sudan from 1991 to 1996. I believe that this administration's engagement with Sudan, under the leadership of General Gration, and with the apparent blessing of the President, has failed to recognize the true nature of Bashir and the NCP. While the hour is late, the administration can still chart a new course.

Today, I sent a letter to the President, which I submit for the RECORD, outlining seven policy recommendations and calling for urgent action.

When the administration released its Sudan policy, Secretary Clinton indicated that benchmarks would be applied to Sudan, that progress would be assessed, and that "backsliding by any party will be met with credible pressure in the form of disincentives leveraged by our government." But in the face of national elections that were neither free nor fair, and in the face of continued violations of the U.N. arms embargo, in the face of Bashir's failure to cooperate in any way with the International Criminal Court, there are no disincentives. This is a worst case scenario and guaranteed, if history is a guide, to fail. More than 6 months have passed since the release of the administration's Sudan strategy, and implementation has been insufficient at best and altogether absent at worst.

During the campaign, then-candidate Obama said regarding Sudan, "Washington must respond to the ongoing genocide and the ongoing failure to implement the CPA with consistency and strong consequences." These words ring truer today than ever before. But the burden for action, the weight of leadership, now rests with this President and this administration alone—and there are lives at risk. The stakes could not be higher.

I close, Mr. Speaker, with a slight variation on the words of Nicholas Kristof: If President Obama is ever going to find his voice on Sudan, it had better be now.