

the United Nations relief operations and other civilian targets. The administration has issued statements. But at this point, after all of the Sudanese Government's atrocities, words are not enough to address the problem in Khartoum.

Two years ago, President Clinton hailed what he called an African renaissance. But a recent article in the Los Angeles Times states that a recent national intelligence estimate says that "Africa faces a bleaker future than at any time in the past century."

Today's Roll Call shows pictures of some of the children who had their arms and legs and ears cut off by rebels in Sierra Leone. This administration has made a mess of the situation in Sierra Leone and has done nothing but spin its wheels there. Yet again, it is an African policy that is long on rhetoric and short on action.

President Clinton has traveled more than almost any other President. He has had first-hand experience throughout Africa, more experience and actual time in Africa than any other President. But all this time there only amounted to photo opportunities and handshakes, amounting to substance-free public relations.

Because of his time in Africa, he should have done much more. It is not too late for this administration to do more for Africa. The death, the suffering, the destruction that has occurred over the past 8 years in Sudan and Sierra Leone and Rwanda and Burundi and other places need more than a touch-down by Air Force One.

REVIEWING THE REOPENING OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, if my colleagues have been in Congress for no more than 5 years, they have never seen Pennsylvania Avenue as a normal city street. It was closed in 1995 in the wake of the tragic Oklahoma City bombing. This body has had no mechanism for reviewing what was done, whether it was appropriate or whether it should continue ad infinitum. The Secret Service has, of course, wanted to close Pennsylvania Avenue for decades now; and after the tragic Oklahoma bombing, it is understandable that the Service succeeded.

But what about now? The Subcommittee on the District of Columbia, to its credit, under the leadership of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) had three hearings. But there was nothing concrete that the committee could come forward with at that time in 1995 to respond to the closing.

For all intents and purposes, there is no way for the Congress of the United

States to review a closing, and it could happen anywhere in the United States on the say so, the unreviewable say so, as it turns out, of the Secret Service, unreviewable because it is clear to me after a meeting that I had with Secretary of the Treasury Lawrence Summers yesterday that the Secret Service has captured and easily continues to capture the government bureaucrats.

The Congress must establish a way to review and decide the appropriateness of a closing when it goes on for years. I intend to introduce legislation to that effect so that it does not again happen here and so it cannot happen in my colleagues' jurisdictions either.

A public-spirited group of business people, the Federal City Council and the D.C. Building and Industry Association, have secured an independent effort by world-class experts to see whether there is any way to meet the Secret Service's concerns and open the avenue. They have a plan that meets each and every concern the Secret Service had raised—narrowing the avenue, putting grass over large parts of it so that cars would be well beyond the distance that a bomb could do damage to the White House complex, bridges on either side of the avenue that would allow only cars and not trucks to enter the avenue, and so forth.

Without this kind of sensitivity to this living, breathing city, of course, essentially we close down much of its commerce in the middle of the town. We do great damage to the environment, and we make congestion far more awful than it is. We are second already in traffic congestion in this country.

There are many other details, including technology, that there is not time to offer here today. I soon am to receive a Secret Service briefing so that I can learn what it is that concerns them now. But there is every indication that they simply intend to move the goal post. First it was trucks. I am sure that now it will be cars. Then it will be motorcycles.

We have briefed White House officials. The President seems quite open to opening the avenue, but he says he wants to make sure that others are not harmed. The fact is that no single person wants to take the responsibility. This is the body that should take the responsibility.

What the Secret Service wants is essentially zero risk. It is time to factor into the equation of decisionmaking the more than half a million people who live in this city, the more than 4 million who live in the region, and the millions of Americans 25 million each year, who come to visit and see America's main street closed down.

Only the independent counsel has had as much nonreviewable authority as the Secret Service effectively has. Nobody wants to harm the President or the White House complex. But in a free

society there must be a way to balance the risk of harm versus the risk to our democratic institutions. We cannot accept a bar that automatically rises when the Secret Service alone, unreviewable for all intents and purposes, simply raises that bar. We cannot let the police ever be the last word on our democratic institutions.

In America, the notion of a zero risk standard in order to protect any of us is unacceptable when what we lose are our democratic rights and our democratic institutions. Zero risk or anything close to it is a standard that no American who believes in an open and democratic society should ever have to meet. That is the power we have effectively given the Secret Service.

I am going to introduce a bill to make sure that it does not happen again.

RIPLEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, if this campaign for President goes on much longer, it may be capable of being admitted into "Ripley's Believe It or Not". In fact, I am speaking specifically of our candidate on the Democratic side, the Vice President of the United States.

Many people will remember some of the claims that he has made in recent years, including "I invented the Internet," "I discovered Love Canal," "I was the feature for Love Story," and then recently he imagined his dog and mother-in-law were taking the same medicine for arthritis in which to compare pricing and scare seniors in my home State of Florida to reality check, if you will, that neither one apparently is taking the medicine, or at least the analysis was incorrect and flawed at best.

More recently he is going to crack down on Hollywood and then goes out there and raises buckets of money and says to them, "Do not worry, I am only here to nudge you." Now he wants to tap into the Strategic Reserve because he sponsored the legislation that created it and authorized the first funds to purchase the fuel, even though that was created 2 years before he came to Congress.

He continues to accuse the Bush campaign of being beholden to big oil, yet continues to refuse to fully explain his ties and financial dealings with Armand Hammer, the late chairman of Occidental Petroleum, and a long favorite of the Russian Government.

More recently now as we talk about the Strategic Reserve, many in this Congress claim on both sides of the aisle that the intervention of the White House on the Strategic Petroleum Reserve has caused the market on energy