

Hearings on Religious Persecution in Sudan: Panel 3 Introduction

February 15, 2000

(Note: These are unedited and uncorrected transcripts)

RABBI SAPERSTEIN: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome.

We are halfway between where we otherwise might be, so I am delighted that everyone cooperated on this.

With our next panel, we begin to move on what Professor Reeves started us on, that is, addressing U.S. responses in general. However, we have also asked Professor John Voll to join this panel. He has addressed the Commission before, at the recommendation of some of the folks in the Muslim community with whom we have been working, as an expert on Muslim history and Muslim issues. It is very illuminating and helpful to us, and we are delighted to have him back again. In a moment, we are going to start with him. Professor Voll is a professor of Islamic history at Georgetown University.

Mr. Ezekiel Gatkuoth is associated with the United Democratic Salvation Front. Many of you will remember in the last few weeks reading in the papers about a split in coalition in the government and a group that has broken away. He is the D.C. representative of an organization that is aligned with that group and will help us to understand what some of these changes are about, why they happen, and what they portend to us.

Richard McCall is a policy analyst and administrator at USAID. He is someone well-known to everyone in the humanitarian field. He has been around a while, and we all look to him for guidance and advice on these issues. So we are delighted to have him here today. There was some miscommunication between us, so the fact that at fairly short notice, you were able to be with us today makes us especially appreciative to you.

And a particular welcome to Mr. Dan Eiffe of Norwegian People's Aid. This was a contact that Elliott Abrams nurtured in his visit over there. Dan is one of the heads of Norwegian People's Aid based in Lokochokie [ph.] in Kenya that helps fly supplies into the Southern part of Sudan, and he will talk a little bit about that work and what might be done to expand the kind of humanitarian relief that is so desperately needed in the areas of the South.

So we are really delighted to have all of you here.

Professor Voll, we are going to begin with you, and let me just remind testifiers if they were not here this morning that we ask you to try really to stay to the 7- to 9-minute period of time for testimony. The lights will go on in front of me, so please try to keep an eye on them.

Second, for anyone here in attendance who was not here this morning, if you have questions that you would like us to ask, please raise your hand, and one of the staff people will hand you a card. Write the questions down and turn in the cards, and we will combine them into consensus questions or questions that offer new insights that we will be asking later on. It was very helpful this morning to have your participation.

With that, Professor Voll, welcome, and please lead us off.