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ESSAYS

Human Rights: Remarks on the Policy of the United States*

BY HON. WARREN CHRISTOPHER**

PART ONE: PRINCIPLE AND REALISM

In our efforts to promote human rights we must carefully define the principles we seek to apply, for glittering generalities can lead to unworkable policies. We must also serve our principles with an abiding realism, since rigidity in the pursuit of principle, especially in foreign policy, is likely to lead us astray.

In defining what we mean by human rights, we believe that we should direct our efforts to the most fundamental and important human rights, all of which are internationally recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which the United Nations approved in 1948. Thus, we emphasize three categories of human rights:

First, the right to be free from governmental violation of the integrity of the person. Such violations include torture; cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; arbitrary arrest or imprisonment; denial of fair public trial; and invasion of the home. When human beings are forcibly abducted from their homes, interrogated incessantly at the pleasure of their captors, and prodded with electrodes or held under water to the point of drowning—when such things are happening in the world in which we live—and they are—all who truly value human rights must speak out;

Second, the right to the fulfillment of such vital needs as food, shelter, health care, and education. The stage of a nation's economic development will obviously affect the fulfillment of this right. However we must remember that this right can be violated by a government's action or inaction—for example, when a government diverts vast proportions of its country's limited resources to corrupt officials

* Part One is adapted from a speech delivered at the Gavel Awards luncheon of the American Bar Association on August 9, 1977. Part Two is from a speech before the American Bar Association on February 13, 1978.

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or to the creation of luxuries for an elite, while millions endure hunger and privation;

Third, the right to enjoy civil and political liberties: freedom of thought; religion and assembly; freedom of movement both within and outside one's own country; freedom of speech; freedom of the press; freedom to take part in government. These liberties that we Americans enjoy so fully, and too often take for granted, are under assault in many places. That authoritarian regimes are premised on a denial of these rights is well known. It is all the more distressing, however, when regimes in countries with democratic traditions violate these precious rights, when, for example, they shut down newspapers and imprison journalists who have done nothing more than print ideas which are out of step with official policy.

It is our goal to promote greater observance by governments of all three groups of the fundamental human rights I have described. It is, after all, these rights that make life worth living.

Obviously, lawyers are deeply concerned with all these rights; and it is of particular relevance to every lawyer that in some countries our colleagues of the bar are being harassed because they have provided a conscientious defense for criminal defendants. It is not easy to imagine a lawyer being abducted and held incommunicado for months for no other reason than that he defended an alleged subversive. But such conduct is occurring, and it is essential that the legal profession, both in the country where it occurs as well as elsewhere, unite in opposition to such practices.

I have admired the speech which President Spann [William B. Spann, Jr., of the American Bar Association] made on this subject to the Inter-American Bar Association last May. "I do not call upon any lawyer for martyrdom," he said. "But I do call upon every lawyer . . . to keep the pressure on, to lend whatever assistance can be given to colleagues in other countries wherever the cry for help is heard." Sharing Bill Spann's appraisal of the importance of helping our persecuted colleagues, the State Department stands ready to do its part.

A. *Universal Ideas*

Having defined the three categories of rights that are the subject of our policy, it is only fair for me to acknowledge that there are those who suggest that it is unwise for us to be promoting abroad the human rights principles that gave this nation its birth. Such critics argue that we cannot expect non-Western societies to find much relevance in what are sometimes disparagingly referred to as

eighteenth century Western ideas.

There is nothing parochial about the principles we seek to promote. They respond to universal yearnings of mankind. They have been formally adopted by virtually all governments, both in their own constitutions and through international commitments. What we are urging is that more than lip-service be accorded to these principles.

Those who say we should not seek to impose our particular form of democracy on the world have set up a straw man. It is not a matter of form we are talking about; rather, it is the substance of human freedom.

Even though people are very poor, they are still profoundly interested in being free to go where they want, to say what they want, to practice the religion of their choice, and to have a voice in determining the rules under which they live. Do the critics really mean to suggest that those struggling to break the bonds of mass misery are content permanently to trade in their freedoms for material advancement? My own view is that those who make such suggestions have failed to recognize the deepest aspirations of human beings.

I see no necessary inconsistency between economic development on the one hand and political and civil rights on the other. I think people will eventually reject leaders who unnecessarily impose such a choice. In the short run, some people may have tempered their desire for freedom, but in the long run I believe that desire is irrepressible.

B. Positive Measures Preferred

We have no illusions that the process of encouraging greater respect for human rights around the world will yield early or easy successes. We realize that there are compelling reasons why we must season our idealism with realism.

There is no blinking at the fact that our ability to change human rights practices in other societies is limited, even where we use all the mechanisms and approaches at our disposal. We must not proceed as if we had unlimited power.

Just as our power is limited, so is our wisdom. We must avoid certitude and its unattractive partner, self-righteousness. We recognize the variety of human experience. Differing histories and circumstances will necessarily mean that there will be a great diversity in political systems and economic conditions throughout the world.

In addition, we must recognize that our actions may provoke

retaliation against our short-term interests or even sometimes against the victims of repression we seek to assist. We would much prefer to find positive and creative ways to encourage governments to respect human rights, rather than to penalize poor performance. But where such positive measures are not possible, the risks of imposing sanctions must be faced and carefully assessed.

It is also realistic to recognize that unless our domestic actions reflect a firm commitment to human rights, the message we are sending to others will ring hollow. We are taking important steps to improve our own human rights record. We have removed all restrictions on the right of our citizens to travel abroad. With our support, Congress has just passed a relaxation of our visa requirements, so that foreigners wishing to visit the United States will not be excluded because of political affiliation, except in the rarest instances. We have expanded our refugee program so that we are now admitting 7,000 Indo-Chinese refugees per month. We have also submitted to Congress new legislation that would improve procedures for admitting refugees, and provide a uniform system of assistance to refugees in the United States. The efforts we are making to prevent a recurrence of abuses by the intelligence community and to overhaul our outmoded and unfair welfare system are also important contributions to the cause of human rights.

C. Diplomatic Approaches

When we find it necessary to address ourselves to the human rights conditions in other countries, our first approach is to express our views in private to the government involved. There are a variety of ways in which this can be done. We can, therefore, choose among a rather wide range of signals. It can be done, for example, by a State Department desk officer talking to a minister in a foreign embassy. It can be done by having the Secretary of State call in a foreign ambassador. It can be done by our ambassador in a foreign country going in to see the foreign minister. Or it can be done by a letter from our President to the leader of a foreign government, and so forth. The point is that diplomacy is a rich resource that can be fully mined only by a calibrated, sequential approach.

We have made scores of diplomatic approaches with respect to human rights, and by and large we are achieving good results. Governments all over the world, even where they disagree with us, are beginning to understand our policy better and to gauge accurately the depth of our commitment.

Diplomatic approaches enable other governments to respond

privately to our concerns. This is appropriate since our objective is improvement of human rights conditions, not embarrassment of others or publication of our successes.

Other governments must be aware, of course, that when private discussions fail to convey our message, public comment may at times be necessary. We shall never apologize for expressing our commitment to our principles.

Our bilateral economic assistance programs also must reflect our commitment to human rights. For our part, we are committed to providing substantial and increasing economic assistance to the Third World.

There are a number of different ways in which one government gives economic assistance to foreign nations, and we believe we should bring human rights considerations to bear with respect to each of them.

This process is greatly complicated by the fact that most of our bilateral economic aid now goes to meet the human needs of the poorest segments of the population. To limit such aid because of human rights violations may penalize people who are not responsible for the violations and cannot prevent them. On the other hand, we are responsible for our actions and must keep trying to assure that our economic assistance programs do not run counter to our efforts on behalf of human rights.

We are eager to use our economic assistance affirmatively to promote the cause of human rights. For example, we helped arrange an international loan to Portugal to aid that country in its difficult transformation to a democratic society.

As for military assistance, our military assistance programs are reviewed in light of the human rights practices of the recipient governments. In some cases we may decide to limit or withdraw security assistance. In other cases where the human rights performance of the recipient is unsatisfactory, we may decide to continue to provide aid because of overriding United States national security interests—but not without expressing our concern.

We are also taking important initiatives in multilateral bodies. For example, we are using our voice and vote in the World Bank and other international financial institutions to promote the cause of human rights. We do this by opposing or seeking reconsideration of loans to governments that are flagrant human rights violators, again with special consideration being given to loans that would clearly help meet the needs of the poor.

At the United Nations, we are working closely with other gov-

ernments to give new strength and validity to that organization's efforts on behalf of human rights. It is especially important that the United Nations take the difficult but crucial step of making its investigations of human rights violations evenhanded and comprehensive. We are, therefore, enthusiastically supporting an initiative of Costa Rica to establish a United Nations high commissioner for human rights. We have urged the General Assembly to establish a special panel to give new impetus to the campaign against torture.

In the Organization of American States, we supported a successful initiative by Venezuela to increase the resources and effectiveness of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. We believe that the Commission can play a critical role in investigating allegations of human rights violations in this hemisphere and in suggesting improvements.

Another important multilateral context was the meeting held in Belgrade in 1978, where the thirty-five nations who signed the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe reviewed what had been done—and what had not been done—to implement the human rights and other provisions of that historic document. At the Belgrade meeting it was agreed that another review conference would be held in Madrid in 1980. We are actively preparing for Madrid and are determined that the deliberations there be conducted in an honest, frank and non-polemical atmosphere. We want to be certain that the cause of human rights, as well as the cause of peace between East and West, will be the ultimate beneficiaries.

These are some of the tools at our disposal. I want to stress that in deciding whether and how to use them in particular cases, we will not be distracted by token improvements that other governments may make. Rather, our attention will be fixed on the long-term trend.

I also want to underscore that as we use these approaches and mechanisms, it will always be our desire to expand our cooperation with other governments and peoples. We know that in the long run we will fail unless we make the promotion of human rights an international movement.

D. Encouraging Developments

Is our policy working? It is certainly too early to say. In a sense, it will probably always be too early to say. The quest to secure human rights is never ending, like the search for peace. We may hope and pray for the day when the world will seem more civilized,

when governments will uniformly treat their citizens with decency and humanity, but we will not be discouraged by the shortcomings we see. Indeed, the failures we observe will only cause us to redouble our efforts.

We take encouragement, but do not take credit, for favorable signs which we observe around the world on the human rights front, signs which indicate that the issue of human rights has touched a responsive chord in a growing number of countries.

—With respect to violations of integrity of the person, some governments, we hope with a real intent to halt repression, have begun to release large numbers of political prisoners as well as to curtail the indiscriminate arrest of alleged subversives. And some governments have punished those responsible for torture and ordered that such practices cease.

—With respect to economic rights, many governments are showing a renewed determination to promote the economic rights of their citizens. They are turning away from grandiose schemes and showcase improvements to apply their energies to economic projects that provide the broadest benefits. The governments of several African countries, recognizing the vast disparities between rich and poor, are beginning long-range and difficult development programs to provide a better standard of life for their people. In addition, in some Latin American countries land reform is again being pursued as a way to give people a stake in their own country and provide them an opportunity for economic advancement. I would also note that in Portugal the new democratic government is moving ahead in the areas of housing and health care, social security and welfare benefits, and new schools. Further, the international financial institutions are gradually redirecting much of their resources toward rural development and agricultural projects that help the largest number of people.

—With respect to political and civil rights, one can perceive a resurgence of democracy. Recent developments in India and Spain, as well as Portugal, are proving that democracy can stage a comeback. In some of the military regimes in Latin America, there are hesitant but hopeful signs of “*retorno*”—a return to elected civilian government. In addition, some East European countries have permitted the reunification of divided families and otherwise eased their emigration rules.

I think all of these positive developments are clear and convincing evidence of the power of an idea. When all is said and done, the idea of human rights has a life and force of its own which govern-

ments can nurture or oppose, but never extinguish. I can see this so vividly as I review cables from all over the world. The human rights initiative echoes in official circles; even more, it has a resonance in the homes and hearts of people around the world.

If we have moved human rights to the front page, it is not because of us, but because of the power of the ideas we are espousing. I see now more clearly than ever before why it has been said that the cause of human freedom is the world's only great revolutionary cause. As Walter Lippmann once put it:

The deepest issue of our time is whether the civilized people can maintain and develop a free society or whether they are to fall back into the ancient order of things, when the whole of men's existence, their consciences, their science, their arts, their labor, and their integrity as individuals were at the disposal of the State.

As in any new undertaking, our human rights policy will not be free from mistakes and miscalculations. But with the understanding and support of our citizens, as well as of our leading private organizations, and with practical and persistent effort, I believe that over time this new policy will achieve historic results. The time is propitious. The challenge is enormous. Our principles are sound and vital, and when applied with realism, they can and will provide a harvest of freedom for us and for people everywhere.

PART TWO: THE DIPLOMACY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Our strength as a nation and our magnetism to the world at large are predicated on our commitment to human rights. It is only proper that the human rights considerations so important to our national life be reflected in our international life as well. This means they must be fully integrated into our diplomacy.

The pursuit of this cause is not an ideological luxury cruise with no practical port of call. Our idealism and our self-interest coincide. Widening the circle of countries which share our human rights values is at the very core of our security interests. Such nations make strong allies. Their commitment to human rights gives them an inner strength and stability which causes them to stand steadfastly with us on the most difficult issues of our time.

Diplomacy can be a rich mix, indeed. In the case of our human rights objectives, we have evolved a mix that is proving effective. The primary ingredient of human rights diplomacy has a seeming simplicity: we frankly discuss human rights in our consultations with foreign diplomats and leaders. Very often these very frank

discussions have led to beneficial results. Sovereign governments have reexamined conditions in their capitals and provinces, and releases of political prisoners and other positive actions have followed.

When we raise human rights issues with another government, we take an affirmative stance. We explain that our people, our Congress, and our government are deeply troubled by the human rights abuses we believe to be occurring. We ask for the other government's assessment of the situation and the prospects for improvement.

Sometimes, it is true, the response is truculent and defensive. Sometimes, we are charged with "intervening" in the internal affairs of another sovereign state. Much more often, though, the response is a real effort to join issue on the merits. Frequently, there is candid acknowledgement of the validity of our interest—an interest rooted in solemn international agreements that make the way a government treats its own citizens a matter of legitimate international concern.

Just as frequently there is disagreement over the degree and the causes of the problem. It is often asserted, for example, that terrorism justifies repression. But usually these differences in perspective are overtaken by a consideration of possible improvements, such as: (1) Whether those held without trial, often incommunicado and for lengthy periods, can soon be released or at least charged and tried; (2) Whether the return to civilian rule can proceed on schedule; or (3) Whether those responsible for mistreating prisoners will be prosecuted.

Sometimes we achieve explicit understandings on such issues. More commonly, there is an implicit recognition of the need for improvement and for further consultations as the situation evolves. Either way, the raising of the issue has profound significance. Rather than being conveniently ignored, human rights abuses are brought to the center of the diplomatic interchange, where they must be addressed.

I believe the almost geometric increase in world awareness of human rights issues is perhaps the major accomplishment of our human rights diplomacy. This new consciousness not only helps curb existing human rights abuses; it also acts as a deterrent to new violations.

A. Modes of Human Rights Diplomacy

The words of human rights diplomacy can effectively be joined

with symbolic acts. For example, trips to other countries by our senior officials, and official invitations to the leaders of other nations to visit the United States, can be used to advance our human rights objectives. Such visits can mark our recognition that a country has an outstanding human rights record, or provide the opportunity to discuss human rights problems with the leader of a country where improvements are urgently needed.

There are a host of other measures that can be used symbolically to send the desired signal, such as: cultural and educational exchanges; selection of the site of international conferences; the level of our representation at diplomatic events; and port visits by our fleet. Carefully used, such symbols and gestures can help advance the cause of human rights.

There is also significance in our willingness to meet, on appropriate occasions, with opposition leaders from countries with serious human rights problems, including some who are living in exile from their homeland; and abroad, our ambassadors regularly meet with opposition leaders.

These meetings enable us to hear both sides of the story, to learn how a human rights problem is seen by those directly affected, and to demonstrate that we are concerned about all the people of the country involved, not just those in power.

Beyond private diplomatic discourse and important symbolic steps, the diplomacy of human rights must sometimes include criticism of regimes implicated in serious human rights violations. Public comment by our government is an official act that directs the attention of the entire world to the objectionable practices of another government. We believe that such criticism can have some inhibiting effect on such governments. We do not generally prefer this approach, but neither will we shrink from it.

Needless to say, public comment has been our first line of approach with respect to countries—such as Uganda under the now deposed Amin regime—where we have little or no diplomatic contact, but yet where unspeakable violations of human rights have occurred as a matter of deliberate state policy. We deplore these policies. We hope other governments which have the contact that we lack can make known the extent of international concern and bring about improvements.

We also, of course, spoke openly and forthrightly at the Belgrade meeting that reviewed implementation of the Helsinki Final Act. That document contemplates a full and frank review of whether the signatories have lived up to their human rights commit-

ments. It is clear that the Soviet Union and the East European countries, in varying degrees, have not done so. We have not hesitated to say so publicly, to request an explanation, and to seek compliance. Our comments and those of West European governments have helped sustain the Helsinki accord as a living force in the cause of human rights, an engine for keeping constant pressure on governments to respect the rights of their people. Our silence would have effectively permitted that force to fade away.

In speaking of our public efforts, I should note that we are actively using our public diplomacy tools such as the International Communication Agency to convey our human rights concerns to various nongovernmental audiences abroad. The Voice of America has increased its attention to these issues. Our embassies and offices abroad have organized seminars in which thoughtful Americans can directly express their human rights concerns to people from similar walks of life in foreign countries.

Our human rights initiative has given recognition and a new stimulus to the longstanding efforts of private nongovernment organizations in this field. We applaud these endeavors and recognize that over time they may well outdistance any government effort.

When our relationship with another government includes economic and military assistance, we are prepared to take tangible steps to recognize good human rights performance or to manifest our concern over human rights violations. When appropriate or necessary, in other words, we will support our words with actions. In taking such steps, we are guided and strengthened by important legislative provisions enacted by a Congress overwhelmingly committed to the cause of human rights.

Taking due account of the needs of the poorest, we have made a fundamental decision gradually to channel a growing share of our economic assistance to countries that respect the human rights of their people.

On the other hand, when countries we assist consistently curtail human rights, and where our preferred diplomatic efforts have been unavailing, we must consider restrictions on the flow of our aid, both overall levels and individual loans or grants. Thus, over the course of the past year we have, for example, deferred bilateral economic assistance to certain countries; opposed loans by the World Bank and the other international financial institutions to countries that engage in flagrant violations of human rights; and taken steps to insure that food aid provided to countries with serious human rights problems will reach the needy.

We have also advised other departments of the government on human rights conditions abroad that may affect their activities. For example, a recently enacted statute calls for the Export-Import Bank to take human rights considerations into account, and the bank regularly seeks advice on this issue.

Human rights performance is also an important factor in our decisions on military assistance and commercial arms sales subject to government licensing. We have reduced, or declined to increase, our military aid to a number of countries and refused to issue licenses in a variety of instances.

The diversity of cultures and the different stages of economic and political maturity tend to produce agonizing, almost incredibly complex, choices in granting or withholding aid. Moreover, human rights, while a fundamental factor in our foreign policy, cannot always be the decisive factor. But the difficulty of the decisions will not deter us from supporting our words with action.

It is important to note that we are not alone in pursuing the diplomacy of human rights. Increasingly, other governments are standing with us. In the United Nations, in the Organization of American States, and in other contexts, we have strong partners in the cause of human rights. Recently, we initiated consultations with our West European allies and others on how to promote broader international cooperation in support of human rights. In general, we are finding strong support for giving human rights a higher priority in international relations.

B. Need for Objective Data on Human Rights Conditions

With the aid of our embassies around the world, we are constantly trying to gather reliable and extensive human rights data. Nevertheless, the validity of our information on human rights conditions in other countries is frequently challenged. Probably it is inevitable that the data collected by any one country would be suspect. Coverage is bound to be limited, and there may be the suspicion that the collecting country has an ax to grind.

What is needed is an objective, widely respected clearinghouse for human rights information on all countries of the world. This would be an important resource for us and others interested in taking human rights conditions in other countries into account in policymaking. It would, thus, both inform our decisions and authenticate the existence and severity of human rights problems.

It is clear that such a clearinghouse must be international in

scope. What is not so clear is whether it should be sponsored by a private organization or by a group of countries or an international organization. Once created, such an entity might also play an important educational role in improving human rights conditions around the world. We stand ready to help in creating such an organization.

This, then, is a capsule view of the diplomacy of human rights. It is a diplomacy that refuses to "be indifferent to the fate of freedom elsewhere." It is a diplomacy that has permitted the United States to seize the initiative for human progress once again. Surveys conducted abroad have shown time and time again that the renewed interest in human values expressed by the President and implemented by our diplomatic efforts has had an enormously positive impact on the view that people in foreign countries hold of America, and our role in the world.

We are daily concerned with our government's response to human rights conditions in other countries. But our credibility—and indeed the inner health of our society—depends upon facing up to our problems here at home and seeking to improve our own human rights situation.

Much of President Carter's domestic program is directed toward the enhancement of the human rights of Americans. Proposals for welfare reform, efforts to cut the cost of health care, and the commitment to full employment are obvious examples. And, as noted above, travel restrictions for American citizens abroad have been eliminated and visa requirements for foreigners coming to this country have been significantly eased.

It is well to remember that we are far from perfect. Our ample due process with all its guarantees does not afford perfect justice. But whatever our shortcomings, they are faced frankly and openly. The three constitutional branches of government have the responsibility to do so, while the "fourth branch" is there to insure that that responsibility is met.

In making human rights a fundamental tenet of our foreign policy and greatly increasing sensitivity to human rights concerns, we have helped to create an atmosphere in which human rights progress is much more likely to occur. We do not take credit for particular improvements, but we note the tangible evidence from every continent that the condition of large numbers of people—of individual, identifiable human beings—is less oppressive now than it seemed one year ago.

In Africa, there have been releases of substantial numbers of political detainees, e.g., in Sudan, Nigeria, Upper Volta, Mali, and

Ghana are moving toward reestablishment of civilian governments. Most African leaders have intensified their efforts to promote agricultural development. Nigeria and other African nations are supporting creation of an African Human Rights Commission under United Nations auspices.

In the Near East, Morocco moved toward political liberalization after nearly a decade of rule by decree. Restrictions on freedom of the press were lifted, and significant numbers of political prisoners were released. Tunisia authorized establishment of the Tunisian League for the Rights of Man, which has been permitted to investigate allegations of human rights violations.

In South Asia, there was in India a magnificent resurrection of democracy. Nepal released political prisoners and lifted newspaper curbs. Sri Lanka changed its government for the sixth time since independence through the free choice of its people. Pakistan released over 11,000 political prisoners.

In East Asia, the Indonesian government released 10,000 political detainees, confirmed its intent to release 20,000 more in accordance with its previously announced release schedule, and agreed to a resumption of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visits. The Indonesian government also permitted the ICRC to visit East Timor and allowed international relief organizations to operate there. South Korea released all but one of the Myong Dong prisoners—opposition political and religious leaders who had opposed the government—as well as the most prominent opposition figure. The Philippine government released some of its detainees and eased some of its martial law restrictions. The government of Thailand eased press restrictions, improved trial procedures and held general elections in April 1979.

In Latin America, political prisoners were released in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Paraguay and Peru. Most Latin American governments have allocated increased resources to improving living standards and productivity of their poor farmers. Some restrictive laws have been repealed in Panama. The Inter-American Human Rights Commission visited Haiti, and Argentina has agreed to a visit by the Commission later this year.

In Western Europe, for the first time in NATO's history, every member of the alliance is a democracy. New churches have been constructed in Poland. Certain countries of Eastern Europe have eased their restrictions on emigration and family reunification. Some human rights activists in Poland and Romania have been released from prison, and live television programs in Hungary have

allowed prominent Westerners to voice their views on political issues.

E. Conclusion

Despite these many improvements and others like them, the fact remains that the distance covered is dwarfed by the distance that remains to be traveled. I could recount in detail the retrograde human rights developments of the past year, as well as the horrendous human rights violations that persist across the globe—in many of the countries I have just mentioned, as well as elsewhere.

Suffice it to say that in all quarters of the world, too many people are still subject to torture and are suffering in squalid prisons, uncharged and untried. Too many people are hungry, have inadequate shelter, and lack medical care and educational opportunity. Too many people are living under martial law or are otherwise barred from political participation. Too many are denied the right to emigrate or even to travel freely within their own country.

These problems are the challenges of the future. They will not be solved easily. However, our experience to date with human rights diplomacy convinces us that while the journey is long, it is not impossible.

Of course, none of us can know for sure where the progress of human rights may lead. Every so often during the past few years, as I have struggled to understand the deep meaning of human rights, I have felt a fleeting intimation of what untold spiritual and material riches may lie ahead—perhaps centuries ahead—in a world of true, universal human freedom. Justice Holmes perhaps had a similar feeling and certainly expressed it much better than I ever could when he said:

I think it not improbable that man, like the grub that prepares a chamber for the winged thing it never has seen but is to be—that man may have cosmic destinies that he does not understand. And so beyond the vision of battling races and an impoverished earth I catch a dreaming glimpse of peace.

The cause of human rights has power and will succeed because, no matter what the obstacle, it tenaciously allows the world's people to "catch a dreaming glimpse of peace."

