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Eleanor Roosevelt Speech [4]

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RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
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Leon H. Sullivan

1922—

Clergyman, civil rights activist, business leader



American civil rights leader Reverend Leon H. Sullivan's revelation to *Fortune* magazine that he was undertaking "a bold new venture" to assist the continent of Africa during the 1990s was no startling proposal from this pastor, who has been a life-long social activist. Sullivan, who early in his career accepted the ministry of Zion Baptist Church, which was located in a run-down slum of north Philadelphia, pioneered the protest concept of economic boycott of stores and companies that failed to employ blacks. He also created the job-training agency Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America Inc., which spawned 75 similar centers throughout the country and trained nearly two million people.

Long an advocate of black entrepreneurship, Sullivan led the members of his church to form Zion Investment Associates Inc., which in turn developed Progress Aerospace Enterprises Inc., a company that manufactured aerospace parts and actively created jobs for the unemployed. But he is most famous, perhaps, for devising the Sullivan Principles, a business code by which companies worldwide operating in South Africa enacted equal treatment of black workers—prior to sanctions imposed by the United States in 1987. Upon his retirement from Zion

Baptist Church, Sullivan told *Fortune* that he would shift his focus to the needs of Africa since his "work at the [Zion Baptist] church is done. We finally paid off the mortgage."

Born October 16, 1922, in Charleston, West Virginia, Sullivan's parents were divorced when he was a child. Growing up in the alleys of a poor neighborhood, the boy demonstrated unusual intellectual and athletic gifts. During his childhood and adolescence, he

avidly pursued religion and sports. At 17, Sullivan became an ordained Baptist minister. After earning an athletic scholarship to play football and basketball, he entered West Virginia State University. When Sullivan lost his scholarship following a knee injury, he worked evenings in a steel mill in order to continue his studies. Furthering his education in New York City, Sullivan obtained a degree in theology from Union Theological Seminary and a degree in sociology from Columbia University during the mid-1940s. Upon graduation, he served as an assistant to Adam Clayton Powell, pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York's Harlem and later congressman from the State of New York. Sullivan served his initial pastorate at First Baptist Church in South Orange, New Jersey, and was voted president of the South Orange Council of Churches.

At a Glance...

Born Leon Howard Sullivan, October 16, 1922, in Charleston, WV; married Grace Banks; children: Howard, Julie, Hope. Education: West Virginia State College, B.A., 1943; received degree from Union Theological Seminary, 1945; Columbia University, M.A., 1947; Virginia Union University, D.D.

Civil rights leader; pastor, First Baptist Church, South Orange, NJ; president of the South Orange Council of Churches; Zion Baptist Church, Philadelphia; pastor, 1950-88, pastor emeritus, 1988—; Zion Home for Retirement, founder, chairman, 1960—; Founder, director, and chairman of Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America Inc.; Zion Investment Associates Inc., and Progress Aerospace Enterprises Inc., cofounder of International Foundation for Education and Self-Help, 1982; organizer of African/African-American Summit, 1991; member of board of directors, General Motors Corporation and Mellon Bank Corporation. Established Leon Howard Sullivan Scholarship Fund, Bentley College, MA, 1988.

Awards: Named one of ten outstanding young men, U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce, 1955; National Publishers Association Award, 1963; Philadelphia Fellowship Communion Award, 1964; Philadelphia Book Award, 1966; American Exemplar Medal, 1969; Leon Howard Sullivan Chair, School of Social Welfare, University of Wisconsin, 1976; Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedom Medal Award, 1987; Presidential Medal of Freedom, 1991; Russwurm Award; more than 30 honorary degrees from various colleges, including Dartmouth, Princeton, Swarthmore, Yale, and the University of Pennsylvania.

Addresses: Office—Progress Plaza Shopping Center, 1501 North Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19122.

He became the pastor of the Zion Baptist Church in 1950. The Philadelphia neighborhood surrounding the church was overrun with juvenile crime, so Sullivan instituted youth programs to counter the rampant adolescent delinquency and gang warfare. In 1955, as a result of his efforts, he was named an "outstanding young man" by the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce.

In the late 1950s Sullivan observed that unemployment was a major cause of crime in his area. In response, he organized an economic boycott that opened 3,000 jobs to blacks in Philadelphia in 1961. Job training programs followed the opening of Opportunities Industrialization Centers in 1964. Sullivan also organized his church congregation into shareholders of a company he helped them form, Zion Investment Associates Inc. Progress Aerospace Enterprises Inc., founded in 1968, was one of several economic-improvement projects Sullivan formed after the establishment of Zion Investment Associates. Many organizations and companies, including the Ford Foundation and General Electric Corporation, have contributed funds to Sullivan's enterprises.

Sullivan devised his now well-known principles of fair business practices in 1977. And though the Sullivan Principles were widely implemented, discrimination against black employees working in South Africa for American companies continued to consume him. Disillusioned over the disregard for his principles there, he urged the U.S. government to institute sanctions against South Africa in the late 1980s, which would pressure that country's government—in which the black majority at that time had no voice—to revise its racist employment practices.

Retired to Pursue Global Concerns

In 1982 Sullivan established the Phoenix-based International Foundation for Education and Self-Help, through which he examined methods of achieving social and political equity for blacks around the world. He envisioned a series of conferences where African and African-American leaders, working in unison, would take steps toward African self-reliance. In 1988, after 38 years at his pulpit—his congregation having grown from 500 to 6,000—Sullivan retired to Phoenix. Though he continued to preach occasionally at Zion, he focused most of his energies on more global concerns.

One of these was his organization of the first African and African-American Summit, which in April of 1991 addressed the lack of black American involvement in African affairs. Sullivan told Kenneth B. Noble in the *New York Times*, "Psychologically, we've been brainwashed to believe that Africa was the dark continent, a place of crocodiles, trees and Tarzan," and as such, not worthy of mutual discourse.

African/African-American Summit

At the African and African-American Summit at Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Sullivan predicted that Africa was the economic future of the world. His plan to realize that projection

included debt relief for African nations as well as aid from American blacks for the development of education, food production, and industrialization. Of his design to generate hundreds of African support committees similar to the Peace Corps, Sullivan disclosed to *New York Times* contributor Noble, "I envision the best and the brightest professionals giving a year . . . to work with Africa."

Sullivan remains undaunted by obstacles to the future of his African ministry. "The economic progress we've seen in Asia in recent years is also possible in Africa," Sullivan told Carolene Langie in *Black Enterprise*. "If in just 40 years, Asians and others can build factories, electronic devices

and automobiles, with the proper tools, Africans can do the same."

Sources

Black Enterprise, October 1988; April 1991.
Fortune, July 6, 1987; August 1, 1988.
Jet, January 28, 1991; July 29, 1991; December 9, 1991.
New Republic, November 14, 1988.
New York Times, April 18, 1991.
Time, November 3, 1986; June 15, 1987.

—Marjorie Burgess

Making Human Rights Come Alive

Eleanor Roosevelt

We worked as eighteen representatives of Government on the Human Rights Commission. We are very happy to know that UNESCO accepted the first fruits of our labor and adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. You know what it will mean if all the various Commissions of UNESCO really help to tell the people of the various countries about this document. It is an educational document because it is simply a declaration that sets standards and puts down things for which we want to strive. It has no legal binding value, but it is a preparation for the coming bill of rights. When the Covenant is written, then we will have to be prepared to ask our various nations to ratify that covenant and to accept the fact that the Covenant has legal binding value.

Now, of course, the first Covenant will probably be a very simple document. It will probably not contain all the things that are in the Declaration, because in the Declaration we could write some aspirations, but nevertheless we know quite well that we will go on. Perhaps the first Covenant will not cover all the things that we will want to have covered in the future. We will keep our minds open and we will be prepared to meet new needs and new circumstances as they arise, but we have to make a beginning, and the beginning can only be made if we really make the Declaration a living document, something that is not just words on paper but something which we really strive to bring to the lives of all people, all people everywhere in the world.

Study the Document

Now to do that we, all of us, will have to study this document. We will have to understand how it came to be written, why certain things are in it. I think perhaps the best way to explain to you how difficult a universal document is to put down on paper, the best way to explain that to you is to tell you a little about what happened in Committee III of the General Assembly in Paris, when we presented as a result of the Human Rights Commission's work over a period of two and a half years that document that we thought was quite a good piece of work, over which we thought possibly there might be some discussion but not too much, and we were to find that there was going to be a great deal of discussion, so much discussion that at one point I thought perhaps we would never get agreement.

M. Laugier, out of his wisdom, said, "This is very valuable. People who discuss as much as this over ideas are going home to talk about them afterwards." I hope that he was right, because that is the way this document will come to mean something in the lives of people all over the world.

I will take the first three Articles and tell you a little about them. In Committee III there are quite a number of women who sit as delegates. I imagine that you know that that is a good committee on which to put women! In the first place, they are naturally interested in humanitarian questions, but in addition, I think some of the members of our delegations believe, we might not do so well if we were put in the political committees or legal committees. We really might get into trouble, so Committee III has quite a number of women.

Right away they saw something in our document that we brought to them which we had not given much thought to. As we presented the document, it was perhaps a little too Anglo-Saxon, a little too much like the American Declaration. It said "all *men*" in the beginning of a great many paragraphs; the final Article reads, "All *human beings* are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

After I got home I received a letter from a gentleman who said, "How could you as the United States Delegate vote for Article I of the Universal Declaration when it is not like our Declaration?"

Now I will tell you how I could. The women on Committee III--and remember there were 58 representatives of governments in Committee III, not 18-58--and the women said "'All men,' oh, no. In this document we are not going to say 'all men' because in some of our countries we are just struggling to recognition and equality. Some of us have come up to the top but others have very little equality and recognition and freedom. If we say 'all men,' when we get home it will be 'all men.'" So you will find in this Declaration that it starts with "all human beings" in Article I, and in all the other Articles it says "everyone," "no one." In the body of the Article it occasionally says "his," because to say "his or hers" each time was a little awkward, but it is very clearly understood that this applies to all human beings.

I want to tell you that to pass the first three Articles in Committee III took four weeks and a great deal of argument, a great deal of real feeling was expressed.

Words in Different Languages

Perhaps one of the things that some of us learned was that in an international document you must try to find words that can be accepted by the greatest number of people. Not the words you would choose as the perfect words, but the words that most people can say and that will accomplish the ends you desire, and will be acceptable to practically everyone sitting round the table, no matter what their background, no matter what their beliefs may be. So that's what happened to us.

In the next few words of Article I you will notice that instead of saying: "All men are created equal," it says: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

Now, I happen to believe that we are born free and equal in dignity and rights because there is a divine Creator, and there is a divine spark in men. But, there were other people around the table who wanted it expressed in such a way that they could think in their particular way about this question, and finally, these words were agreed upon because they stated the fact that all men were born free and equal, but they left it to each of us to put in our own reason, as we say, for that end.

There is one other word that I want to tell you about because it cost us a great deal of time, and it illustrates one of the difficulties of writing a document of this kind. It is in Article II which reads:

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-selfgoverning, or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Now, the word we had so much difficulty about was the word "birth" in the first paragraph. Our Russian colleague was making a speech, stating something he wished to have included in the Article, but he and the translator had a different opinion as to the way his idea was translated, and he stopped and said "That translation is wrong. It does not say what I mean." So he was finally asked if he would explain what he wanted to express. And he said that he wanted to say in French the word "etat"; in English the word "estate." There is no distinction of any kind such as "etat." Well, Professor Cassin, who is the Delegate of France and a very

distinguished and interested delegate on the Human Rights Commission, said: "I am afraid that wouldn't mean a great deal today. There was a time when it might have meant something in France. It was 'etat,' but today I don't think it would be very meaningful to people in my country." I said: "Well, I don't think the word 'estate' would mean a great deal to people in the English-speaking countries."

So, our Russian colleague said he would accept the word "class," and that I didn't like very much. I said: "I think in many countries we're getting away from the use of that word, and it would be a mistake to write it in a universal document." So, finally, after long discussion we settled on the word "birth" as a translation that our Russian colleague would accept and I thought that was all settled. But then our China colleague, who, perhaps, is more interested in the English language even than we who call it our mother tongue, Dr. P. C. Chang of China, decided that since we were going to put the word "birth" it should come after the word "race" and should read: "without distinction of any kind such as race, birth, colour, sex," etc.

Our Russian colleague would have none of it; that was not the right place. We argued for a long while, and finally it was put after "property." Then for a reason that I have never been able to understand, our Russian colleague sat back apparently feeling that he had gained a complete victory--that it now meant something that it had not meant before, and was perfectly satisfied and voted for that Article. Of course, in the end he abstained on the whole Declaration.

That is a very good illustration of one of the difficulties of translation; one of the difficulties of really understanding what is going on in the minds of other people; because to this day I don't really know why that was a victory. Perhaps you do, M. Laugier, but I never have understood. Someday I hope to understand, but I never have.

And so I think these three things all give you an idea of some of the difficulties of writing documents which is to mean something to a great many different peoples at different points of development, with different religious beliefs, and different legal systems, and with habits and customs that vary very greatly.

UNESCO Will Help Us Gain Peace

Now, UNESCO is going to help us all to understand each other better. It is going to do the work that I feel really needs to be done to teach us more about what makes man the kind of animal he is. Man has learned to use nature very well, to control it very well. He has learned a number of secrets which are nature's secrets. But he hasn't learned a great deal about himself, and that is probably what UNESCO is going to help us all to achieve; and, perhaps, one of the best ways will be in really making people understand why human rights and freedoms are one of the foundations on which we hope to build peace. Peace isn't going to just drop on us all of a sudden. We have machinery in the United Nations which we can use, if we will, to help us create an atmosphere in which peace may grow, but we will have to work to keep that machinery doing its job. And the study of human rights, the acceptance of human rights and freedoms, may be one of the foundation stones in giving us an atmosphere in which we can all grow together towards a more peaceful world.

Precedents in Laws

I remember very well when Professor Rene Cassin in the early days of our discussion in the Human Rights Commission, suggested an article. It is not now in the words that he used in first suggesting it, though the idea is in that direction. I have often thought of it because it not only illustrated the difficulties of different legal systems, but it also illustrated the belief which many of the representatives in our Commission had, that certain things must never happen again because they had been one of the causes that brought on World War II. I will tell you about it because I think it is interesting. His suggestion was that we have an article that

would read in French, "Personne ne doit etre prive de sa personalite juridique," and I, without any legal knowledge, translated it into English as "No one shall be deprived of their juridical personality."

Well, I didn't know what I had started. Behind my back, where lawyers sit from the departments in Washington, there was a storm. They all said, "There is no such expression as 'juridical personality' in English or American law." And all the United Kingdom gentlemen who were lawyers put their heads together and said "No" very firmly at me. So I knew that I hadn't gotten the right word. Behind my back they kept arguing, saying what it means is "without due process of law," but how do you say it? Well, it took a long while to argue that out and finally one day one of my Department of Justice youngish lawyers handed me a piece of paper and said, "You can accept the translation 'juridical personality,' it was once used in American law."

And when do you think it was used? It was used in the Dred Scott case when Justice Taney said "a slave has no juridical personality." So I accepted it.

There was no trouble at all with any of the Latin American countries, all of which accepted the French idea quite happily because they had the same system of law. The trouble lay with the Anglo-Saxon people, and finally our United Kingdom delegate said that it didn't mean anything in English law, but he couldn't think of any better expression, so for the time being, he would accept it. Professor Cassin himself finally thought of something better in the way of wording and the idea is in the document, though the words are changed. But I always felt that it was a very good illustration of some of the difficulties that came up on the legal side.

There Are No Guarantees

We had a very good illustration of our difficulties from a different point of view between the U.S.S.R. and ourselves. Their chief amendments were two: one was to come at the end of many articles and say "these rights" whatever they might be, "are guaranteed by the state." That was a kind of national implementation which many of us thought very unwise and so it was not accepted, but it gave the U.S.S.R. a reason for abstaining in the end because they said there was no way for any of the things that were written here to be guaranteed, which is completely true. There is no way. It is an educational declaration and the only way we can guarantee that these rights will be observed is by doing a good job educationally. People really strive to have their governments and their people understand that these are the kind of rights that give dignity to man, and, therefore, they insist that they be observed.

Now, we have great belief, I think, in the force of documents which do express ideals. We think that, in themselves, they carry weight. But they carry no weight unless the people know them, unless the people understand them, unless the people demand that they be lived. And perhaps Article 2 is one of the articles that we, in this country, and in most of the democracies, should think about, but perhaps it is more important for us in the United States because we have to recognize that there are two ideas that must live side by side in the world.

Well, the only way that they can live in the same world is for the recognition of their equal strength to come about. At present, the U.S.S.R. is quite convinced that their idea is stronger than the democratic idea.

They feel quite sure that what they have to offer in their attitude of equality of all races, of a kind of economy which they consider gives greater equality than other types of economy in the world, of a kind of political government which they say is government by workers for workers they are quite sure that if they make those promises there are masses of people in the world who will feel that they are better promises than we of the democracies can make, and that is why they single out over and over again the United States and the United Kingdom for attack--the United Kingdom on colonial policies, the United States on racial policies, the way we treat minorities--because there is no better forum for propaganda than the United Nations.

The United Nations Is a Forum

You are talking in every committee to the representatives, in the last meeting of 58 nations, in the next I think of 60 nations. That is quite a forum! There are quite a number of people that can hear what you are saying and you cannot blame the U.S.S.R. for feeling that they are offering what they feel will appeal to the people throughout the world who have perhaps not felt that they were on a basis of equality, who have perhaps felt that their economic security was a little insecure. There are a good many peoples of the world who have often been not only one day away from starvation but actually have starvation among them, and yet they have seen a few people who still have a good deal.

So this offering--it is only promises, of course--and that is another thing we must remember. The U.S.S.R. can make promises because very few people get in to verify what they promise, but the United States, the United Kingdom, the other democracies, they are all open to inspection, so it is very easy to find out what actually goes on, and that is one of the reasons why it is so important that we in the democracies make human rights and freedom a reality. It is true that these very words that are in Article 2 have been in our own Bill of Rights, but we felt it was a domestic question. We had plenty of time. We could set our house in order when we felt the time had arrived. We could have a little more time for education. We could let people gradually grow out of their prejudices. Now it is a part of the great question of whether democracy or communism really offers most to the people of the world. It is no longer a domestic question. It is an international question, and for that reason you can't wait any longer. You are open for inspection.

We Are Inspected

Nothing ever happens in any part of the United States that, if we are in session, whether it is the Human Rights Commission or the General Assembly, that wherever I am sitting the U.S.S.R. delegate doesn't manage somehow to tell the story of what has happened, and then he will turn to me and say, "Is that what you consider democracy, Mrs. Roosevelt?" And I am sorry to say that quite often I have to say, "No, that isn't what I consider democracy. That's a failure of democracy, but there is one thing in my country: we can know about our failures and those of us who care can work to improve our democracy!"

You see, there is one very interesting thing. Communism is perfect! I have never heard one of the U.S.S.R. delegates say that there was anything that could be improved! Now that is interesting about something which still remains human, because human things are rarely perfect, but I have never heard one U.S.S.R. delegate acknowledge that you could improve something in communism.

Another thing which is interesting is that all through the Declaration the value of economic and social rights is emphasized. The U.S.S.R. delegates fought for those and many of their suggestions are included in those articles, but they still abstain on the whole from the Declaration. They fought for those economic and social rights because to them those are the really important things. They never offer anybody freedom and I have often wondered whether those who listened to their promises ever noticed that freedom was left out.

Conceptions of Freedom

The interesting thing is that they are quite safe in doing so because many of the peoples to whom they talk don't know the meaning of freedom as we know it. In Japan, for instance, freedom only means license. There was no character in the Japanese language which meant freedom as we understand it, so that when we tried to explain what freedom meant, they had to evolve a new character, because when they speak of a child who acted with complete irresponsibility and complete license, they said he was acting with freedom.

That is something we must remember, because when you argue with Mr. Vishinsky, he will say there is no such thing as absolute freedom, and of course you and I know that is true. All freedom is conditioned by the freedom of other people, but nevertheless there is for human beings something very precious, which we know as freedom, the freedom to help govern ourselves, the freedom to help develop the future. These are very important things for us, more important perhaps than the actual assurance by the state of certain economic and social rights.

Now I am going to read you just one Article, because it will explain to you why it was impossible for the U.S.S.R. to vote in favor of this document, and it will show you the cleavage in thought which somehow, some day, we have to bridge. We are not going to bridge it right away. It is going to take time, but the understanding of it is necessary before we can begin to decide how we can work. The Article is one of freedom of movement. It reads:

Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and return to his country.

The amendment they wanted to that was:

Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country according to the laws of his country.

That would have meant that the law said you couldn't leave your country without permission of the government.

Naturally, in discussion it was brought out that many countries have regulations. I have to pay my income tax; I have to take the little piece of paper from my doctor saying when I was vaccinated. I must have been vaccinated within the last three years or I can't come back. But when that is done, I can leave and come back, and I can move anywhere within my own country and can do it when I wish, and I can settle where I wish.

After defeat of the amendment, I went over to talk to Mr. Pavlov, and I said: "Mr. Pavlov," (I should say that he speaks French very well) "do you see no difference between the regulations which my country puts on freedom of movement, and the regulations of the U.S.S.R. which forbid a citizen to leave without permission from his government, and to give no permission?" He looked at me and he said: "All regulations are the same." Now that is a very interesting thing because that is a good illustration of where we think differently.

Now, I don't expect that gulf to be bridged for a long while. But I do feel that we can reach the point where we can live in the same world, but I think the only way we will reach it is if we show in the democracies that our beliefs are as strong; that we intend to crusade just as much as they do, and that we are as determined that all human beings shall eventually have the rights and freedoms set forth in this document, and that we are not going to be intimidated; neither are we going to be despondent.

I think they count on wearing out our patience, on making us feel that it is hopeless, on getting us discouraged to the point where we will give up and decide that there is no way to live in the same world. The day we do that we have lost, and I hope, therefore, that we will concentrate on making our own selves, our own communities, our own country, the real democracy that we have given lip service to for so many years. And in doing that, that we will be the spearhead and the spiritual and moral leader of all the other democracies that really want to see human rights and human freedoms made the foundation of a just and peaceful world.

For Better World Understanding [NOTE]

In the United Nations we are trying to work for better world understanding. You would feel, I am sure, that we in the United Nations ought to find the answers. I agree that we ought to, since we have delegates from so many nations. There were fifty-eight delegates at the last meeting in Paris, and there are going to be sixty at the next meeting. That makes a good many delegates in the General Assembly, for each delegation is composed of five delegates, five alternates, and quite a number of advisers. You get to know and to talk to many people from different countries. And this, perhaps, ought to give us the answers on how to promote world understanding. But I confess that at each meeting I learn something new. Surprising facts are thrust upon me that I had never thought of before. So I have come to feel that one of our troubles is lack of awareness of the differences between peoples.

I will illustrate for you by something that happened to me in Paris. I have always been assigned to Committee III. That is the committee that deals with education, cultural, and humanitarian subjects. When I was first put on this Committee, I felt quite sure that one reason for the assignment was that our delegation was worried about having a woman as one of the delegates. They said, "Committee III--that's safe. She can't do anything there." Sometimes I think it has not been quite as safe as they thought it would be at the beginning. But I want to get back to my story, because it illustrates the points of our difficulty in understanding. The Committee was discussing, at the last meeting in Paris, the Declaration of Human Rights. On my right, since we sit alphabetically, was the delegate from Uruguay, and he was making many objections and giving many legal arguments. I thought, in order to save time, the delegate from Chile, who sat in the Commission on Human Rights, might explain some things to him, so I asked Mr. S. if he would have a talk with the delegate from Uruguay and explain certain things to him. He looked at me and said.

"I have been on the Human Rights Committee for quite some time and have become accustomed to this document, and you must let him become accustomed to it because it is an Anglo-Saxon document."

"But," I protested, "It is the result of eighteen nations and they were not all Anglo-Saxon nations."

He insisted, "It still is an Anglo-Saxon document. In time, the delegate from Uruguay will grow accustomed to it, but just now he is very much shocked, just as I was when I first read it."

I had been thinking that it was a joint document which we had produced and I was sure there were a great many things in it that were not the result of Anglo-Saxon thinking. You see how unaware we are of the fact that other nations think of things that come up in terms of not representing their thinking, or their type of law, or their type of religious feeling, and, as my Chilean colleague said, it had taken him time to grow accustomed to it but finally he began to agree with the strange ideas that were Anglo-Saxon. I don't know whether it should always be just that way, for certainly sometimes we should become accustomed to thinking in their terms, as well as having them thinking in our terms. That flow backwards and forwards of ideas and understanding is one of the great contributions of the United Nations, but it isn't the only thing that must take place before we get to the bottom of what it is that divides people. The increase of intellectual understanding, the exchange of ideas, and the gradual coming to see what affects other people on the intellectual levels is very important, but there are other things, too.

I have thought a great deal, of course, about our first and most important difficulty, which is the U.S.S.R. I suppose you read what their delegates say to us. They say: "Perhaps in the military and economic sense you have the upper hand." (They never say, "*We have . . .*" they say "*perhaps*.") "But time is on our side. We can afford to wait, because our ideas are much stronger than yours; our ideas, our belief in communism, are going to gain the world. It makes a great appeal because we believe in basic human rights. We believe that all races, all people are equal; we believe that men and women are equal."

The Committee gets long dissertations about that equality and occasionally it will cause a funny incident to occur. One day we had listened for one hour to a gentleman talk on the equality of men and women in the U.S.S.R. A little later, he happened to accept an invitation to lunch with us that day. The Russians will seldom accept an invitation without another member of their delegation going along, but he came alone. At the table some remark was made and he turned to me and said, "That is just women's gossip," and I said, "Oh, no, if men and women are completely equal then there is no more 'women's gossip!' If you really believe they are equal in the U.S.S.R., then you must not say it is women's gossip; it is men and women's gossip."

He looked at me and said not another word.

When they state what they believe, they are very sure of their philosophy of equality, and they state it so simply that they are certain that the downtrodden people of the world will accept it much more easily than they will accept our democratic theories. They say, "Our government is a government of workers, for workers. Our economy is perhaps having a little hard time at present, but basically, as commodities increase, everybody will share alike. There will be none of this having a great deal for certain groups as you have in your decadent democracy; we will all share alike." That sounds simple, doesn't it? And, of course, there is something in what they say when one considers that they are offering these ideas to people who are perhaps, not more than a day away from famine. Nearly all of these people have seen small groups in their midst having a great deal and the masses having little, and to them these promises are very alluring. The question is whether people who are better off are willing to accept such promises with no proof. We Americans surely have difficulty making our promises sound as simple as theirs.

It is quite possible to know what goes wrong anywhere in our country, and those of us who really care can work to make our democracy better. Of course we cannot get in to see what happens in the U.S.S.R. and therefore it isn't profitable to make statements that can't be proved. I have had in my briefcase for two sessions a report from our embassy in the U.S.S.R. telling me a great many things which are probably true but are difficult to prove for no one has actually seen them. They are only hearsay. It is not our fault that we have not seen these things. We have not been allowed to see them. But I have never used that document.

In the last session of the 3rd Committee we had as a delegate, for a short time, from the United Kingdom, a young member of Parliament. This British delegate had sat through some pretty stiff attacks on the United Kingdom's colonial policy. There is never a time when we touch on the problems of a colonial country, that the U.S.S.R. goes not give us at least an hour of attack on the United Kingdom. I realized that our job was to get the Declaration of Human Rights accepted, and I knew that the U.S.S.R. would like very much to delay it so that we wouldn't have time to vote on it. Up to the time of the last meeting, they always abstained from voting, saying that they could not commit their government to an unfinished document, but at Paris it was a finished document, and it would be difficult to go home and say that they had abstained on a declaration of human rights. That was not going to be easy, so the delaying tactics were used to confuse us so that we would take longer. I am sorry to say that, unwittingly, a number of our other colleagues helped the delay. They were really interested in certain points and wanted to have a chance to talk them over. These colleagues were from the South American countries and they had a document on human rights in which they took great pride. They had the Declaration of Bogota and some of them were anxious, for reasons of pride, to have the same wording used in the universal declaration. Every time one of them would make a very long speech concerning this, it was amusing to watch one of the delegates from the U.S.S.R. or a satellite country go to him and say, "That was a most enlightening speech--wonderful--I hope tomorrow you will make another speech on some other point. We need enlightening." And it always meant tomorrow they made the other speech.

Also, the delegate from England couldn't take the constant attack on his country for all its

colonial policies. The next day he spent one and a quarter hours answering the Russians, which of course he had to do. For if one fails to answer an accusation they were sure to say, "Oh, Mrs. Roosevelt did not answer yesterday, so of course what we said must be true." The United Kingdom delegate gave his rebuttal, which was fine, but he then proceeded to launch forth on an attack of the Russians which lasted well over an hour. If it had ended there, we could have spared the time, but instead we have two solid days, four full sessions, in which every member of the satellite states, as well as the U.S.S.R., answered the speech of the United Kingdom's delegate, and the U.S.S.R. could deny everything in it because it was hearsay; there was no complete proof. You can say that people who have come out of Russia have said certain things, but the U.S.S.R. can say that these people lie. Shortly after this incident, England sent a new delegate to serve on Committee III. This delegate was Mrs. Corbett Ashby. I immediately said to her, "Look, we have a declaration to get through. We have spent two days listening to attacks and the answers. Do you think it is more important to get the declaration through or to attack the U.S.S.R.?" While it is true that the Russians must be answered, Mrs. Ashby agreed that it was more important to get the Declaration of Human Rights through. By bringing the Declaration up for a vote, we would obligate the Russians to say why they had to abstain. This was more revealing for the rest of the world, and perhaps in the long run more revealing to them, than all the attacks we could have made. It certainly leaves less bitterness. I believe we must never compromise a principle. We must be very persistent, very patient, because we have a long way to go in understanding.

I was talking the other day to a very learned gentleman on how we could ever understand the U.S.S.R. He said, "Read *Didemus*," and I thought, "Oh, when will I get time to read *Didemus*, and why?" So I thought I had better ask honestly why I should read *Didemus*. He said, "Because all the rest of Europe received its civilization from Rome, but the Russians, from their first beginnings, drew their civilization from the Byzantines. You will find more explanation for Russia by going back to Byzantine thought than you will in trying to think of Russia as a part of the European scene." But I haven't had time to read *Didemus*. I am going to try, for I do know that there is a great deal for us to learn.

One thing that makes it hard to learn, is that we are never talking to people. You are always talking to government representatives who are saying what they were told to say. You never know what they think as individuals. Our delegation says what it thinks in the hope that it may be taken back to their country, for they have very extraordinary powers of memory and concentration, and I think they report very clearly.

You who are teachers probably understand some things that I am still groping about. I would like to know how it is possible for the Russian delegation to work in the way it does. There is no other delegation whose leader always takes part in the final argument in the General Assembly. But their leader never fails to argue, not only the things that were argued in committee, but every single point that has been worked over in every committee. He displays a complete grasp of every detail and every single thing that has happened during the work of that committee. With us, the United Kingdom, and nearly all the other delegations, the delegates who clear the work in the committees are the ones who argue the points in the final General Assembly. But Mr. Vishinsky has argued for the U.S.S.R. every time....

The Declaration of Human Rights was looked upon as so important because many people believed it to be one of the things on which we might build understanding in the future, if enough nations could agree on what the basic rights and freedoms were. Even though the Declaration has no legal binding value, it is a document to be used for education in preparation for a Covenant. The Covenant won't cover many things, but the Declaration includes the aspirations that we hope, in time, to achieve. It was written with the aim in view that all the countries that accepted it would make a study of its ideas.

We have even included a resolution asking the governments to see that schools and colleges become sufficiently familiar with the document to quote from it and to discuss it intelligently. It is quite true that it has no legal binding value and that is why some people say, "It is just

words--more words--and we have plenty of words--why do we bother with more words?" Well, the Declaration is only half of the Bill of Rights. The second part of the Covenant, if accepted, must be ratified by each nation and that will have legal binding value as a treaty....

A criticism that is often made about this Declaration is that rights alone are set forth, but that with every right there goes a responsibility, and that those responsibilities are not set forth with each article. That was discussed for a very long time, and it was decided that, if you tried to set forth with each article all the responsibilities, it would make a very long and detailed document that would not have the same impact on people as a declaration that was shorter and more concise. After all, this is the Declaration of rights and freedoms, and so it was decided to have one article as a general over-all limitation and that reads--

Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone is subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society. These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

The feeling was that this article covered in a general way and would not detract from the really important thing which was to get down on paper, for people all over the world, with different backgrounds, customs, and stages of development, the basic idea that every individual had certain rights and freedoms that could not be taken away from him. It gave respect and importance to the individual, which is, of course, a basic tenet of democracy.

Now, I think, perhaps, you would be interested in the article on religion. We thought we had consulted most of the interested people who were represented by consultants in the Human Rights Commission. We found that one group had had no representation. They had never asked for it. But when it came to the final decision, that group differed among themselves as to the interpretation they could put on certain things in their own religious law, and they nearly voted against the whole Declaration because they did not think they could accept just one thing in this article. The article reads:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

And the group that had not asked for representation and with whom we had not consulted beforehand was the large group of Mohammedans, and they said, through their representatives in Committee m. "We can't accept that because in our religion you may not change your belief." Saudi Arabia stuck to that until the end. And Saudi Arabia abstained from voting. Pakistan changed. And the statement of the head of their whole delegation before the Assembly was as follows: "I think our delegate misinterpreted the Koran. The Koran says that 'he who will shall believe; he who cannot believe shall disbelieve.' The only unforgivable sin is to be a hypocrite!" I repeat this statement at every opportunity, for I think it is something all of us would do well to remember. He voted for the Declaration.

Education

You might be interested in the article on education. There is one point in it that I regret very much and voted against, but it was included and I will tell you why when I have read it.

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and

- professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
 3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

That number three was put in by the Catholic nations. They were very insistent on the right of the family and the right of parents. We realized that they said this because they aimed to prevent a repetition of Hitler's training of youth, and of course of the Communistic training of youth. On the other hand, this statement caused other difficulties to arise. For instance, I know families in my own country-area with whom one really had to fight to get them to allow their children to have more education than they themselves had had; I am not quite sure that always the parents' rights rather than the rights of children should be the permanent, final decision. I think the parents naturally have great rights. You couldn't educate children against the will of their parents along certain lines, but the children have a right to certain opportunities for education and should be allowed to take advantage of them. It was very difficult for me to accept paragraph 3, but I was outvoted. We had a full and complete argument, and it was easy to understand why anyone familiar with Hitler's youth training, and Communistic training today, should want to safeguard their children against it. You do have to adjust to different countries at different times and anything that is completely rigid will put us in a straight-jacket. This, after all, is just a statement of standards and aspirations and a very good document for us to become educated upon--but when you come to the Covenant it is going to be extremely difficult and extremely necessary for us to watch every single thing that we agree to.

I can't tell you much more, but I hope that I have given you some idea of some of the problems that come in writing international documents and some of the problems that exist when you start out to really achieve world understanding. I have a feeling that in practice this document will do a great deal for even those countries where it will not be published. It will not be published in any of the satellite countries, but, curiously enough, knowledge seems to seep through even Iron Curtains. And I can't help but believe that working together on some of these things and writing them down may be a good basis for beginning a little more understanding and confidence. Much of our difficulty today lies in our fears. We fear the Russians; they fear us. How you get away from fear, I don't know yet. I am hoping that if we can stay together, and work together, each year that we live we perhaps will build a little more confidence and destroy a little of the fear. All of you who are going to teach the next generation--the generation that is going to live with this when we are dead--can perhaps teach them the willingness to be patient, to experiment, to believe in human beings even when they seem so contrary and so difficult. I get so angry sometimes with my U.S.S.R. colleagues. Then each time that I do, I say to myself, "Remember that you really like these people as people. If you could meet them as people you would like them. So try to begin again with good will, with a sense of objectivity, of understanding why it is so hard for them. They couldn't possibly accept this document because freedom of movement is one of the articles. They don't allow any freedom of movement. There are lots of things that they can't accept, and it will take them a long time. Children growing up today are going to live in a world that is a very adventurous world and not a very secure one. After all, many generations have lived that kind of life. It takes more character, more calm, but perhaps the challenge of today is the ability to stay in the United Nations and watch ourselves as the leading democratic nation of the world, a nation which all the world watches. If they can see that our beliefs are as strong as theirs and that we are not going backward, they might begin to live in the same world with us and make some compromises. That is almost as important as to have more military power and more economic power. We have a difficult job because all of our failures are seen. At the same time, our successes are seen and, for that reason, I hope we are going to be strong enough, and imaginative enough, and take the future with enough spirit of adventure so that

we will live it with joy and never grow hopeless. Never get a feeling that we cannot succeed, because I think with the help of all of you, and the help of many other people in our country, we can succeed. All we can do is pray that we will grow more tomorrow and that others will grow with us, and together we will be able to win a peaceful world."

FOOTNOTE: The above is from a speech by Eleanor Roosevelt to Pi Lambda Theta at Columbia University, New York, March 30, 1949. The complete speech is published under the title "For Better World Understanding" in the *Pi Lambda Theta Journal* 22 (May 1949): 196-203. *Phi Delta Kappan* has excerpted sections of this presentation which supplement the preceding speech.

From *Phi Delta Kappan* 31 (September 1949): 23-33. Speech to the Second National Conference on UNESCO, Cleveland, Ohio, April 1, 1949.

As edited by Allida M. Black. See her collection, *What I Hope to Leave Behind: The Essential Essays of Eleanor Roosevelt*. (Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1995)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

September 23, 1999

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE DINNERWashington Hilton
Washington, D.C.

10:00 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. If you've been following the news, you probably know I'm a little hoarse, and I know you're a little tired, so you won't have to put up with me for very long here.

But I'm grateful for the chance to be here. I strongly support the NDI. I thank Ken Wollock and Paul Kirk and all the rest of you for the work you do. I thank my friend, Senator Kennedy, for being the embodiment of the commitment to democracy and freedom and human rights.

Mrs. Kirkland, we're glad to see you here tonight, and I was honored to be at the service at Georgetown today. I want to thank you for giving this award to President Shevardnadze. He has been a friend of the United States and a friend of ours. He has stood for democracy. You heard him tell the story tonight -- he's like anybody who has converted; once he converted, he was really stuck as a true believer.

He has endured assassination attempts, illegal coup attempts. He has been through ethnic difficulties in his own country. He has been through pressures from the outside and problems from the inside. He has watched the economy go down and things come apart and come back together again. But once he decided he believed, he stayed hitched. He embodies something that I think we don't think about enough.

We talk a lot about what it takes to establish democracy, but once, having established it, there are always people who will try to twist it to their own end, because we may eliminate communism from the world, but we have not eliminated lust for power or greed that leads to corruption, or the hatreds and fears in the human heart that lead to the oppression of those who are different from us in race or religion or belong to some other minority group. This man has stayed the course when the price was high, and I thank you for awarding this to him tonight. (Applause.)

I thank you for giving Hillary this award tonight. I'm sorry Monica McWilliams couldn't be here. That's the only problem -- a ruptured appendix -- I have seen those Irish women unable to overcome almost instantaneously. (Laughter.)

I was hoping -- Hillary just got in today from out of town and I didn't have a chance to talk to her about what she was going to say tonight. And I was sitting there in my chair, saying, gosh, I hope you're going to tell them about those people in that African village. And I hope all my fellow Americans were listening tonight.

I'll tell you, we walked in that room in Senegal, and all

those women came with their token men supporters -- (laughter) -- a role with which I am becoming increasingly familiar -- (applause) -- I'm telling you, it made chills run up and down my spine. And I wish, too, that every American could have seen it because then we would understand what a precious thing a vote is. And we would understand what a precious responsibility the public trust is.

We, in our country, we want democracy for everybody else, but sometimes we forget that it carries responsibilities of citizenship and responsibilities for those of us in representative positions to keep it going. We think we're so strong, nothing can happen to our democracy. But when a man like Itzhak Rabin is killed, when we see our friends in Northern Ireland in both communities vote for a clear path to the future of peace and reconciliation and then vote for representatives to get the job done and they still can't seem to get it done -- we're nowhere near giving up, by the way; George Mitchell is over there working on it right now -- but when you see that, it is an agony because you're always afraid somehow, something will happen to twist it awry.

But what Hillary has done with this Vital Voices movement is simply to give voice and power to practical and compassionate women who find real human answers to human problems, and who don't let lust for political power in and of itself or fear of those who are different from them, or the desire for personal recognition get in the way of their desire to perfect democracy.

What I would like to say to all of you tonight is, when we go to Bosnia or we go to Kosovo to stop ethnic cleansing, or we help to train Africans so that they can prevent another Rwanda or Burundi from occurring again, when we labor in America for peace in the Middle East and try to empower ordinary people everywhere, we should remember with humility that we are supposed to behave in our respective positions of citizenship and authority the way those village women did in Senegal, the way the Irish women do in the Vital Voices conference, the way the women did who had the microcredit loans that I have seen my wife visit on the Indian subcontinent or in Southeast Asia, or in countless African and Latin American villages.

People who have never had it before, you see, when they get it, they know what they want to do. And we in the United States have a serious responsibility to the rest of the world and to our own people to stand for peace and freedom and democracy and human rights, and to stand for it at home as well as abroad, and to never forget that the purpose of power is to liberate the human spirit, not to grasp onto yesterday's arrangements in a fleeting life that no matter how long we hold to power, will be over all too soon, anyway.

Lane Kirkland was over 75 years old; to me, he was a very young man. We are all just here for a little while. The premise of democracy is, if people are truly empowered to live out their dreams and help other people solve their problems, that will bring more happiness and self-fulfillment than picking a few of us to increase our wealth and power, or the power of our crowd to oppress another. And we need a little humility here along with our devotion to democracy.

We need to remember the travails of a man like President Shevardnadze who puts his life on the line when he shows up for work. And we need to remember the courage of people like those Irish women or those Senegalese women and their hardy male supporters who believe they could change the world if they only had a voice.

I am grateful to you for honoring this President and my wife, who has done more than anyone I know to give those kinds of people a

voice. But when you leave here, remember that all of us can do that every day, right here.

Thank you, and God bless you. (Applause.)

END 10:10 P.M. EDT

-- That's why your work -- and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights -- are so important.

- For fifty years, the Declaration of Human Rights has formed a precious constellation of principles to which all nations can aspire, the guiding light of human dignity.

-- As the President has said, the idea of a global declaration of rights emerged from the trauma of a global war in which human rights were the first casualty.

-- It's a very American document for a very American reason -- because Eleanor Roosevelt led the commission that created it. Many of the principles of the Declaration -- and many of the words of the Bill of Rights -- were put directly into the Universal Declaration. Half a century ago, 18 delegates from China to Lebanon, Chile to Ukraine, forged the first international agreement. On December 10, 1948, the Declaration was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.

-- For the first time, what a country did to people within its own borders was not its business alone. The Universal Declaration said that what you do to your own people matters to the rest of us -- and not only are we allowed to be involved, we are obligated to be involved.

-- These rights are not a new invention -- they are as old as man. Sophocles wrote about them 2,500 years ago when he had Antigone declare that there were ethical laws higher than the laws of Theban kings. The Chinese delegation at the time of the drafting of the Declaration pointed out that Confucius articulated these values in ancient China. These rights begin, as Eleanor Roosevelt said in the "world of individual persons . . . the places where every man, woman, and child seeks justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination."

--- The enduring strength of the Declaration is its universality. Its core freedoms are the entitlement of all people, not just some groups or cultures. The Declaration says that human rights are indivisible, interdependent, and universal. Every human being has the right to fundamental dignity, whether you are a Tutsi or Hutu in Rwanda, a Catholic or Protestant in Ireland, a priest in East Timor, an academic dissident in China, or a 7 year-old homeless boy in New York. They do not vary culturally or politically. Abuse is wrong whatever culture or society. Our dignity has no color, race, religion, or creed.

- Guided by those principles, this world has come a long way the past ten years.
 - The end of communism has enabled hundreds of millions of people to affirm their special differences -- religious, ethnic, and cultural.
 - Today, more than half of the world's people live under governments of their own choosing.
 - The principles of the Universal Declaration have entered the consciousness of people around the world.
 - They're now routinely invoked in constitutions and courts.
 - Last year, in places as diverse as Mali, Albania, Guatemala, Kuwait, Yemen, Oman, Georgia, and South Korea, the actions of people in the advancement of their own human rights and democracy reaffirmed the viability and universality of the Declaration's principles.
- The end of the Cold War has allowed America to promote not just political and religious rights, but economic and social rights as well -- the rights articulated in the second half of the Declaration, and reinforced in the Covenant on Economic and Social Rights.
 - For 40 years, economic and social rights were the last refuge of scoundrel nations. During the Cold War, countries like the Soviet Union would say, "free speech and writing in a newspaper is nice -- but what does it mean if you don't have a house, food, or health care." Even today, countries like China insist that until all citizens have economic rights -- knowing that they never will -- political and religious rights must wait."
 - Since it was the primary claim of communist nations, we never supported economic rights as strongly as we should have -- or could have.
 - The end of the Cold War has allowed us to see that the two are not mutually exclusive -- that we can promote economic rights at the same time we promote political and religious rights.
- One country where we need to promote economic and social rights more strongly than ever is America. Because while we are gaining ground abroad, we are losing ground here at home.

- Article 25 of the Declaration says that everyone has the right to a standard of living, adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, housing, medical care, and necessary social services.
- Article 25 also includes the "right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control."
- This is the battle that HUD fights every day.
- We are the agency assigned the task of carrying out Article 25. Our mission is to provide decent, affordable housing, and a suitable living environment for everyone.
- We serve the poorest of the poor, the people with the most need.
- In fact, in a way, HUD and Amnesty use the same exact words to describe their mission: we both speak for those who nobody else speaks for, those without power or connections, those who would otherwise slip through the crack -- the Robbies of the world.
- The end of the Cold War has allowed America to promote the rights ensured in the second half of the Declaration, those articulated further in the Covenant on Economic and Social rights. But we continue to lose ground on those same rights here at home.
 - Last year, I had the pleasure of meeting with the Housing Minister from South Africa. We spent the day talking about a country where 80 percent of the people who live in cities are not white, where black babies are twice as likely to die as white babies, where black children are more than five times as likely to get shot as white children, where black teenagers are ten times more likely to drop out of school than wealthy white teens -- and 80 percent remain unemployed.
 - The country is South Africa right? Wrong -- the United States of America.

- Read the newspapers, and America is the picture of success. Time Magazine says it's the best economy in our history, and probably the best of any nation, ever" -- 15 million new jobs, lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, highest homeownership rate in history, the highest Dow Jones ever, more millionaires than ever before.
 - But we also know the brightest lights cast the biggest shadows:
 - 15 million jobs / 1 in 5 children in poverty / 1.5 million in prison
 - welfare reform 40% being sanctioned off / Phil lost 600, need 50,000
 - Record Dow Jones / Record worst-case needs / 5.3 million / 12.5 million
 - More millionaires / greatest income inequality in 20 years
 - 66% homeownership / 600,000 homeless
 - 2 school systems: pentium processor / metal detector
 - Every month at HUD, we invite leading thinkers and scholars. A few months ago, Robert Coles of Harvard came in to talk about homelessness. He described what happened when he worked with migrant farm workers in Florida -- who are almost by profession homeless. By in the 1960s, he asked some homeless children to draw pictures. If you were to talk with children from all backgrounds and ask them to draw pictures when they are about 7,8, or 9, they would quickly draw pictures of themselves, their relatives -- and before long, they would be drawing a house or school or other buildings. But Dr. Coles found that these homeless children were unable, unwilling -- it was beyond their capacity -- to draw pictures of buildings. They could draw pictures of themselves, but when asked to draw a building, a home, a school, they were at a loss. It wasn't just migrant farm children -- in a Boston homeless shelter in the 1980s, he found the same thing with welfare children. Things that you and I take for granted, these children couldn't even conceive of.
 - Underlying all of it is the issue of race. When you look at civil rights, many developing nations across the world actually seem to be passing us by.
 - Thirty years after the Kerner Commission report, race and discrimination is still alive and well.
 - Some of it still involved intimidation with a club.
- Cases: cross burning on lawn
 segregated buildings in New Orleans
 Mrs. Ippolito -- blow up her home

- But in developing nations, increasingly discrimination with a club is being replaced by something even more insidious -- discrimination with a smile.

Cases: "no apartment available" "you don't qualify for a loan."

Bank in Texas: approve whites, deny blacks

- Just as the principles of good behavior are universal, the methods of bad behavior are universal as well.

- It's about demonization, alienation, stereotyping, separating one class from another in reality in order to separate them in your mind -- whether it's South Timor, South Africa, or the South Bronx.

- It's about the poor having bad values. It's the stereotype of lazy, shiftless black people living on welfare, homeless men standing on the street corners guzzling beer. It's about immigrants who sneak in and steal our jobs -- why should they have the right to vote? Let's make them take a test. It makes it easy to deny them their rights. Never mind the fact that most people in poverty today are women with children, disabled, and elderly.

Welfare -- pride / dignity -- never asked for a welfare check

Public housing -- just look at what we did -- then come back and say, My god, it didn't work. It must be their fault.

- The places are different, the degrees are different, the severity is different, but the methods are the same -- and so are the solutions.

- Amnesty and HUD both promote the same solutions:

Education

Empowerment

Not top-down, but grass-roots

Not doing for others, having them do for themselves

- The challenge in developed nations is not so much to pass new laws, but to enforce the laws that are already on the books.
 - Make sure that ignorance and cowardice do not go unpunished.
 - The Fair Housing Act, the Voting Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Employment -- the right to vote, the right to secure decent employment, the right to decent shelter.
 - These three legs of our civil rights legislation mirror Article 25 of the Declaration.
 - HUD has a lead role in enforcing the law, and we are -- holding bad landlords accountable, prosecuting those who break the law.
- It's more important than ever. America has always been a model. But today, countries are looking to us not just to be a philosophical model, but a practical model. They're not just asking what does democracy mean, they're asking how does democracy work?
 - How do I set up a system of universal schooling?
 - How do we set up a housing finance system to house our people
 - How do we get capital to businesses to create jobs that provide opportunity?
 - It's taken America more than 200 years to serve as a model. If we held a mirror up to this nation in 1798, 1898, or even 1940, we would have failed to meet many of the principles of the Universal Declaration. We need to make sure that other nations don't make some of the same mistakes that we did.
- How?
 - Individuals must play a role -- grass roots
 - Government must play a role
 - NGOs must play a role as well

- I applaud the campaign you are undertaking this fall to focus more on these rights in America. Amnesty understands better than anyone what it takes -- and what it mean to be a good role model.
- As Indonesia and India this week show us, this is still a dangerous world, and we've got a long way to go.
 - Human rights are still at risk from Burma to Nigeria, from Belarus to China.
 - Democracy's roots are still fragile in some countries; others are besieged by forces ranging from drug dealers to organized crime.
 - From Bosnia to Rwanda, we have seen that old hatreds can become the newest human rights abuses.
 - The more America can continue to serve as a guiding light, the stronger this world will be.
- The President calls it One America. Amnesty calls it one world. Martin Luther King said it thirty years ago, when he said, "we are all brothers. We will either go up together or down together -- but we are one." Our Hispanic brothers and sisters would say, "Somos uno -- we are one." The founders said "E Pluribus Unum" -- one, out of many. The words are different, but the idea is the same -- one nation, one community, one world, sharing the benefits and burdens. Together, we'll make it a reality.

Third Draft Outline -- Amnesty International -- May 14, 1998

- TY Bill Schultz
- Nancy Rubin
- My political hero: Kerry
- Kerry -- International / the rights ensured in the first 21 articles of the Declaration
Me -- Domestic / the rights articulated in the last 9 articles
- I guess I've been invited here tonight to serve as a witness on the domestic front.
As Bill mentioned, this is an area I have some experience in.
 - HUD Secretary -- a position of "zero glamour" . . . a slow-moving, inefficient agency . . . with no infusion of new federal money . . . a neglected constituency with little power and virtually no urgency or White House domestic agenda." Other than that . . . it's a great job.
 - Chris -- confirmation
 - But I wasn't always a government bureaucrat. I had a real job once
 - Working in governor's office / saw problem of homelessness / story of HELP / 2 employees / bias against short names / built all kinds of housing -- shelters, transitional, permanent / within 3 years, housed 1/7th of New York's homeless population / built over 1,000 units . . . ended with 500 employees / frustrating -- every week, we kept seeing the same people coming back.
 - I understand a little bit about both the hard work and the heartbreak involved with this kind of work. I have the highest respect for what you do.

I. Yardstick / Mirror

- One of the great anomalies in our history is that the Declaration of Independence -- the supreme statement of human freedom -- was written by a man who owned slaves. In the back of her mind, I think Eleanor Roosevelt was aware of the same kind of contradiction when she oversaw the drafting of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

- She understood that the Universal Declaration wasn't just an international challenge, but a national challenge. She understood that it was both a yardstick and a mirror -- a yardstick to gauge the world and a mirror to see how much remained to be done here at home.
- In fact, if the standards of the Universal Declaration were held up to the United States in 1948, we would have failed nearly every single test.

II. 1948

- Look how far behind we were in 1948.
 - For example, Article 5 of the Universal Declaration stated that no human being should be subjected to torture -- at a time when African-Americans were being hung and beaten in our own country.
 - Article 26 said everyone had a right to an education -- at a time when America had segregated schools, and fewer than 5 percent of all African-Americans went to college.
 - Article 21 said everyone had a right to take part in the government of his country, but blacks were not allowed to vote.
 - Article 27 said that everyone had the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community -- at a time when blacks could not enter certain theaters, eat in certain restaurants, play on many golf courses, or even enjoy a public library.
 - Article 25 said that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate to health and well-being, but nearly 90 percent of older Americans in 1948 didn't have health insurance.

III. Progress -- first 25 years

- And 35 years ago, America responded to that challenge -- passing the Civil Rights Act, then the Voting Rights Act, and finally the Fair Housing Act -- the three legs on which so many of these fundamental rights rest.

--. Since the 25th anniversary in 1973, we've been sliding backwards

- South Africa

-- I remember last year, I had the pleasure of meeting with the Housing Minister from South Africa. We spent the day talking about a country where 80 percent of the people who live in cities are non white, where black babies are twice as likely to die as white babies, where black children are more than five times as likely to get shot as white children, where black teenagers are ten times more likely to drop out of school than wealthy white teens -- and 80 percent remain unemployed. The country is South Africa right? Wrong -- the United States of America.

- Look at housing. Article 25 says, "everyone has the right . . . to housing."

-- Worst case
5.3 million households
12 million people

-- How many building
Hint; 200,000
0

- Look at homelessness.

-- Where are we today? Despite the fact that we have a record 66% homeownership rate, we have 600,000 homeless people sleeping on the streets every night. Two years ago, we did a report that said at one time or another since 1990, 7 million people were homeless.

-- I remember when homelessness first emerged in the early 1980s. It was supposed to be a temporary problem. I remember Mayor Koch asked Governor Cuomo if he could borrow some of the state's emergency facilities for a week, maybe two at tops.

- Think about the effect that has. Every month at HUD, we invite leading thinkers and scholars. A few months ago, Robert Coles of Harvard came in to talk about homelessness. In the 1960s, he asked some homeless children to draw pictures. If you were to talk with children from all backgrounds and ask them to draw pictures when they are about 7, 8, or 9, they would quickly draw pictures of themselves, their relatives -- and before long, they would be drawing a house or school or other buildings. But Dr. Coles found that these homeless children were unable, unwilling -- it was beyond their capacity -- to draw pictures of buildings. They could draw pictures of themselves, but when asked to draw a building, a home, a school, they were at a loss. It wasn't just migrant farm children -- in a Boston homeless shelter in the 1980s, he found the same thing with welfare children.
- Look at the economy. Article 23 -- everyone has the right to work. Article 25 -- everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate to health and well-being.

Record Success

- You'd never know it looking at the headlines. Time Magazine calls it the best economy in our history, and probably the best of any nation, ever. Who would have imagined how well we're doing: 15 million new jobs . . . the lowest unemployment rate in 25 years . . . the highest homeownership rate in history . . . the highest Dow Jones average in history . . . more millionaires than ever before.
- But we also know: the brightest lights cast the darkest shadows. We are doing well -- but not everyone is doing well, everywhere.
- We have 15 million new jobs in America. Do you know what percentage of those jobs are being created in the inner-city? Only 13 percent.
- Welfare reform -- worse.
Philadelphia lost 600 / 50,000
- From 1973 to 1995, poverty went from 8.4% to nearly 11.5%. And it was worse in the inner city -- from 1970 to 1995, central city poverty increased 50% (from 14% to 21% of population). The

number of neighborhood that were very poor (tracts with 40+% of population), increased nearly seventy percent, from 6% in 1970 to 14% in 1995. In 1970s, one out of 20 city residents lived in impoverished areas. In 1990, it was one in 9. And it's more minority than ever -- one-fourth of African-Americans and Hispanics live in these severely impoverished areas.

- Today, we have 15 million new jobs -- but 1 in 5 children living in poverty. Think about this: if we made a city of all the poor children in America, it would be bigger than New York.

Income Inequality

- Today, while we have more millionaires than ever before, we have the greatest income inequality in a generation. Today, the top one percent owns more than the bottom 90% combined.
- Between 1947 and 1973, the median paychecks of American workers more than doubled, and the bottom twenty percent enjoyed the biggest gains. Since 1973, median earning have fallen by about 15 percent and the bottom 20 percent have fallen the furthest behind. The paycheck of a working father with a high school diploma earning \$30,000 a year is worth 30% less than it was in 1973.
- In 1973, the average CEO made 35 times as much as the average working person. Today, it's 135 times as much. And at America's top ten corporations, it's more than 225 times as much.

- Race. Article 7: all are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.

- Discrimination -- particular housing discrimination -- isn't just an ugly stain from our past, it's the ugly reality of our present
- There are many methods, many faces of discrimination
- Some of it is crude, obnoxious -- discrimination with a club.

Cases: Missouri -- Portuguese / cross burning on lawn
segregated buildings in New Orleans
Mrs. Ippolito -- blow up her house

- But in many cases it's more subtle but in many ways more insidious, discrimination with a smile.

"no apartment available"

"you don't qualify for a loan."

Accubanc: approve whites, deny blacks

- Last year, the Federal Reserve Board (in accordance with the requirements of the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act) found that African-Americans are denied credit for homes at more than twice the rate of whites -- and Hispanic Americans are nearly as bad.
- For higher-income African-Americans (those who make more than 120% of median income), the denial rate was nearly three times as much (17 percent for blacks and 15 percent for Hispanics compared to 6 percent for whites)

It's not torture. It's not abuse. It's not hanging or political persecution. But it's not where this nation was twenty years ago, either -- and it's not as good as we need to be.

IV. Challenge -- do better -- mirror & yardstick

Now is the time

- We can't afford to go backward, especially now. Today, our light needs to shine more brightly than ever. For the first time, more than half the world's people live under governments of their own choosing. They used to look to us for philosophical advice about what democracy meant, now they are looking for practical advice about how democracy should work. If we're going to be a strong voice for moral authority in this new world, we've got to be able to argue from a position of moral strength at home.
- Walls coming down
- Economy growing
- Faith in government

V. Goal is simple: one America, one world

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Echoes of Pre-Renaissance Italy and Crumbling Walls

BYLINE: By VIVIEN RAYNOR

BODY:

OF the three Rockland County shows under review, the first is a joint effort by Sister Adele Myers and Todd Stone at the Blue Hill Cultural Center in Pearl River. The others are solos by Francesca Greene and Eric Laxman at, respectively, Piermont Flywheel and Piermont Fine Arts, two galleries adjoining each other at 223 and 218 Ash Street in Piermont Landing.

The Blue Hill exhibitors have in common an architectural approach but in all other respects are totally unlike. Sister Adele, a member of the Order of the **Dominican** Sisters at **Sparkill**, made her Rockland debut 15 years ago as founder and director of Thorpe Intermedia, the gallery at the convent. In 1991, she abandoned this project to pursue her career as a sculptor. Her abstractions may be described as reliefs ornamented with fresco or, alternatively, as frescoes applied to reliefs. Either way, their surfaces are expressionistic and their colors fresh.

Like its cousin concrete, cement is totally manmade and most people associate the material with industry or at least with the International style in architecture and, as far as I know, no one has ever waxed emotional over its color or texture. Yet to Sister Adele it "lends itself to expressive use" and seems, she says, not only to have "a life of its own" but also the "weight of human history." Less romantic observers may feel that these are qualities infused by the artist.

In any case, the images, never very large, look good in the rambling space at Blue Hill, especially those in which a balance is struck between raw and painted cement. "Nasu," a variant on the diagonal cross with arms shading from rusty red through pink to white and interstices of plain cement that are combed, troweled or left smooth, is just such a work. So is the row of chunky little plaques embossed with chevrons painted different colors.

Also pleasing is the chorus line of overlapping pancakes painted yellow tinged with blue. In "Stele I," however, the sculptor devotes her efforts to working the raw cement, piling it up in ridges and steps and confining her color to a single small vertical stripe of red and white.

A similar ratio of paint to cement obtains in "As the Sun in the Temple" but more successfully, because the shape is essentially a thick frame rectangular on the outside, circular within and broken diagonally in two. Inside is a smooth hemisphere of yellow-orange and white. Sister Adele's

expression is getting simpler and more powerful.

Mr. Stone's paintings are so packed with visual incident as to defy description. Some are abstractions involving patches of flat color, which eventually separate to become jigsaw-puzzle pieces flying through the air. Others, notably the series titled "Off the Wall," imply church interiors of stained-glass windows, multicolored piers and murals that seem to have lost their bearings in an earthquake. Colors are bright verging on rowdy and are often inscribed with grids or wandering white threads intimating that the very fabric of creation is disintegrating.

In his statement, Mr. Stone mentions as a major inspiration the crumbling frescoes painted by the 13th-century Florentine artist Cimabue for the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi. Apparently, he has also pondered the Taoist ideas about the cyclical nature of things. The trouble is that he tries to pack it all into his canvases, and this leads inevitably to information overload for the viewer.

Mr. Stone, who is in his early 40's, has had numerous solo exhibitions, many of them in Manhattan; he has also received a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in painting. Nevertheless, his art gives the impression of a sensibility convinced that each brimming canvas is his last.

At Piermont Flywheel, Francesca Greene shows still lifes in handsome frames, which she made herself, and a series of larger figural canvases related to a period spent in Mexico some years ago. The still lifes -- of fruit, vegetables and crockery -- are beautiful, particularly that of a lustrous black teapot posed with purple plums against a window framing light green foliage.

There are few nuances in these canvases -- for example, stacks of white cups are shadowed in gray and dusty-colored figs lie in a white plate rimmed in gray on a ground of another gray. Yet the very crispness of the artist's approach is seductive.

The figural canvases, on the other hand, are problematic, partly because of their unmodulated colors and partly because of their contents -- devils with animal heads and other monsters. They smack more of Picasso than Mexico. But on the whole, this is a fine performance by an artist who has been visible in New York City and the state for more than a decade.

Piermont Flywheel is 14 months old and has 24 members; Piermont Fine Arts, next door, is an infant of two months that has 23 members. There is a show there -- closing today -- by Eric Laxman, who carves his marble figures in pieces, which he then locks together in mysterious ways. Sometimes the sculptor hacks his blocks ferociously with results that are all the more successful for being virtual abstractions.

At other times, he allows figures to emerge from the roughly hewn blocks as if of their own accord. In a pseudo-classical head of a youth, he stays the course. Behind all this bombast lurks some talent and ingenuity.

The Piermont Flywheel Show closes Jan. 30; the number to call for information is 365-6411.

The exhibition at Blue Hill remains through March 9; the number there is 735-4110.

GRAPHIC: Photos: "On the Wings of the Wind" by Sister Adele Myers. "Off the Wall," left, by Todd Stone, who cites the 13th-century frescoes of Cimabue as a major inspiration for his work; "Black Teapot and Plums" by Francesca Greene.

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Statement on Draft Covenant on Human Rights

Eleanor Roosevelt

I am pleased that we are now undertaking to consider the substantive questions relating to the Draft Covenant on Human Rights in this Committee. It is particularly important at this time that the Assembly give adequate consideration to human rights.

Three years ago, when the General Assembly met in Paris, the chairman of the United States delegation, Secretary Marshall, said that the "systematic and deliberate denials of basic human rights lie at the root of most of our troubles and threaten the work of the United Nations...." In this Assembly, Secretary Acheson made clear that these words are even more pertinent today than they were in 1948.

It is a tragic commentary on the status of civilization in the middle of the twentieth century that the systematic and deliberate denials of human rights by some governments are so widespread in certain areas of the world that they are almost taken for granted. The kind of callous brutality which would have shocked the conscience of mankind a century ago is now unfortunately a commonplace occurrence in those areas.

All members of the United Nations have a responsibility, individually and collectively, to see that the lights of freedom are not further extinguished throughout the world.

Every member has a responsibility to see that the rights of men are safeguarded, for no country is perfect in protecting the individual rights of its citizens.

Three years ago in this same city the General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That Declaration has already become the yardstick by which all can measure the conduct of governments. The language of that Declaration has been written into the constitution of a number of states. The United Nations must now move ahead to develop new methods for advancing human liberty and for translating human rights and fundamental freedoms into action. One of these methods is the Draft International Covenant on Human Rights.

The task of drafting the Covenant, of putting human rights into treaty form, is not an easy one. We have been working in the United Nations on this draft Covenant since 1947.

I would like in particular to discuss the matter of economic, social, and cultural rights.

When the General Assembly last year called on the Commission on Human Rights to include economic, social, and cultural provisions in the Covenant on Human Rights, the United States fully cooperated in the 5-weeks' session of the Commission this spring in Geneva in drafting these provisions. The United States delegation voted last year in the General Assembly against the inclusion of economic, social, and cultural rights in the same Covenant with civil and political rights. At no time, however, did my delegation to the Commission on Human Rights question the responsibility of the Commission to prepare a draft with these provisions for the consideration of the General Assembly. The United States

delegation to the Commission felt that, as a member of a technical commission, we should cooperate in doing that which the General Assembly had asked us to do at that time.

We did vote at the end of the Commission session for a resolution introduced by the delegate of India requesting a reconsideration by the General Assembly of the question of including economic, social, and cultural rights in the same Covenant with civil and political rights.

This resolution did not, however, interrupt the technical work of the Commission. This Indian resolution pointed out that economic, social, and cultural rights, though equally fundamental and therefore important, formed a separate category of rights from that of the civil and political rights in that they were not justiciable rights and their method of implementation was different.

At this session of the General Assembly we have before us a resolution of the Economic and Social Council inviting the General Assembly to reconsider its decision of last year. It is entirely appropriate for us in the General Assembly this year to reconsider this matter. In view of the importance of the Covenant on Human Rights, we must be willing to study and restudy the basic problems involved in the drafting of this document. There may be differences of opinion in this Committee on the question of whether there should be one covenant or two covenants, but at no time should anyone argue that this Committee should avoid a further consideration of this very important question.

Principal Provisions of the ECOSOC Resolution

The resolution of the Economic and Social Council points out that there are certain differences between the provisions on civil and political rights and the provisions on economic, social, and cultural rights and that these differences warrant a consideration of two covenants rather than a single covenant. The Council resolution also refers to the difficulties which may flow from embodying in one covenant two different kinds of rights and obligations.

Let us examine these differences which have been recognized by the Commission in a number of ways in drafting the provisions of the Covenant.

In the first place, article 19 of the draft Covenant recognizes that the economic, social, and cultural provisions are objectives to be achieved "progressively." This obligation is to be distinguished from the obligation applicable to the civil and political rights in the Covenant. In the case of civil and political rights, states ratifying the Covenant will be under an obligation to take necessary steps fairly quickly to give effect to these rights. A much longer period of time is clearly contemplated under the Covenant for the achievement of the economic, social, and cultural provisions. This is obvious and is, of course, to be expected.

For example, in the field of health, it would be necessary to undertake training programs for doctors and nurses, to establish experimental stations, build hospitals, obtain hospital beds, medical supplies, etc. Similarly, in the field of education, it will take a considerable period of time to train teachers, write school texts, obtain necessary supplies, build schools, et cetera. In these fields, it will take years to reach the objectives set forth in the Covenant. As you well know, my delegation fully supports the attainment of these objectives. I am simply stressing the longer period of time it will of course take and the long-range planning that will be necessary to achieve the objectives of the economic, social, and cultural provisions of the Covenant.

It has taken years to achieve progress in the United States in these fields, as it will no doubt take years to achieve further progress in these fields in my country as well as in other countries.

For example, with respect to education in the United States, which under our federal system is essentially a matter within the jurisdiction of our states, in 1900, in one-third of the United States, there was no compulsory-school-attendance law and in only a few sections of the country was there legislation requiring compulsory school attendance until the age of 16. Fifty years later, all sections of the United States require school attendance for all boys and girls at least until the age of 16, and in some areas school attendance is required until the age of 17 or 18. Since 1910 we have increased our expenditures per student in our schools 300

percent.

In the field of health in the United States, it has taken us 30 years to reduce infant mortality by more than two-thirds. Pneumonia and tuberculosis, which were the two leading causes of death in the United States in 1900, now are in sixth and seventh places as causes of death.

I mention these instances, not to claim we have achieved our goals in these fields but simply to indicate that it takes a long time to move toward these economic, social, and cultural objectives. In contrast, in the case of civil and political rights, it is anticipated that these rights will be effectuated promptly. It is this time difference between these two types of rights that I am stressing.

A second difference between the civil and political provisions and the economic, social, and cultural provisions is the manner in which the obligation is expected to be performed. In the case of the civil and political rights, they can in general be achieved by the enactment of appropriate legislation, enforced under effective administrative machinery. On the other hand, it is recognized that economic, social, and cultural progress and development cannot be achieved simply by the enactment of legislation and its enforcement. Private as well as public action is necessary. The Commission on Human Rights repeatedly rejected the proposal by two members of the Commission to limit the achievement of economic, social, and cultural rights solely through state action. The Commission fully recognized the importance of private as well as governmental action for the achievement of these rights.

A third difference between the civil and political provisions and the economic, social, and cultural provisions relates to the difference in the implementation contemplated. Initially the Commission on Human Rights drafted provisions for the establishment of a Human Rights Committee to which complaints by one state against another state may be filed. The Commission did not then have time at its session this spring to decide whether this machinery should also be applicable to the economic, social, and cultural provisions, but there actually was general sentiment in the Commission that this complaint machinery should be limited to the civil and political provisions of the Covenant. It was felt by those with whom I discussed this matter in the Commission that this machinery is not appropriate for the economic, social, and cultural provisions of the Covenant, since these rights are to be achieved progressively and since the obligations of states with respect to these rights were not as precise as those with respect to the civil and political rights. These members of the Commission thought that it would be preferable, with respect to the economic, social, and cultural rights, to stress the importance of assisting states to achieve economic, social, and cultural progress rather than to stress the filing of complaints against states in this field.

Instead of a complaint procedure, a reporting procedure was devised by the Commission with respect to the progress made in the observance of the economic, social, and cultural provisions of the Covenant.

A fourth difference between the civil and political rights and the economic, social, and cultural rights relates to the drafting of these rights. The economic, social, and cultural provisions were necessarily drafted in broad language as contrasted to the civil and political provisions. For example, article 22 simply provides that "The States Parties to the Covenant recognize the right of everyone to social security." It was thought in the Commission that since economic, social, and cultural provisions were being stated in terms of broad objectives, general language would be adequate.

It seems to my delegation that these four basic differences between the civil and political rights and the economic, social, and cultural rights warrant the separation of the present provisions of the Covenant into two covenants, one covenant on civil and political rights and another covenant on economic, social, and cultural rights. By a separation of these rights into two separate covenants we would avoid a great deal of confusion that is naturally inherent in a combination of all these different provisions in one covenant.

Equality of Importance in the Two Groups of Rights

Of course, I realize that some members of this Committee argue for a single covenant to include all the provisions now before us. The principal argument urged by those pressing this view is that there should be no differentiations in importance between civil and political rights and economic, social, and cultural rights. In the proposal that I wish to make to the Committee there is no question raised with respect to the importance of one group of rights as against another group of rights. I consider each group of rights of equal importance. My proposal would maintain this equality of importance.

My delegation proposes that two covenants of equal importance be completed in the United Nations simultaneously and be opened for signature and ratification at the same time. Neither one nor the other covenant would be called the first or the second covenant. Each of the two covenants would be on human rights, one setting forth the civil and political rights, and the other setting forth the economic, social, and cultural rights. We would request the Commission on Human Rights to prepare both of these covenants for the consideration of the General Assembly next year.

If members of the Committee will look at the present text of the Covenant, they will observe how naturally its parts may be divided into two covenants. The provisions on civil and political rights are in parts I, II, and IV. These parts can constitute one covenant. The economic, social, and cultural provisions are in parts III and V. These parts can constitute another covenant. Part VI contains general provisions which should accordingly be repeated in both covenants.

The basic differences between civil and political rights and economic, social, and cultural rights warrant this division into two covenants. The option will, of course, remain open for countries wishing to ratify both covenants at once to do so. To insist on the inclusion of all the provisions in one covenant will delay the coming into force of any covenant on human rights. A separation of these provisions into two covenants would accelerate their ratification by many states.

I hope that this proposal that I have made will be supported and will facilitate reaching agreement in the Committee on the question of economic, social, and cultural rights. The situation this year is very different from the situation last year in the General Assembly. At that time we were considering the drafting of a first covenant on human rights, containing only civil and political rights. A covenant on economic, social, and cultural rights was proposed to be drafted at a later date. Now that the Commission on Human Rights has drafted provisions on economic, social, and cultural rights, we are in a position to visualize two covenants, simultaneously completed, one on civil and political rights and the other on economic, social, and cultural rights. This changed situation warrants a decision by the General Assembly calling for two covenants rather than one covenant.

I will not at this time discuss other aspects of the covenant. I may comment on these other matters later. I have devoted my attention in these remarks to the importance of drafting two covenants, one on civil and political rights, and the other on economic, social, and cultural rights, because I feel this to be the most important question facing us.

From *Department of State Bulletin*, December 31, 1951, pp. 1059, 1064-1066.

As edited by Allida M. Black. See her collection, *What I Hope to Leave Behind: The Essential Essays of Eleanor Roosevelt*. (Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1995)

Human Rights and Human Freedom: An American View

Eleanor Roosevelt

I realize that the other delegates speak from different points of view and I understand why to them this seems different from what it does to me.

I cannot remember a political or a religious refugee being sent out of my country since the Civil War. At that time I do remember that one of my own relatives, because he came to this country and built a ship that ran contraband to the South, was not included in the amnesty. But since then this has not been a question that has entered into my thinking.

Europe has had a succession of wars and changes in population, as well as changes in ownership of land; and therefore it is natural that we approach the question from a different point of view; but we here in the United Nations are trying to frame things which will be broader in outlook, which will consider first the rights of man, which will consider what makes man more free: not governments but man.

I happen to come from the United States. I used in the committee an example: I am going to use it again; it is purely hypothetical. We happen to have an island in the Caribbean called Puerto Rico. Now in Puerto Rico there are several factions. One faction would like to become another State. Another faction would like to be entirely free. Another faction would like to stay just the way they are in their relation to the United States.

Suppose, just for the sake of supposing, that we had a refugee camp. We belong to the United Nations, but are we going to say that the Puerto Ricans, who happen to want to be free from the United States, shall receive no letters from home, none of their home papers, no letters perhaps from people who have gone to live in other places or information from other places? I think that we can stand up under having them free to get whatever information comes their way and make up their own minds. They are free human beings.

What is propaganda? Are we so weak in the United Nations, are we as individual nations so weak that we are going to forbid human beings to say what they think and fear whatever their friends and their particular type of mind happens to believe in? Surely we can tell them, their own Governments can tell them, all we want to tell them. We are not preventing them from hearing what each country wants them to hear, but we are saying, for instance, that in the United States we have people who have come there from war-torn Europe. They are in two different camps. They will write their relatives as they hear they are in different camps in Europe and they may not always say things that are exactly polite or in agreement with the United Nations. They may even say things against the United States, but I still think it is their right to say them and it is the right of men in refugee camps and women to hear them and to make their own decisions.

I object to "no propaganda against the United Nations or any member of the United Nations." It is like saying you are always sure you are going to be right. I am not always sure my Government or my nation will be right. I hope it will be and I shall do my best to keep it as right as I can keep it, and so, I am sure, will every other nation. But there are people who are going to disagree and I think we aim to reach a point where we on whole are so right that the majority of our people will be with us and we can always stand having among us the people who do not agree, because we are sure that the right is so carefully guarded among us and the freedom of people is so carefully guarded that we will always have the majority with us.

For that reason I oppose including in a report which we have to accept, this amendment, which I consider restrictive of human rights and human freedom.

The *New York Times Magazine*, March 24, 1946, p. 21. From a debate between Eleanor Roosevelt and Soviet delegate Andrei Y. Vishinsky, at the UNO General Assembly.

As edited by Allida M. Black. See her collection, *What I Hope to Leave Behind: The Essential Essays of Eleanor Roosevelt*. (Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1995)

The Promise of Human Rights

Eleanor Roosevelt

The real importance of the Human Rights Commission which was created by the Economic and Social Council lies in the fact that throughout the world there are many people who do not enjoy the basic rights which have come to be accepted in many other parts of the world as inherent rights of all individuals, without which no one can live in dignity and freedom.

At the first meeting of the Economic and Social Council in London, early in 1946, a Nuclear Commission was named to recommend a permanent setup for the full Commission of Human Rights, and to consider the work which it should first undertake. These first members of the Nuclear Commission were not chosen as representatives of governments, but as individuals. Naturally, however, each government was asked to concur in the nomination from that country. There were nine members nominated, but two of them were not able to come; and one or two nations insisted on nominating their own representatives. I was one of the members of the original Nuclear Commission, and when we met at Hunter College, I was elected chairman. The other members were: Mr. Fernand de Hussenot, Belgium; Mr. K. C. Neogi, India; Professor Rene Cassin, France; Dr. C. L. Haaij, China; Mr. Dusan Brkic, Yugoslavia; Mr. Borisov, U.S.S.R.

The representative from the U.S.S.R. was at first a young secretary from the Soviet Embassy. The other members of the Nuclear Commission did not realize that he was not the regular representative and was not empowered to vote. It was not until three days before the end of the meeting that the regular member, Mr. Borisov, arrived; and then we discovered that the representative of the U.S.S.R. who had been attending the meetings actually had no right to vote, and such votes had to be removed from the record. The Commission was a little disturbed because a number of concessions had been made in order to obtain unanimity. Also, this change made it impossible for any decision to be unanimous, since the Soviet representative had been told that he could not commit his government by a vote on any subject and therefore registered no vote on the first program of work.

The Commission made a number of recommendations. For instance, we agreed that persons should be chosen as individuals and not merely as representatives of governments. We agreed that there should be 18 members of the full Commission—an example of a minor point on which we had made concessions to the representative of the U.S.S.R., because originally the various members of the group had differed as to what the proper size of the Commission should be. I had been told that it made very little difference to the United States whether the Commission numbered 12 or 25, but it was felt the number should not be less than 12 because unavoidable absences might cut it down to too small a group; and it was felt also that the number should not be more than 25, for fear a large group might make our work very difficult to accomplish.

When I found out how many varieties of opinion there were, I made the suggestion as chairman that we might make the number 21, since we were apt to discuss some rather controversial subjects, and if there was a tie the chairman could cast the deciding vote. Most of the members agreed with this until we came to the representative of the U.S.S.R. He insisted that we should be 18, because our parent body, the Economic and Social Council, was made up of 18 members. As we did not feel that the size of the Commission was vitally important, and as he could not be induced to change, we agreed to recommend that the Commission consist of 18 members.

Among a number of other recommendations in our report we suggested that the first work to be undertaken was the writing of a Bill of Human Rights. Many of us thought that lack of standards for human rights the world over was one of the greatest causes of friction among the

nations, and that recognition of human rights might become one of the cornerstones of which peace could eventually be based.

At its next meeting, the Economic and Social Council received our report, which I presented, and it was then studied in detail and a number of changes were made. The members of the Commission were made government representatives, chosen by their governments. The 18 governments to be represented on the Commission were chosen by the Economic and Social Council. The United States was given a four-year appointment and my government nominated me as a member. At present the following are represented on the commission: Australia, Belgium, Byelorussia, China, Chile, Egypt, France, India, Lebanon, Panama, the Philippines, Ukraine, the U.S.S.R., Yugoslavia, Uruguay, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The first session of the full Commission was called in January 1947. The officers chosen at that time, in addition to myself as permanent chairman, were Dr. Chang of China as vice-chairman and Dr. Charles Malik of Lebanon as rapporteur. In that first meeting we requested that the Division of Human Rights in the Secretariat get out a yearbook on human rights, and receive all petitions and acknowledge them. Since we were not a court, we could do nothing actually to solve the problems that the petitions presented, but we could tell the petitioners that once the Bill of Human Rights was written, they might find that their particular problems came under one of its provisions.

We considered some of the main points which should go into the drafting of the Bill of Human Rights, and we named a drafting committee which should present the first draft to the next meeting of the full Commission. This work was entrusted to the officers of the Commission, all of whom were available in or near Lake Success, and to Dr. John Humphrey, as head of the Division of Human Rights in the Secretariat. But when the Economic and Social Council received the report of this procedure considerable opposition to the appointment of so small a committee was expressed. As it had been understood in our meeting that the chairman of the committee was to call upon other members of the Commission for advice and assistance, I at once urged that the drafting committee be increased to eight members. This was done.

The drafting committee then met in June 1947. The delegate from the U.S.S.R., Mr. Koretsky, and the delegate from Byelorussia, neither of whom was authorized to vote on an unfinished document and both of whom lacked instructions from their governments, participated very little in the general discussion of the drafting committee, though they did agree to the principles that all men are equal and that men and women should have equal rights. The second meeting of the full Commission was called in Geneva, Switzerland, because some members felt strongly that the Human Rights Commission should hold a session in Europe. We were scheduled to meet on December 1, 1947, but as many of the members were delayed in arriving we actually met on December 2.

We mapped out our work very carefully. The position of the United States had been that it would be impossible in these initial meetings to do more than write a Declaration. If the Declaration were accepted by the General Assembly the next autumn, it would carry moral weight, but it would not carry any legal weight. Many of the smaller nations were strongly of the opinion that the oppressed peoples of the world and the minority groups would feel that they had been cruelly deceived if we did not write a Convention which would be presented for ratification, nation by nation, and which when accepted would be incorporated into law in the same way that treaties among nations are accepted and implemented. The Government of the United States had never, of course, been opposed to writing a Convention; it simply felt that the attempt would not be practical in these early stages. When it was found that feeling ran high on this subject, we immediately cooperated.

The Commission divided itself into three groups. The group to work on the Declaration consisted of the representatives of Byelorussia, France, Panama, the Philippines, the U.S.S.R. and the United States. The group to work on the Convention was made up of the

representatives of Chile, China, Egypt, Lebanon, the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia. The third group, to work on methods of implementation, which would later, of course, be included in the Convention, consisted of the representatives of Australia, India, Iran, Ukraine and Uruguay.

At the first meeting of the Commission, the representative from Australia made the suggestion that a Court of Human Rights be created. There had been a good deal of discussion of this idea in previous meetings. The general feeling was, however, that this action could not be taken under the Charter as it now stands and would raise the problem of revision of the Charter.

At the start, the United Kingdom had brought to the drafting committee a Declaration and a Convention which included suggestions for implementation. The U.S.S.R., while still not committing itself to any vote, as the Soviet Government still insisted that until a finished document was prepared they could not vote on it, nevertheless was willing to participate in the discussions which concerned the writing of a Declaration. Their representative took an active part, particularly in the discussion and formulation of the social and economic rights of the individual which are considered in some detail in the Declaration.

This was a hard-working committee, and I was extremely gratified both at the willingness of the members to put in long hours and at the general spirit of cooperation. In spite of the fact that a good many of the members must frequently have been very weary, there was always an atmosphere of good feeling and consideration for others, even when questions arose which called forth strong differences of opinion.

We finished our work at 11:30 P.M. on the night of December 17, and I think the documents which have now gone to all of the member governments in the United Nations are very creditable. A Declaration and a Convention were written. The group working on implementation made suggestions which, of course, must be more carefully considered before they are fully incorporated in the Convention. We now await the comments. These were requested in early April, so that the Human Rights Division of the Secretariat could go over them carefully and put them in shape for the drafting committee which will meet again at Lake Success on May 3, 1948.

The full Commission will meet at Lake Success on May 17, to give final consideration to this Bill of Human Rights, or Pact, as our Government prefers to have it called. The Economic and Social Council received the report of the documents written in Geneva, and sent them to the governments in January. They will now make their comments and suggestions. The final opportunity for consideration by the Economic and Social Council will come at its meeting next July, and the pact or charter which is finally adopted at that meeting will be presented to the General Assembly in the autumn of 1948.

II

Three Articles in the Declaration seem to me to be of vital importance. Article 15 provides that everyone has the right to a nationality; that is, all persons are entitled to the protection of some government, and those who are without it shall be protected by the United Nations. Article 16 says that individual freedom of thought and conscience, to hold and change beliefs, is an absolute and sacred right. Included in this Article is a declaration of the right to manifest these beliefs, in the form of worship, observance, teaching and practice. Article 21 declares that everyone, without discrimination, has the right to take an effective part in the government of his country. This aims to give assurance that governments of states will bend and change according to the will of the people as shown in elections; which shall be periodic, free, fair and by secret ballot.

Some of the other important Articles are broad in scope. For instance, Article 23 says that everyone has the right to work, and that the state has a duty to take steps within its power to

ensure its residents an opportunity for useful work. Article 24 says that everyone has a right to receive pay commensurate with his ability and skill and may join trade unions to protect his interests.

Other Articles in the Declaration set forth rights such as the right to the preservation of health; which would give the state responsibility for health and safety measures; the right to social security, which makes it the duty of the state to provide measures for the security of the individual against the consequences of unemployment, disability, old age and other loss of livelihood beyond his control; the right to education, which should be free and compulsory, and the provision that higher education should be available to all without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion, social standing, financial means or political affiliation; the right to rest and leisure—that is, a limitation on hours of work and provisions of vacations with pay; the right to participate in the cultural life of the community, enjoy its arts and share in the benefits of science. Another Article asserts that education will be directed to the full physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual development of the human personality and to combatting hatred against other nations or racial or religious groups.

If the Declaration is accepted by the Assembly, it will mean that all the nations accepting it hope that the day will come when these rights are considered inherent rights belonging to every human being, but it will not mean that they have to change their laws immediately to make these rights possible.

On the other hand, as the Convention is ratified by one nation after another it will require that each ratifying nation change its laws where necessary, to make possible that every human being within its borders shall enjoy the rights set forth. The Convention, of course, covers primarily the civil liberties which many of the nations of the world have accepted as inherent rights of human beings, and it reaffirms a clause in the Charter of the United Nations which says that there shall be no discrimination among any human beings because of race, creed or color.

The most important articles of the Convention are subjects with which every American high school student is familiar. Article 5 makes it unlawful to deprive a person of life except as punishment for a crime provided by law. Article 6 outlaws physical mutilation. Article 7 forbids torture and cruel or inhuman punishment. Article 8 prohibits slavery and compulsory labor, with exceptions permitted as to the latter in the case of military service and emergency service in time of disaster such as flood or earthquake.

A provision which is new in an international constitutional sense, though not new in practice to Americans, is Article 11, which guarantees liberty of movement and a free choice of residence within a state, and a general freedom to every person in the world to leave any country, including his own. Article 20 makes all sections of the Convention applicable without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, property status, or national or social origin; and Article 21 requires the states to forbid by law the advocacy of national, racial or religious hostility that constitutes incitement to violence. In general, every nation ratifying the Convention will have to make sure that within its jurisdiction these promised rights become realities, so it is the Convention which is of the greatest importance to the peoples throughout the world.

A possible stumbling block to general ratification of the Convention is the fact that some federal states, like the United States, operate constitutional systems in which the primary laws affecting individuals are adopted by the constituent states and are beyond the constitutional power of the federal government. The Convention provides, in Article 24, that in such cases these federal governments shall call to the attention of their constituent states, with a favorable recommendation, those Articles considered appropriate for action by them.

One of the questions that will come before the Human Rights Commission in May is whether all the Articles included in the Convention shall be submitted to the various nations for

ratification in a single document, to be taken all in one gulp, so to speak, or shall be divided into separate conventions, in the thought that this procedure would avoid the rejection of the entire document because of objection to one or two articles, as might happen in many cases. Of course, it is quite evident that in the future there will have to be many conventions on special subjects, and that the work of the Human Rights Commission should be directed for years to come on those subjects as they arise. A convention on the subject of nationality and stateless persons seems to be knocking at our doors for consideration almost immediately.

III

As I look back at the work thus far of our Human Rights Commission I realize that its importance is twofold.

In the first place, we have put into words some inherent rights. Beyond that, we have found that the conditions of our contemporary world require the enumeration of certain protections which the individual must have if he is to acquire a sense of security and dignity in his own person. The effect of this is frankly educational. Indeed, I like to think that the Declaration will help forward very largely the education of the peoples of the world.

It seems to me most important that the Declaration be accepted by all member nations, not because they will immediately live up to all of its provisions, but because they ought to support the standards toward which the nations must henceforward aim. Since the objectives have been clearly stated, men of good will everywhere will strive to attain them with more energy and, I trust, with better hope of success.

As the Convention is adhered to by one country after another, it will actually bring into being rights which are tangible and can be invoked before the law of the ratifying countries. Everywhere many people will feel more secure. And as the Great Powers tie themselves down by their ratifications, the smaller nations which fear that the great may abuse their strength will acquire a sense of greater assurance.

The work of the Commission has been of outstanding value in setting before men's eyes the ideals which they must strive to reach. Men cannot live by bread alone.

From *Foreign Affairs* 26 (April 1948) 470-477.

As edited by Allida M. Black. See her collection, *What I Hope to Leave Behind: The Essential Essays of Eleanor Roosevelt*. (Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1995)

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001a. memo	Personal (Partial) (1 page)	12/01/1999	P6/b(6)
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Speechwriting (Paul Orzulak)
OA/Box Number: 4023

FOLDER TITLE:

Eleanor Roosevelt Speech [4]

2008-0702-F

jm211

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

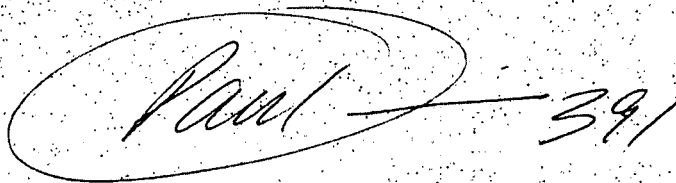
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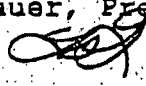
Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
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- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
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- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

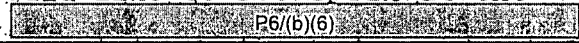


December 1, 1999

TO: Katy Button for Melanne Vermeer

FROM: Lois Gochbauer, President's Interagency Council
For Women 

SUBJECT: Afghan woman speaker for the Human Rights Day
Ceremony

Attached is a bio of Belquis Ahmadi, the young Afghan
refugee woman this office would like to see speak at the
Human Rights Day Ceremony.  P6(b)(6)

 P6(b)(6)

[0019]

She has been highly recommended by our Refugee Coordinator,
Tom Hushek, at our Embassy in Islamabad and the former
Refugee Coordinator who is now with our Mission to the UN
in Geneva, Linda Thomas Greenfield. Both know her.

Ms. Ahmadi left Afghanistan after the Taliban took control
because her two sisters could not go to school. She took
her two younger sisters and brother to Peshawar so they
could continue their education.

She accompanied the International Human Rights Law Group to
Geneva in 1998 and 1999 where she gave an eloquent
statement before the UN Human Rights Commission about human
rights in Afghanistan. She impressed everyone. This was
courageous because she had to return to Peshawar after
that.

She was subsequently resettled as a woman at risk in
January 1999 in St. Louis, Missouri. She is not the
typical Afghan activist on the Feminist Majority's circuit.
Rather, she is trying to build a new life in America and
maintains a genuine love of her homeland. At age 28, she
is the guardian of her two younger sisters and brother, all
teenagers. She is raising them in St. Louis and working at
the Hilton Hotel to make ends meet. On the side, she is
taking some courses at a university there. Her parents and
one handicapped sister remain in Kabul.

Attachments: Biography

 P6(b)(6)

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001b. note	Address (Partial); Phone No. (Partial) (1 page)	12/01/1999	P6/b(6)
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Eleanor Roosevelt Speech [4]

2008-0702-F

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FILE No. 841 12/01 '99 15:14 ID:

FAX:

PAGE 2

Bio- Ms. Belquis Ahmadi from Afghanistan
Current address:

P6(b)(6)

[0016]

For Louis G.
President's Inter Agency
Council on Women

Ph:

P6(b)(6)

E-mail:

Belquisa@yahoo.com - or- Belquisa@hotmail.com

Belquis Ahmadi is 28 years old women's rights activist from Afghanistan. She has worked for women's rights in Afghanistan for over ten years. Currently, she is Afghanistan Advisor for the Women's Rights Advocacy Program of Washington DC based non-profit organization, the International Human Rights Law Group. Ms. Ahmadi has highlighted the women's rights situation in Afghanistan at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva as a NGO delegation member of International Human rights Law Group in 1998 and 1999.

Ms. Ahmadi is one of the three founding members of the Afghan Women's Network which was started in Kabul in 1996 after the Taliban takeover of the Afghan capital. She has also worked as Program Officer for Women's Affairs at ACBAR (Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief) in Peshawar, Pakistan and Kabul, Afghanistan from 1996 to 1999. Earlier, Ms. Ahmadi worked as Office Manager for CARE International office in Kabul, Afghanistan from 1995 to 1996. She started her work for women as a Deputy Head Nurse and Administrator for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRW) at the War Wounded Hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan from 1988 where she worked till 1995.

Ms. Ahmadi has written articles and papers on Violence Against Women in Afghan Society and about the struggle for women's human rights in Afghanistan.

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001c. article	Article on Afghanistan (3 pages)	12/01/1999	P6/b(6)

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12/03/99 4:30 pm
Orzulak

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
REMARKS TO THE
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS
WASHINGTON, DC
DECEMBER 6, 1999**

[Acknowledgments: First Lady; National Security Adviser Berger, etc]

It occurs to me that at some point tonight, somebody in America will be flipping through channels, and they will come across the speech we just heard. They may stop and listen, or they may not. They may know what the Taliban is, or they may not. But I wonder if that person will stop and think even for a moment that in nearly half the world, doing what Belquis (Bel-KEYS) just did -- simply standing and speaking freely -- could get her arrested, jailed, beaten, and even tortured. And I wonder if that person will realize that until people like Eleanor Roosevelt came along, the rest of the world did not recognize its right or power to do anything about it.

Sometimes we forget how long it took the world to agree on what freedom actually meant. Half a century ago, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights said it in simple words: all human beings are free and equal in dignity and human rights. All are endowed with reason and conscience. All have the right to a standard of living adequate to health and well being. In her memoirs, Eleanor Roosevelt recalled that delegates from the Soviet Union kept trying to add the words "these rights are guaranteed by the state." But that's the whole point -- they're not. No state should have the power to take these rights away -- because no state has the power to grant them in the first place.

The real genius of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is that for the first time, it said that what a country does to people within its own borders is not its business alone. It said to all the world that what you do to your own people matters to all people.

We in the United States know how hard it is to live up to its principles. One hundred years ago, Eleanor Roosevelt was a 15 year-old girl growing up in a country where women could not vote. Half a century ago, if the standards of the Universal Declaration were held up to segregated schools and lunch counters in the South, we would have failed the test.

This Century has taught us that even though human rights are endowed by the hand of our Creator, they are ensured by the hearts and hands of men and women who inch by inch have moved our world forward. We are here today to honor five brave Americans whose lives have made a difference.

It is said that when Burke Marshall first met Robert Kennedy, they sat across a table for ten minutes and didn't say a single word. But from that awkward moment sprang an extraordinary partnership. As Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in the Kennedy Administration, he bridged the gap between the government and those activists fighting every day to oust Jim Crow. John Lewis, who received this same award last year, once recalled that whenever Martin Luther King or James Farmer needed to talk to somebody in Washington, they would simply say: call Burke. His work was crucial to passing the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act. After he had helped shape a new America, Burke Marshall later worked equally hard to shape young minds at Yale Law School. I know – because Hillary and I were two of them. Burke, thank you for all you have done for our country.

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We honor these five Americans today with the thanks of a grateful nation. But if we truly want to honor their work, we must stay committed in the places where the glory has not come yet, and continue to speak out for human rights around the world, from Burma to Cuba to Sudan, from Serbia, to North Korea and Vietnam. We must do so because it is the right thing to do – but also because it is the surest path to a world that is safe, democratic, and free.

In Afghanistan, we have worked with the United Nations to bring sanctions against the Taliban, while ensuring that the Afghan people continue to receive humanitarian assistance. We are Afghanistan's largest donor and today we take another step forward. I am pleased to announce that next year, we will spend at least \$2 million to educate and improve the health of Afghan women and children refugees. We are also making an additional \$1.5 million available in emergency aid for those displaced by the recent Taliban offensive. And we are dramatically expanding our resettlement program for women and children who are not safe. But these are temporary solutions. We must continue to work until that day when Afghanistan has a government as good as its people.

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12/03/99 4:30 pm
Orzulak

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
REMARKS TO THE
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS
WASHINGTON, DC
DECEMBER 6, 1999**

[Acknowledgments: First Lady; National Security Adviser Berger, etc]

It occurs to me that at some point tonight, somebody in America will be flipping through channels, and they will come across the speech we just heard. They may stop and listen, or they may not. They may know what the Taliban is, or they may not. But I wonder if that person will stop and think even for a moment that in nearly half the world, doing what Belquis (Bel-KEYS) just did -- simply standing and speaking freely -- could get her arrested, jailed, beaten, and even tortured. And I wonder if that person will realize that until people like Eleanor Roosevelt came along, the rest of the world did not recognize its right or power to do anything about it.

Sometimes we forget how long it took the world to agree on what freedom actually meant. Half a century ago, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights said it in simple words: all human beings are free and equal in dignity and human rights. All are endowed with reason and conscience. All have the right to a standard of living adequate to health and well being. In her memoirs, Eleanor Roosevelt recalled that delegates from the Soviet Union kept trying to add the words "these rights are guaranteed by the state." But that's the whole point -- they're not. No state should have the power to take these rights away -- because no state has the power to grant them in the first place.

The real genius of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is that for the first time, it said that what a country does to people within its own borders is not its business alone. It said to all the world that what you do to your own people matters to all people.

We in the United States know how hard it is to live up to its principles. One hundred years ago, Eleanor Roosevelt was a 15 year-old girl growing up in a country where women could not vote. Half a century ago, if the standards of the Universal Declaration were held up to segregated schools and lunch counters in the South, we would have failed the test.

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