



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

August 9, 1993

UNCLASSIFIED  
MEMORANDUM

TO : HA - John Shattuck  
FROM : HA - George Lister 7  
SUBJECT: Human Rights - Democracy

I am glad you surfaced the human rights vs. democracy controversy at this morning's meeting, but I vote that we try to keep to a minimum the amount of time and effort we invest in that issue. Of course we cannot and should not attempt to ignore the subject, if only because it is obviously going to be on the front burner in many upcoming discussions and debates among Governments, NGOs, etc. But after we have worked out a clear official position I hope we will try to defuse the debate and put it in its proper perspective, continuing to place major emphasis on the far more important and urgent task of reducing specific violations of human rights and democracy around the world.

I think there is much less substance and significance to the human rights vs. democracy polemic than to the older controversy over political vs. economic and social rights. In any event, I do not think we have to choose between human rights and democracy. There is a huge overlap. The more human rights are protected the easier it will be to achieve democracy. The more democracy flourishes the better it will be for human rights.

Let's keep our main attention on the very difficult, tragic day-to-day problems of violations of human rights and democracy. We have come a long way, and we have a long way to go.

cc: Nancy Ely-Raphel  
Catharin Dalpino

DRAFTED: HA:GLister  
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