

John Salzberg on the creation of the Fraser Subcommittee

But Fraser, he always placed a special concern on what he referred to as the “integrity of the person” rights: torture, detention without trial, prolonged detention, the physical security of the individual, and killing, of course. And of course Fraser was concerned about the fact that quite a few of our allies, to which we provided military aid, were gross violators of human rights, and frequently the military aid wasn’t simply used for external defense, but was used for internal security. And at that time if you look across the world you have President Marcos in the Philippines under martial law; you had President Somoza in Nicaragua, a West Point graduate; you had Paraguay, Stroessner being there for decades; and a number of other dictators. Then you had Park Chung Hee in South Korea. In fact, that was one of the cases I still remember. At one of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the full committee hearing – it may have been the Foreign Aid Bill – Fraser raised the question about political prisoners in Korea, which led to an amendment in the Foreign Aid Bill which actually cut the military aid by some amount because of that.