

## Richard Schifter on the establishment of the Human Rights Bureau

The establishment of the Human Rights Bureau sent a message from the Congress that this is expected of the United States government. Beginning at that time also with the appointment – this is very important – the appointment in embassies throughout the world by ambassadors; ambassadors were expected to designate human rights officers in their various embassies. So that as a result of that for the first time ever you had people in our embassies whose task it was to monitor human rights concerns in a particular country. Therefore it wasn't considered a matter that you really would monitor, and basically if you are assigned in the State Department to monitor something, you then write it down, and when you have written it down you put it into a cable and you send it to Washington. So you see beginning around 1977 suddenly all these cables arrive from all over the world that had never gotten to Washington, to the State Department before.