

INTRODUCTION

Nineteen ninety-one was a year in which the discourse of human rights gained greater acceptance than ever before. The tired formula that the way governments treat their own citizens is an internal affair, not the appropriate subject of international discussion, lost resonance even among the governments most resistant to international scrutiny. Even so sacred a notion as the inviolability of borders — the essence of sovereignty — gave way to a growing insistence that the most extreme abuses could not remain immune from humanitarian intervention. Several efforts to fashion peace also reflected the emerging recognition that human rights must be at the center of a secure and stable world order.

Despite this increased acceptance, however, respect for human rights faces a dangerous challenge in the rise of exclusionary ideologies. Now that the Cold War's proxy conflicts are winding down, the quest for ethnic, linguistic or religious purity, pursued by growing numbers, lies behind much of today's bloodshed. By closing the community to diversity and stripping outsiders of essential rights, these dangerous visions of enforced conformity nourish a climate of often brutal intolerance.

At the same time, democracy itself faces an important challenge. Just as the breakup of the Soviet Union finds opponents of totalitarianism pronouncing victory, more and more governments are attempting to claim that they are democratic merely because they hold periodic elections. Fearful of the unrestrained exercise of the freedoms of speech and association, such governments have sought to cripple the institutions of civil society that might provide a vehicle for an organized challenge to their power.

It is a source of disappointment that the Bush Administration has responded to these challenges by downgrading the significance of human rights in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy. On occasion, when other interests did not stand in the way, the Administration defended human rights. Examples include Bulgaria, Honduras and Suriname, where the Administration has spoken out against human rights violations, and Burma and Kenya, where it backed such criticism with economic sanctions. But when competing interests arose — conducting business with China, fighting drug-trafficking in Peru, maintaining warm relations with Saudi oil sheikhs, pursuing a limited vision of Arab-Israeli peace, or avoiding politically embarrassing questions about why the United States went to war to restore the Kuwaiti emir — human rights took a back seat at the White House.

The sad irony is that this policy of devaluation has become entrenched at a time when U.S. influence is exceedingly high. Rather than use that influence to insist that human rights are a critical element of a "new world order," the Administration maintains a short-sighted vision of national interest, too ready to sacrifice the pursuit of human rights if it is not cost- and conflict-free.

Sovereignty and Human Rights

Fortunately, the worldwide trend was in the opposite direction, with increasing acceptance that respect for human rights is a legitimate international concern. The most dramatic example of the breakdown of sovereignty as a defense for human rights violators occurred when the U.N. Security Council authorized the creation of a security zone in northern Iraq to protect the Kurdish population from massive reprisal by Saddam Hussein's forces. The action represented the first time that the international community had formally limited a sovereign nation's authority over its own territory essentially on human rights grounds.

But sovereignty gave way to human rights in a number of less dramatic ways as well.

- o The Organization of American States (OAS), traditionally a staunch defender of sovereignty after decades of big-stick U.S. diplomacy in the hemisphere, resolved in June to convene immediately if any democratically elected government were overthrown in a military coup. The first test came in late September, with the ouster of Haiti's first freely elected president, the popular and populist Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The OAS responded with unprecedented resolve, imposing an economic embargo and vowing to maintain it until President Aristide is restored to power.**
- o In September, in the face of a disintegrating situation in Yugoslavia, the thirty-eight-state Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) dropped its traditional insistence on unanimity to permit the sending of a human rights fact-finding mission to a member state without securing the state's formal consent.**
- o An armed force created by the Economic Community of West African States continued its intervention between the warring factions in Liberia. Begun in August 1990, this military presence and subsequent diplomatic efforts were**

critical in curbing the carnage and abuse of that conflict.

- o The U.N. General Assembly in November took the unprecedented step of unanimously adopting a resolution rebuking by name a member state — Myanmar (Burma) — for human rights abuses. The lack of dissent meant that even such hard-line opponents of international scrutiny as Cuba and China did not oppose the emerging consensus. Indeed, China felt it necessary to issue a White Paper on its own human rights practices which at least gave lip service to the legitimacy of human rights as a topic of debate.**
- o Then-Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin, in his September speech to the Moscow CSCE conference, explicitly rejected the long-time Soviet position that international criticism of its human rights record constituted interference in its internal affairs.**
- o The European Community and several of its member states have announced that development aid would be linked to the recipient government's respect for human rights. Even Japan, long resistant to the notion, has articulated a similar policy.**

There were, of course, exceptions to this trend. The Organization of African Unity continues to refuse to take up human rights violations by its member states, and to diffuse international efforts to scrutinize abuses by those states. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was outspoken in its hostility to international human rights scrutiny. The fifty-nation Commonwealth made substantial reference to human rights at its 1991 heads-of-government meeting but continued to neglect the matter in practice.

Still, a trend could be discerned throughout the year of significantly greater acceptance of human rights as a legitimate topic of international concern. Given the violent disintegration at year's end of Yugoslavia and Somalia, there in all likelihood will be a continuing need to examine whether sovereignty can be a basis for forgoing international efforts to prevent major human rights abuse.

Human Rights as an Element of Peace and Stability

Human rights also gained growing recognition as a vital element of peace and stability. The realpolitik view of world order in which relations between states are determined by power and self-interest, without concern for such "internal"

matters as how a state treats its citizens, gave way fitfully but steadily to a broader understanding that security is not simply a question of armed might but depends on a foundation of respect for human rights. The need to readjust this understanding became increasingly apparent with the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. If the international community previously had challenged Saddam Hussein to temper his cruelty at home, it seems doubtful that he would have risked brutalizing the citizens of a neighboring state.

The recognition that respect for human rights promotes peace shaped international policy in several countries in 1991. The most significant efforts were in El Salvador, where peace talks have proceeded with the increasing acknowledgment by both sides that respect for human rights must be established after more than a decade of large-scale abuse. Even while the conflict continues, a team of more than one hundred U.N. observers has spread throughout the country to monitor human rights. A "Commission of Truth" has been named and will be established in 1992 to investigate and acknowledge the major human rights abuses of the past decade. Another commission is planned to review the records of senior army officers with an eye toward purging human rights violators after a peace settlement. These developments represent an understanding that peaceful reconciliation cannot be achieved without confidence by all sides that their human rights will be respected after they lay down their arms and that the most serious abuses of the past will not be forgotten.

Colombia also put into practice an understanding of the relationship between human rights and security. Tremendous strides were made in ending Colombia's multiple guerrilla wars by opening the political process to encourage participation by former rebels. The process has been marred — a presidential candidate representing a former guerrilla group was murdered in 1990 — but former guerrillas elected in 1991 played a major role in drafting a new constitution. The revised charter contains several important measures for curbing the killing and disappearances that have plagued the nation.

Other countries have shown a recognition that lasting peace can be achieved only in tandem with respect for human rights. As a critical part of their peace accords, Angola and Cambodia vowed to hold competitive elections, with an opportunity for all parties to organize and speak out without interference. The peace agreement in Ethiopia included a pledge to facilitate international human rights monitoring.

Unfortunately, the long-awaited Middle East peace talks between Israel and its Arab neighbors appear not yet to have taken cognizance of the importance of human rights. Neither the security that Israel desires nor the expandable autonomy sought by the Palestinians can be achieved without new respect for

human rights on both sides of the Arab-Israeli divide. The open dissent and free public debate needed to resolve current and future disputes will not be possible if political opponents can be detained without trial as "terrorists" by the Israelis, threatened as "capitulationists" by the Palestinians, imprisoned as "traitors" by the Syrians, or arrested and tortured for expressing "anti-state" ideas by the Egyptians.

Exclusionary Ideologies

Even as the growing acceptance of human rights has begun to alter understandings of peace and sovereignty, the rise of exclusionary nationalism poses an alarming threat to individual liberties. Doctrines of intolerance — be it a vision of ethnic, linguistic or religious purity — are apparent in a variety of conflicts around the world. Several of these are in Eastern Europe: the interethnic attacks in Yugoslavia; and the violent confrontations in such regions of the former Soviet Union as Georgia, Azerbaidhzan, Moldova and the Chechen-Ingush region of Russia. More restrained ethnic tensions continue to raise the specter of violence as Turks in Bulgaria, Hungarians in Romania, and Gypsies in several countries face intolerance from the majority population.

Many have described the resurgent nationalism in Eastern Europe as a pot of simmering ethnic tensions that was waiting to explode once the lid of Communist rule was removed, as if one should be grateful to totalitarian rule for keeping the lid on so long. That view overlooks the tremendous contribution to these tensions by Communist rule itself — a contribution with parallels in authoritarian regimes of various political stripes around the world.

Far from relieving ethnic hostilities, the violation of human rights under Communist rule fueled these tensions. The assertion of ethnic identity is hardly surprising after years of denial of the basic rights to practice one's religion, speak one's language, or celebrate one's culture. Nor does it help to ease ethnic tensions when an unresponsive bureaucracy of one nationality rules members of another ethnic group.

The explosion of destructive nationalism also reflects the devastation of institutions that might have allowed the tensions of political and economic transition to be resolved peacefully. Societies steeped in democracy enjoy the opportunity to resolve these strains through public debate and political compromise. But authoritarian traditions have fostered a strong tendency toward absolutism.

In addition, dictatorial rule, sometimes built on the deliberate exploitation of

ethnic rivalry, has stifled the independent institutions of civil society that might have provided a sense of community beyond the ethnic, linguistic or religious group. Fearful and isolated individuals, without a history of free expression and association to find common solutions, have tended to fall back in time of fear on more traditional identities.

A history of dictatorial rule also lies behind the ethnic conflict in South Africa. The divide-and-conquer strategies of apartheid, ranging from the cynical homeland policy to the restrictive pass system, stand behind the sense of isolation and despair reflected in the black-against-black political violence of recent years. The violence has been fueled by radical defenders of apartheid — including government forces — who have chosen to spill vast quantities of blood rather than give up the prerogatives of a racist state. The denial of democratic institutions to the black majority also has made it difficult to establish the trust needed to build a representative state and remedy the injustices of apartheid.

A legacy of abuse and the denial of democratic means for resolving grievances lie behind a host of other ethnic conflicts.

- o In Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese-dominated government's intolerance of the Tamil language and perceived Tamil privileges has bred a vicious war with untold brutality by insurgent and government forces.**
- o In India, government heavy-handedness in addressing separatist rebellions in Punjab, Assam and Kashmir has promoted a cycle of cruelty and violence by all sides.**
- o In Indonesia, an entrenched and intolerant authoritarian regime has met separatist movements in Aceh and East Timor with summary executions and widespread repression.**
- o In Tibet, the Chinese have imposed their territorial claims through ruthless crackdowns on pro-independence demonstrators.**
- o In Iran, the struggle of the country's Kurdish and Baluch minorities for greater political, cultural and linguistic autonomy has met with heavy-handed repression usually masked as an anti-drug campaign.**
- o In eastern Turkey, the government's long repression of the Kurdish minority has stoked the flames of insurgency.**

- o In Rwanda, Hutu domination of the Tutsi minority (after years of the reverse) has sparked another invasion by predominantly pro-Tutsi forces and reprisal killings by government forces.**
- o In neighboring Burundi, war broke out in November when pro-Hutu rebels attacked after years of discrimination by the dominant Tutsi minority.**

One dangerous manifestation of this nationalist fervor is the tendency to deny members of other ethnic groups any status in the nation. Loss of citizenship rights and summary expulsion is often the product of this exclusive view of the nation.

- o Ethnic Haitians who were lifelong residents of the Dominican Republic and should be considered citizens under the Dominican Constitution were summarily expelled in retaliation for international criticism of the Dominican government's use of forced Haitian labor on state sugarcane plantations.**
- o The Kuwaiti government, after the ouster of Iraqi occupying forces, expelled or prevented the return of hundreds of thousands of long-term Palestinian residents because of alleged pro-Iraq sympathy. It is also threatening to expel some 250,000 stateless Arabs, the Bedoons, whose only home is Kuwait but whose Kuwaiti citizenship has never been officially recognized.**
- o Saudi Arabia summarily expelled close to a million Yemenis, most of them long-term residents, after Yemen was perceived as siding with Iraq during the Persian Gulf conflict.**
- o Latvia is threatening to deny citizenship to anyone who cannot trace his or her ancestry in Latvia to 1940 or demonstrate residence in the country for sixteen years.**
- o Predominantly Buddhist Burma continues to detain Muslims born in Burma as "illegal immigrants."**
- o Eritrea, following the end of the Ethiopian conflict, has expelled thousands of non-Eritreans.**
- o Congo summarily expelled hundreds of thousands of Zairians, many of them long-term residents, to politically unstable conditions in Zaire.**

Nationalism is not the only exclusionary ideology that threatens respect for individual differences. A similar intolerance can be found in Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Pakistan, where governments invoke an extreme version of Islamic fundamentalism to suppress dissent and stifle the development of civil society, or in the continuing death sentence pronounced by Iran's theocratic state against writer Salman Rushdie. Elements of the Afghan *mujahedin* also have used detention and murder to enforce their rigid brand of Islamic fundamentalism. In turn, some governments, notably Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia, have fueled the growth of religious extremism by using repressive methods, including torture, rather than encouraging public debate and the growth of alternative independent institutions to challenge intolerant fundamentalist ideologies.

A Threat to Democracy

Apart from the threat of exclusionary ideologies, civil society is also endangered by attacks on the very nature of democracy. Although most governments today claim to be democratic, an increasing number have sought to redefine the term as a form of narrow electoralism, with periodic balloting but without the independent institutions of civil society — a free and robust press, outspoken bar associations and religious institutions, freely organized labor unions and uninhibited grassroots organizations — that permit people to debate issues of importance and to organize and petition their governments in a manner that permits them to be heard.

There have been important exceptions, such as Zambia's transition from one-party rule after an open and highly competitive campaign. Although President Kenneth Kaunda was defeated at the polls, ending over two decades in power, his wisdom in permitting outspoken political parties and an unrestrained press does more than all his years in office to ensure him a place in history as a contributor to Zambia's emerging democracy.

With disturbing frequency, however, elected leaders wedded more to power than democracy have sought to quash independent institutions that might transform periodic elections into a genuine challenge to their continuation in office. The form of this token electoralism varies from country to country. But it seems always to reflect a conviction by the leadership of the day that it possesses a monopoly on the wisdom needed to guide the nation, and a convenient belief that nongovernmental institutions should either stay out of politics or avoid public disagreement with the chosen path of the head of state.

Such perversion of democracy has emerged in many nations that adhere to the democratic form of periodic elections.

- o **The Egyptian government dissolved a leading women's organization because it dared to "disseminate ideas running counter to the position of the State" and to "take a stand against the official and public stand of the government with regard to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq." The government also warned students that "universities are a place for science and learning and not for political activity."**
- o **In Singapore, the government has reduced political competition to a brief campaign period every four or five years, while using the threat of administrative detention and a variety of more subtle economic penalties to stifle the growth of independent organizations. When the opposition overcame these obstacles to win four of fifty-one parliamentary seats, the government announced that it had been mistaken to attempt a slightly more open form of governance.**
- o **In South Korea, the government detains people suspected of "anti-state" ideology. Debate on the central issue facing society — relations with North Korea — must take place under the shadow of possible criminal charges of "benefiting" the north.**
- o **In Indonesia, political discussion is constrained by the ever-present possibility of detention for violating the state ideology.**

This narrow electoralism can also be found in several nations that have declared themselves on the road to democratic reform. In Kuwait, for example, the restored emir has promised elections in 1992 but refuses to permit campaigning by relaxing censorship and lifting prohibitions on independent organization and assembly. Similarly in several countries in Africa, governments are trying to sway with the winds of democratic change without losing their grasp on power.

- o **In Nigeria, the military government is attempting to control a proclaimed transition to democracy by dictating which two political parties may exist, undermining the press, and insisting on an "open ballot" in which voters must publicly identify their choice.**
- o **In Kenya, despite a long-awaited opening for multiparty politics, outspoken lawyers and politicians have continued to face fines, arrest and mistreatment**

in custody for challenging the government's insistence on its monopoly on power.

- o In Cameroon, elections have been promised but six independent organizations were banned for engaging in politics.**
- o In Ghana, the government has declared a transition to democracy but still bans political parties and targets opposition journalists for harassment.**

Equally critical to a democracy is the rule of law, but again many "democratic" nations show little tolerance for legal process.

- o In Malaysia, the ruling party, after taming the judiciary through suspension and dismissal of independent-minded members of the Supreme Court, set its sights on the Bar Council, briefly threatening to revoke its independence and limit its public voice because of its vigorous defense of the rule of law.**
- o In El Salvador, the government has allowed abusive forces to face prosecution and, occasionally, trial in cases that attract international attention, confident that efforts to repress evidence and manipulate the judiciary will usually avoid conviction and punishment, and that in any event, the sporadic nature of these prosecutions coupled with amnesties for those who face punishment will not substantially dent the pattern of impunity enjoyed by security forces.**
- o In Guatemala, a handful of judges, police officers and human rights monitors willing to pursue military abuses have been met with threats and murder.**
- o In a number of nations around the world — including Egypt, India, Israel and Malaysia — avowedly democratic governments have bypassed the criminal law altogether by detaining dissenters administratively, without specific charges or a public trial before an independent tribunal.**

A similar bypassing of judicial institutions affects certain prisoners in the United States. After conviction and sentencing in court, prisoners who are deemed to present excessive security threats are confined administratively, without further judicial review, in severe and often cruel super-maximum security facilities.

Some attacks on democracy did not bother with subtleties. Military coups in

Thailand in February and in Haiti in September overthrew popularly elected governments. An effort by an interim government in Togo to plan elections after twenty-four years of military dictatorship faced open challenge beginning in late November by the armed forces, forcing the interim prime minister to agree to share power with the former despot to avoid further bloodshed.

Other governments — especially in Asia — still make no pretense of adherence to democracy.

- o Despite its professed acceptance of the legitimacy of discussing human rights, China persists in its brutal effort to stamp out any remnant of the "counterrevolutionary" pro-democracy movement of 1989. More than a thousand peaceful participants in the movement are known to remain in custody.**
- o In Burma, the military-dominated State Law and Order Restoration Council continues to ignore the results of the May 1990 elections, imprison the leaders of the victorious National League for Democracy (NLD), and hold Nobel Prize-winner and NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest.**
- o In Vietnam, despite economic liberalization and a small opening for dissent, those who overstep prescribed bounds still face imprisonment and severe mistreatment in custody.**
- o In North Korea, repression is so tight and the country so closed that public dissent remains virtually unthinkable.**
- o In Cuba, persistent opposition to Fidel Castro's closed political system has been met with continuing arrests and violent "acts of repudiation," in which government-organized mobs batter and abuse dissident leaders.**
- o In Malawi, Life President Hastings Banda, who has dominated political life since independence in 1964, maintains a highly repressive system that has permitted him to remain immune to the democratic tide sweeping Africa.**

U.S. Policy: Human Rights at No Cost

In the face of these varied and sometimes complex challenges to human rights, the Bush Administration has tended toward a policy of promoting human

rights only when it is cost-free. The Administration is not openly hostile to human rights, and sometimes becomes an outspoken proponent, but these occasions are usually only when competing interests do not stand in the way. The promotion of human rights rarely has emerged as a concern that overrides the Administration's other preoccupations.

Much of the blame for this devaluation of human rights rests with President Bush himself. His preference for personal diplomacy among national leaders seems to have left little room for the embarrassment and possible affront that human rights criticism can cause. But the problem also appears to reflect a lack of profound concern with human rights by Secretary of State James Baker, whose personal interventions seldom address human rights matters.

The Middle East

The crucible of the Bush Administration's human rights policy in 1991 was the Middle East. President Bush cited Iraqi abuses of human rights in rallying support for a military solution to the invasion of Kuwait. Yet as soon as the war was over, the cry for human rights was lost in the rush of other considerations. Indicative was that Secretary Baker visited the region seven times in 1991 without once publicly mentioning human rights.

The pattern, begun the year before as the Administration ceased human rights criticism of governments willing to join the anti-Iraq coalition, continued in the course of the Gulf war. As U.S. troops occupied a broad swath of southern Iraq and began unprecedented efforts to discover and destroy Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, the Bush Administration waffled on whether to ground the Iraqi helicopter gunships that were helping to butcher participants in the anti-Saddam uprising. Fear of Iranian influence in southern Iraq and of Kurdish unrest bordering Turkey led the Administration to countenance the massacre of the insurgents and their kin rather than risk a shift in power in Iraq.

Throughout the year, the Administration led the hard-liners at the United Nations in maintaining the tightest possible embargo on Iraq. Although in August the Security Council allowed Iraq to sell oil to generate the revenue needed to purchase food, it insisted on strict control of the revenue so that Saddam Hussein would not reap the political benefits of distributing food. When the Iraqi president balked, no oil sales proceeded. Since the Administration made clear that it would not lift the sanctions until Saddam was removed, the Iraqi people remained the innocent victims of a heartless strategy designed to encourage them to rise up out of sheer desperation against a leader who will stop at no atrocity to preserve his hold on power.

President Bush also trivialized the atrocities of the Iraqi regime by personalizing his dispute with Saddam. "We'd be perfectly willing to give the military another chance," he said in July of the security forces that are responsible for the summary murder of hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis, "provided Saddam Hussein was out of there." In his quest to remove Saddam — a potent symbol in U.S. domestic politics — President Bush seemed to countenance a simple substitution of dictators that would leave the Iraqi people saddled with a new Saddam.

In liberated Kuwait, the Administration was equally weak in preventing the sorts of abuses that it had cited as a prelude to going to war. The thousands of U.S. troops in the country played an active role in rebuilding Kuwait's ruined

infrastructure — even preparing a palace for the emir's return — but adopted a hands-off attitude when it came to preventing vengeful Kuwaiti forces from executing scores of perceived Iraqi sympathizers and torturing hundreds more.

Evidently worried that public criticism of the restored Kuwaiti government would tarnish the Desert Storm military victory, the Administration acted as the foremost apologist for the emirate, rebutting human rights criticisms and actively seeking to deflect attention from Kuwaiti abuses. There were no public calls to punish those responsible for murder and torture, to release or retry those convicted of "collaboration" after farcical trials, or to stop the summary deportation of refugees and stateless residents of Kuwait. Fear of antagonizing other U.S. allies in the region — notably Saudi Arabia — also prevented the Administration from lending firm support to calls by Kuwaiti pro-democracy forces for an end to restrictions on the freedoms of expression and association.

President Bush visited Turkey, an important ally in the Gulf war, in July, the first visit to the country by an American president in thirty years. Rather than publicly criticizing pervasive torture, bans on the press and independent associations, the arrest of journalists, and attacks on human rights monitors, President Bush called Turkey his "second home" and noted how much he valued Turkey's "commitment to democracy."

Fear of the political cost appeared to lie behind the Administration's flat unwillingness to engage in any critical examination of its own war record. The Pentagon's interim report on the war, released in July, was as much a whitewash as its television footage released during the war of bombs hitting Iraqi military targets with pinpoint precision. Neither reflected the deaths of some 2,500 to 3,000 civilians as a direct consequence of the bombing, roughly one-third of which were attributable to deliberate allied decisions that flouted the laws of war.

The submersion of human rights concerns continued as the Administration organized the Arab-Israeli peace talks. Promising to take part in the talks became a virtual shield against public criticism from the Administration for human rights violations. As he addressed the Madrid peace conference on November 1, Secretary Baker made not one reference to human rights.

One ostensible justification for the silence was fear of compromising the U.S. role as arbiter. But even-handed criticism of all regional violators would hardly have undermined U.S. neutrality. Israel did come in for occasional criticism of its settlement policy, but only because the policy was an "obstacle to peace," not because of the discriminatory treatment of Palestinian residents and confiscation of their land that the settlements represent, let alone for the illegality of the settlements under the Fourth Geneva Convention. The result was to encourage Israel to treat the settlements as a matter for negotiation rather than as a

violation of human rights that should be stopped unconditionally.

Other Devaluation of Human Rights

The Administration's devaluation of human rights was apparent elsewhere in the world as well. President Bush continued to insist on a policy of "constructive engagement" with China despite glaring and persistent evidence of its failure. In May, he labeled the argument that the United States should distance itself from China's abusive leadership as "self-righteousness draped in a false morality." "You do not reform the world by ignoring it," he proclaimed, as if no degree of killing or repression made a regime immune from the Kissingerian realpolitik of U.S. diplomats. Rather than even considering the use of trade sanctions, President Bush ensured the Chinese leaders understood that their friend in the White House would block any more severe sanction than a private finger-wagging for their continued imprisonment and mistreatment of democracy advocates.

Until the failed August coup in the Soviet Union, the Administration was preoccupied with the survival of the center to the point of disregarding the principle that any political arrangement should be based on respect for human rights. Long after Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev changed from a champion of openness to a proponent of centralized and if need be repressive control, the Bush Administration seemed exclusively concerned with his political survival. For example, the Administration refused to assess Gorbachev's role in the violence in January against peaceful independence advocates in Lithuania and Latvia — despite substantial evidence that it was centrally directed — and failed even to attend congressional hearings on the crackdown out of evident fear of undermining Gorbachev. The Administration's vacillation on human rights squandered the possibility of having some influence in this time of turmoil.

In Colombia and Peru, the Administration's eagerness to funnel military aid to the "war" on drugs led it to issue blatantly false certifications about human rights conditions. The denial that the army of either country was engaging in a consistent pattern of gross abuses flew in the face of extensive evidence, much of it recorded in the State Department's own annual report on human rights. In Colombia, this insensitivity to human rights worked at cross purposes with the increasing responsiveness to human rights concerns shown by that country's own civilian government. In Peru, the Administration's position threatened to make the United States a party to a counterinsurgency campaign carried out by means of dirty-war tactics.

Some Positive Steps

There were occasional positive steps that the Administration took to promote human rights.

- o With Honduras no longer serving as a staging point for the Nicaraguan *contras*, the new U.S. ambassador, Cresencio Arcos, is a leading proponent of accountability for army abuses. He called for a "transparent" investigation into a particularly brutal army rape and murder, and brought in the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation to help with forensic analysis.**
- o As Cold War competition waned in the neighboring Horn of Africa, U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Smith Hempstone received backing for his blunt and outspoken advocacy of multiparty democracy and strong opposition to the arrests and mistreatment used to preserve one-party rule.**
- o In Burma, the Administration maintained tight restrictions on high-level diplomatic contacts and refused to resume bilateral assistance. Secretary Baker also spoke out forcefully against Burmese abuses at an ASEAN meeting.**
- o In Suriname, following the military overthrow of an elected government in December 1990, the Administration continued in 1991 to issue high-level public calls for new elections, which were held in May 1991, and for an end to the military interference in civilian government that has been the rule in that country for a decade.**
- o In Bulgaria, despite warming relations, the Administration spoke out publicly against constitutional restrictions on ethnically and religiously based political parties.**

Welcome as these interventions were, they had in common the lack of substantial U.S. interests standing in the way of human rights advocacy. As a result, they regrettably did not mark a deviation in the Administration's policy of subordinating the promotion of human rights to a range of other concerns.

Haiti represented both the height and depth of the Administration's policy of promoting cost-free human rights. Even though the December 1990 elections had brought to power President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a man with ideological views

considerably to the left of the Administration, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Bernard Aronson and U.S. Ambassador Alvin Adams played a critical role in supporting the electoral results and blocking a coup attempt in January 1991. Ambassador Adams also helped to save President Aristide's life when a brutal military coup overthrew him in September. In the following month, the Bush Administration denounced the army's atrocities and joined the OAS in pressing for President Aristide's return.

Yet, once Haitians began fleeing the violence and turmoil in large numbers, the fear of a wave of Haitian refugees on U.S. soil led the Administration to begin sending the Haitians back, after cursory review of potential claims for asylum, to the ruthless regime controlling Port-au-Prince. When a U.S. court barred this violation of the international prohibition of *refoulement*, the Administration obtained a reversal on appeal by claiming that there was no right under U.S. law to challenge the Haitians' return. The view that any inadequacy in domestic law might vitiate a clear international prohibition strikes at the heart of the international law of human rights. It also reveals a cynical unwillingness to apply that law when it matters.

Equally troubling, the Administration's fear of jeopardizing its position in court and opening the door to a flood of refugees led it to stop criticizing ongoing military abuses in Haiti. Once the flow of refugees accelerated, the State Department began a series of tortured efforts to say that human rights conditions in Haiti were not so bad that the refugees could not be returned. Indicative was the State Department's formal opinion, issued on December 13 as soldiers continued to hunt down Aristide supporters, that "we have no reason to believe that mere identification of an individual as an Aristide supporter puts that individual at particular risk of mistreatment or abuse."

The Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs

The Administration's devaluation of human rights continued to be apparent in its misuse of the Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. Time and again, when the United States should have outspokenly denounced gross abuses of human rights, it chose instead to dispatch Assistant Secretary of State Richard Schifter, either to defend the abusive government, or to conduct talks with it that turned out to be meaningless because the Administration was unwilling to follow them with either sanctions or public criticism.

- o In China, Schifter took the welcome step in June of submitting a list of prisoners held for peaceful political expression and beliefs. But the Administration then capitulated to Chinese blackmail — the threat of breaking off the nonexistent "dialogue" on human rights — by remaining silent for six months about the meager results of the exercise. Meanwhile, the Administration pressed to continue Most Favored Nation trading status for China unhindered by human rights conditions.**
- o Secretary Schifter visited Mexico in January — his first official visit — as pressure grew to consider human rights as part of the North American Free Trade Agreement. However, he pronounced himself "very, very positive" about reforms under way without bothering to check his views with any nongovernmental human rights organization in the country.**
- o Secretary Schifter led several delegations to Peru as part of an Administration effort to persuade the U.S. Congress to permit counternarcotics assistance to the highly abusive military. Testifying before Congress in September, he scoffed at a legislative restriction on U.S. aid to abusive militaries as a mere "legalism," dismissed the army's violence as having produced "only a few hundred" political killings, and argued that Peru was deserving of aid because it was not as bad as Argentina and Chile in the 1970s or El Salvador in the early 1980s.**
- o At a time when Indonesian security forces had been responsible for more than a thousand executions and disappearances in Aceh, Secretary Schifter wrote to Congress stating that there was nothing to suggest that human rights violations there were occurring on a "massive" scale.**
- o Testifying before Congress about a law in India that suspends constitutional safeguards against arbitrary arrest and torture, Secretary Schifter announced that the Indian government "respects individual rights and is not going to misuse a law deliberately" — despite several thousand detentions under the law following the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. When questioned about extrajudicial killings in Punjab, Secretary Schifter said that investigations took place "in private for [the] morale...of the security forces" and that the Administration had been told that those responsible for abuses had been punished. In fact, no police officer or other security personnel had been prosecuted for such killings at the time.**

- o Secretary Schifter also lobbied the American Red Cross against adopting a resolution endorsing U.S. ratification of the 1977 Additional Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. The standards of international customary law that are codified in the First Additional Protocol should have governed U.S. conduct in the Persian Gulf conflict. While U.S. forces generally complied with these standards, they deviated in several important respects. U.S. ratification would be an important statement of willingness to abide by these standards in the future.

We recognize that in assessing the work of the Human Rights Bureau, we generally are not in a position to be aware of its private efforts, particularly within the State Department as an advocate for human rights. To cite two instances that have come to our attention through our contacts with the Bureau, we know that Bureau personnel played a key role in pressing the State Department to address the human rights disaster engulfing Somalia at the end of 1991, and that the Bureau was also highly supportive of efforts to collect documentation of past Iraqi abuses that became available in northern Iraq.

Praise is also in order for the Bureau's role in supervising and publishing the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*. The volume has continued its trend toward greater accuracy and comprehensiveness, with a diminishing number of political distortions. The mere compilation of the *Country Reports* is an important statement of U.S. concern over human rights, and a major resource on human rights issues.

Unfortunately, the *Country Reports* are also a good indication of the low regard in which the State Department holds the Bureau and the cause of human rights that it represents. With respect to too many countries, the *Country Reports* have become an isolated annual exercise. Few of their findings are ever repeated publicly by a U.S. official, let alone incorporated into U.S. policy.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

The Bush Administration in the fall of 1991 endorsed ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which had been signed by the Carter Administration in 1977. Unfortunately, this positive step was marred by the Bush Administration's submission to the Senate of a series of reservations, declarations and understandings designed to dilute the domestic impact of the Covenant. One reservation was aimed, appropriately, at protecting the greater free-expression safeguards offered by the First Amendment to the U.S.

Constitution. However, several of the Administration's caveats sought to negate the Covenant's safeguards when they are stronger than those provided by U.S. law. One was in the controversial area of the death penalty, where the United States remains out of step with international trends against capital punishment. Another was an effort to preempt any argument that the federal government should play a more active role than it traditionally has in protecting individual rights from abuse by state governments — a stand with dangerous implications for efforts to enforce human rights in countries around the world with federal systems of government.

This effort to pick and choose among the Covenant's provisions reflects a disappointing distrust of international human rights standards. Efforts to promote compliance with these standards abroad will inevitably be weakened by a refusal to acknowledge their applicability at home.

The Work of Human Rights Watch

This report reviews fifty-seven of the countries in which the five regional divisions of Human Rights Watch were most active in 1991. Each chapter is divided into four parts: a portrayal of human rights conditions in the country in question; a discussion of the degree to which the right to monitor human rights is respected in that country; an analysis of the role played by the United States, and occasionally other governments and international institutions, in promoting human rights in the country; and a description of the steps taken by Human Rights Watch to promote human rights in the country.

The report reflects the year-long research efforts by the Human Rights Watch staff to collect information on human rights conditions. Whenever possible, this research includes periodic visits to the country in question to interview victims and witnesses of abuse as well as to discuss human rights conditions with government officials. In a few cases, we maintain our own staff in countries of concern to gather information day-in, day-out. The report also reflects regular contacts with human rights monitors within the countries in question — that is, groups that have established themselves as human rights organizations as well as lawyers, journalists, relief workers, clergy, scholars, diplomats and others who make a point of collecting pertinent information.

Most of the chapters that appear in this volume are summaries of other reports and newsletters issued during the year. Because this report was prepared in late November and early December 1991, events that occurred in the last weeks of 1991 may not be reflected.

The information that appears in this report also has served as the basis of our advocacy efforts throughout the year. We seek to curb human rights violations in two principal ways. First, we try to stigmatize abusive governments by publicizing their conduct, so governments realize that they will have to call a halt to human rights violations if they wish to regain their international reputation. Second, we seek to encourage third-party governments — particularly the United States but increasingly other governments as well — to end military, economic and diplomatic support for governments that commit gross abuses. Each technique has proved highly effective in pressing governments to be more respectful of human rights.

Although the human rights situation varies greatly from country to country, and the efforts pursued by Human Rights Watch are adapted accordingly, certain aspects of our work have assumed a special prominence worldwide. The human rights community and others concerned with human rights have come to look to Human Rights Watch to play a leading role in these areas. Among those that again

figured prominently in our work in 1991 were the following:

Monitoring Violations of the Laws of War

Over the past decade, Human Rights Watch has increasingly devoted itself to monitoring the conduct of the parties to armed conflicts in an effort to promote compliance with international humanitarian law, or the laws of war. Human Rights Watch's focus on war monitoring derives from its belief that by far the largest number of victims of severe violations of human rights worldwide are the noncombatants who are killed, injured, deprived of food and other necessities, or forced to flee from their homes because of the manner in which opposing forces seek to prevail militarily. In addition, this focus reflects the fact that such war-related abuses of human rights were largely neglected by the worldwide human rights movement before Human Rights Watch determined to assume this role. International humanitarian law was hardly ever mentioned in the reports of human rights organizations until Human Rights Watch began doing so in 1982.¹

In previous years, most of Human Rights Watch's monitoring of armed conflict focused on internal wars. The same was true in 1991 but, in addition, the organization systematically monitored violations of international humanitarian law in the Gulf war and published several reports dealing with human rights abuses related to that war, including a lengthy report on the air war, *Needless Deaths in the Gulf War*. Although that report was highly critical of some aspects of the bombing by the allied forces, it also acknowledged that considerable care was taken by those forces to avoid direct civilian casualties. In a sense, the care that was taken is a tribute to heightened sensitivity to the requirements of international humanitarian law to which Human Rights Watch contributed by the war monitoring in which it engaged in previous years.

The internal wars with which Human Rights Watch was particularly concerned in 1991 included half a dozen wars in Africa (Angola, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique, Somalia and Sudan); two wars in India (Kashmir and Punjab); two in Indonesia (Aceh and East Timor); five in other countries of Asia (Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, Philippines and Sri Lanka); the wars against the Kurds and the

¹ The International Committee of the Red Cross, the principal organization that provides humanitarian services to victims of armed conflicts worldwide, does not regard itself as a human rights organization and, for the most part, avoids public denunciations of human rights violations.

Shi'as in Iraq; the war in the Kurdish area of Turkey; the war in Yugoslavia; and the wars in three Latin American countries, Colombia, El Salvador and Peru. In addition, Human Rights Watch monitored internal armed strife of varying degrees of intensity in Guatemala, the Israeli-Occupied Territories, Nicaragua, Northern Ireland, Rwanda, South Africa, and in several of the republics of the former Soviet Union, particularly Georgia.

In a few cases, considerable headway was made during 1991 in ending such conflicts. Nevertheless, it seemed important for Human Rights Watch to maintain its monitoring. Two examples are: our publication of *Evil Days — 30 Years of War and Famine in Ethiopia* documenting, among other things, the manner in which the famines that killed hundreds of thousands in Ethiopia were less attributable to natural disasters such as drought than to the direct consequences of human rights abuses related to the counterinsurgency strategy of the regime of President Mengistu Haile Mariam; and *Land Mines in Cambodia* documenting the placement of land mines by all parties to the conflict, the responsibility of their international patrons, the toll that such mines continue to take on Cambodian civilians and the urgency of undertaking a mine clearance program, especially during a period when refugees are attempting to resettle Cambodia.

Modifying the practices of combatants in war time is a difficult task. Yet it has been the experience of Human Rights Watch that most combatants (with a few notable exceptions, such as the *Sendero Luminoso*, or Shining Path, guerrillas in Peru and the competing factions that were devastating Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, at the end of 1991) are dependent on international support and sensitive to international public opinion. In many circumstances, the reports of Human Rights Watch have seemed to cause changes in practices that have benefited noncombatants. Also, when peace accords have been negotiated in recent years, detailed agreements to respect human rights, at times with compliance procedures spelled out, have sometimes been incorporated, reflecting the influence of human rights monitoring.

Abuses of Human Rights in Ethnic Strife

In recent years, there has appeared to be a worldwide explosion of ethnic strife, and some of the wars that Human Rights Watch monitors are extreme manifestations of that strife. Human Rights Watch also focuses on such abuses in circumstances short of armed conflict in many countries, whether it involves pogroms against the Gypsy minority in Romania, or systematic discrimination and harassment of the Turkish minority in Greece or the Somali minority in Kenya, or the expulsion of the Palestinians from Kuwait, or Chinese government abuses in Tibet, or restrictions on the right to citizenship for those not of Latvian stock in Latvia.

Unfortunately, it appears that this is an area in which Human Rights Watch will have to concentrate even more in the years ahead. Now that the Cold War is over, the world seems to have entered a period of ethnic-linguistic nationalism as intense as in the period following World War I. Indeed, if anything, the situation seems more dangerous today because, at that time, such nationalism seemed primarily a European phenomenon; today, it appears to affect much of the world. Also, the worldwide proliferation of lethal armaments greatly exacerbates the dangers. Protecting the rights of minorities in such a climate is a formidable task.

Accountability for Past Abuses

In previous years, Human Rights Watch's main focus in this area has been on attempting to see to it that the power that remains in the hands of those who committed gross abuses of human rights in the past does not continue to insulate them from accountability even after successor governments attain office. In several Latin American countries, for example, elected civilian governments have been unwilling to take on the military officials responsible for systematic murder, disappearances and torture for fear that the armed forces would not tolerate even disclosure and acknowledgment of their abuses, much less prosecution and punishment.

In such countries as Argentina, Chile, El Salvador and Guatemala, Human Rights Watch continued to be concerned with those issues in 1991. Elsewhere, however, it was necessary for Human Rights Watch to stress a related concern: that those accused of past abuses must themselves be accorded fair treatment. Increasingly, the former Communist nations of Eastern Europe are adopting laws that are designed to punish collectively, without due process, those who were associated with the previous governments of their countries. An example is the

"lustration" law adopted in Czechoslovakia which bars many Communists and those identified in the files of the secret police as its collaborators from many public and private offices. It seems possible that some of the republics that formerly constituted the Soviet Union will follow a similar path, and that Human Rights Watch's concerns with due process as part of its policy on accountability for past abuses will be particularly significant in the period ahead.

Yet another aspect of Human Rights Watch's concern in this area is raised by the case of Iraq. Human Rights Watch is in the process of gathering evidence demonstrating that the abuses by Saddam Hussein's regime against its Kurdish minority in 1987-88 were even greater than had been previously known. Efforts to document the extent of those abuses were being pursued intensively at year's end and, during 1992, Human Rights Watch expects to disclose the results of its research and to seek some means of holding the Iraqi government accountable.

Shaping United States Foreign Policy

From its founding, a principal aim of Human Rights Watch has been to influence United States foreign policy to protect human rights. The concern of Human Rights Watch in this area is two-fold: first, the United States remains the most powerful force in world affairs and it has great power to affect human rights practices in other countries. Second, as a U.S.-based organization, Human Rights Watch considers that it has a responsibility to affect the practices of its own government. Increasingly, it also does the latter by monitoring abuses of human rights within the United States. Yet this is a role that is played by many domestic civil liberties and civil rights groups, whereas no other organization plays a comparable role in attempting to influence U.S. foreign policy on human rights matters.

During most of the 1980s, two regions of the world dominated U.S. foreign policy on human rights: the Soviet bloc and Central America. In both cases, this reflected Cold War concerns. With the end of the Cold War, neither region has such significance in the shaping of the U.S. government's policies on human rights worldwide. Instead, the debate was most intense during 1991 on China and, secondarily, on human rights in the countries involved in the Gulf war such as Iraq and Kuwait.

As was the case when the focus of debates over U.S. foreign policy was elsewhere, Human Rights Watch played a central role in the shaping of U.S. foreign policy in 1991. Asia Watch was at the forefront of the debate over China, continually bringing to light information that embarrassed the Administration

over its failure to take a stronger stand against Chinese abuses. Similarly, Middle East Watch played the leading role in dealing with such questions as Kuwaiti abuses against suspected collaborators with the Iraqis in the period following liberation, and in challenging the Bush Administration's failure to oppose such abuses.

Debating with the Administration over its policy with respect to such countries has also produced indirect benefits for the human rights cause. It puts the spotlight on the abuses that are the subject of the debate, damaging the reputation of the country committing the abuses and, thereby, at times prompting it to try to improve its reputation by reducing abuses. Also, it raises the profile of the human rights issue itself, which sometimes helps to make the Administration pay more attention to human rights in other parts of the world where it may have fewer competing concerns. In the Reagan years, for example, the debate over Central America prompted that Administration to espouse democracy as the solution to violent abuses of human rights. Eventually, that led to U.S. support for the democratic forces in Chile seeking to end the Pinochet dictatorship and to U.S. abandonment of its support for Marcos in the Philippines.

In the case of the Bush Administration, the most discernible benefit of the debates has been the impact on the countries that are in question. China has had to release some prisoners and provide opportunities to travel to some dissenters. Kuwait was required to curb some of the most extreme abuses that followed liberation.

In attempting to shape U.S. foreign policy, Human Rights Watch testified at nineteen congressional hearings during 1991; and maintained regular contact with many members of Congress and their staffs, various offices of the State Department, U.S. embassies in many countries, and occasional contact with several other agencies of government. The majority of the publications issued by Human Rights Watch during the year contained sections assessing U.S. policy toward the country in question.

Protecting Human Rights Monitors

Human Rights Watch considers that one of its principal responsibilities is to support and protect those who monitor and defend human rights in their own countries. Worldwide, the number of persons who devote themselves to monitoring and defending human rights has been growing rapidly. Many who take on this task do so at great risk and, in a distressing number of cases, suffer severe penalties, including death.

Human Rights Watch's efforts include missions and reports that focus on attacks on human rights monitors; continuing work with the group established at the initiative of the Washington office of Human Rights Watch, the Congressional Friends of Human Rights Watch; and assistance in training and fund-raising for groups monitoring human rights in their own countries. To help draw attention to human rights monitors, Human Rights Watch annually brings a group of monitors to the United States in December for a series of events in New York and Washington, including an annual dinner at which they are honored. In 1991, sixteen monitors from fifteen countries were invited to the United States for those events (fourteen came; one was not permitted to travel by her government; the other is a "disappeared" monitor who was "invited" to call attention to the risks of monitoring).

Monitoring Human Rights Abuses That Are Not Politically Motivated

Prior to the establishment of Human Rights Watch, most efforts to protect human rights internationally were exclusively concerned with politically motivated abuses. An exception was the work of Amnesty International on capital punishment which the organization opposes regardless of the identity of the victim.

Although political motivations — broadly defined — are involved in most of the abuses with which Human Rights Watch is concerned, the organization also has attempted to address abuses that derive from other motives. Human Rights Watch's work on ethnic strife could be defined as nonpolitical. Other areas in which Human Rights Watch has been particularly concerned with abuses that are not politically motivated include:

- o prison conditions:** as described elsewhere in this report, the Prison Project of Human Rights Watch has been engaged for the past few years in a systematic effort to monitor prison conditions as they affect those charged with common crimes as well as those suspected of politically motivated offenses. Several investigations were conducted and several reports were published on prison conditions in various countries during 1991.
- o women's rights:** also as described elsewhere, Human Rights Watch established a Women's Rights Project in 1990 which focused particularly during 1991 on violence against women in circumstances in which the state does not offer protection by attempting to prosecute and punish those

responsible. One of the aims of the project is to integrate a concern with women's rights into efforts to promote human rights worldwide.

- o police abuses:** Human Rights Watch has conducted a number of investigations and published a number of reports in previous years focusing on violent police abuses — such as summary executions and torture — against those suspected of common crime. In 1991, Argentina and the United States were the focus of such efforts by Human Rights Watch.
- o freedom of expression:** Human Rights Watch attempts to protect freedom of expression not only when individuals or groups criticize or challenge their governments or government leaders, but also when the dissemination of information and ideas on any issue is suppressed. Among the issues with which Human Rights Watch has been concerned are the dissemination of information on AIDS, which some governments have limited for fear of the stigma that attaches to the disease; information on damage to the environment; information on corruption; information on the transfer and production of weapons; and academic freedom. Within Human Rights Watch, the Fund for Free Expression spearheads work on these issues.

In many of the countries in which Human Rights Watch worked during 1991, such traditional issues as political imprisonment and torture continued to be the main focus of its work. It is important to note, however, that some governments have become more sophisticated in their abuses. Wary of the international opprobrium that attends the holding of political prisoners, they have shifted toward abuses that are either more violent or more subtle — or sometimes both simultaneously. For example, except in Cuba, there are hardly any prisoners anywhere in Latin America held for nonviolent political dissent. That hardly suggests, however, that the region has become a human rights paradise. In some countries, abuses involve violent acts that may be difficult to attribute definitively to governments, such as suspicious killings by unidentified persons or disappearances; or methods that are more difficult for purposes of enlisting international protest, such as compromising the independence of the judiciary, threatening lawyers or closing or corrupting the electoral process.

In the experience of Human Rights Watch, effective efforts to protect human rights require flexibility in mounting a response and a willingness to tailor efforts to the circumstances of a country or a region. In the 1980s, Helsinki Watch focused particularly on efforts to protect the emergence of civil society in Eastern Europe. Similarly, in the 1990s, protecting civil society — that is, the independence

of lawyers, academics, writers and other professionals — is at the heart of the work of Africa Watch in many countries of the continent where authoritarian states have controlled all the institutions of the society.

As this brief overview suggests, the number of issues with which Human Rights Watch could and should be concerned is nearly endless. The organization's resources are no match for its mission. Yet some significant efforts were undertaken in 1991 and they are discussed briefly at the conclusion of each of the country reports in the pages that follow.

Human Rights Monitors Killed During 1991

As noted, each of the following chapters contains a discussion of the extent to which the government in question respects the right to monitor its human rights practices. In many nations, human rights monitors pursue their work at tremendous risk to their lives. The following monitors were killed in the course of 1991.

COLOMBIA

Alicides Castrillon, a member of the National Coordinator of Human Rights, Displaced and Refugees of the Dirty War, was murdered on February 25 in Bogota. He was approached by armed men who followed him to his home where they shot and killed him. Originally from Meta, Castrillon moved with his family to Bogota following telephone death threats. In early February, he participated in a meeting with the attorney general, where he denounced human rights abuses committed by the military against civilians in its war against insurgents in the department of Meta.

José Humberto Hernandez Gabanzo, a member of the Regional Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Barrancabermeja, Santander, was murdered by unknown assailants in the streets of that city on March 19. Hernandez, 56, was active in the trade-union and peasant movements. Most recently, he had been a full-time volunteer in the Regional Committee for the Defense of Human Rights, working closely with its president, attorney Jorge Gomez Lizarazo. Members of that organization have been repeatedly threatened because of their work documenting abuses by the army, police and paramilitary organizations in the Middle Magdalena area.

CUBA²

Angel Galvan Vanegas, was shot and killed by a Cuban policeman on September 28, 1990. Several police, acting on orders to "clean up the neighborhood," attempted to arrest four young men, one of whom was Galvan's son. When Galvan tried to find out why his son was being arrested, he became involved in a shoving match with the officer, who took out his gun and shot Galvan in the chest. Galvan had been involved with two independent groups, the Cuban Human Rights Party and the *Lancheros* Council, an independent group that campaigns on behalf of those who are imprisoned for attempting to leave the country without permission. Galvan's killing coincided with Fidel Castro's denunciation of human rights activists as "worms" who should be fought, and with the anniversary of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, Cuba's grassroots surveillance network.

GUATEMALA

Juan Perebal Xirúm, a member of the Council of Ethnic Communities "We Are All Equal" (CERJ) from Chunima, was shot dead by six gunmen as he walked with two sons toward Chupol on February 17. One of his sons also died in the attack; the other was left paralyzed. Members of his family had been threatened repeatedly by the local civil patrol chiefs. **Diego Perebal León**, the son who survived, identified two of the gunmen as the local civil patrol chiefs.

Manuel Perebal Morales, a CERJ member from Chunima, was shot dead in the same incident described above.

Camillo Alquí Jimón, a CERJ member from Potrero Viejo, in the municipality of Zacualpa, El Quiché, was stabbed to death by three unidentified men who dragged him from his house on April 14. Civil patrol chiefs and military commissioners in Potrero Viejo have repeatedly threatened to kill CERJ members in the community.

Celestino Julaj Vicente, a twenty-nine-year-old CERJ delegate from Chuitzalic, in the municipality of San Pedro Jocopilas, El Quiché, was shot dead by a gunman dressed in olive green as he walked home from a festival in San Pedro Jocopilas on June 28. About six weeks before the murder, the civil patrol chiefs of San Pedro

² This killing from 1990 is recorded here because it was not included in our report of last year.

Jocopilas had reportedly vowed in a meeting to kill any CERJ members who attended the June 28 festival.

INDIA

Shankar Guha-Niyogi, 48, was murdered on September 28 when two men broke into his house in the early morning hours and shot him six times while he was sleeping. Guha-Niyogi was a long-time member of the National Council of the Peoples Union for Civil Liberties, one of India's foremost human rights organizations. At the time of his death, he was involved in organizing efforts at three industrial plants. It is suspected that the killers were hit men hired by industrialists in an effort to stop those activities.

Narra Prabmakara Reddy, 35, was shot to death by unidentified men who entered his home in the early morning hours on December 7. Prabmakara Reddy was a member of the Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee (APCLC) and the secretary of the District Bar Association. He was the third member of APCLC to have been assassinated since September 1985.

PERU

Porfirio Suni Quispe, a prominent leader of the Departmental Federation of Campesinos of Puno, as well as regional parliamentarian and president of the regional congress's human rights commission, was dragged from his home on May 13 in the early morning by two men in civilian clothes. His attackers, members of the insurgent group *Sendero Luminoso*, shot Suni three times, then once more as a *coup de grace*.

TURKEY

Vedat Aydın, 39, a founding member of the Diyarbakir branch of the Turkish Human Rights Association, was taken from his home on July 5 by several armed men who identified themselves as police officers. The authorities later denied that he was in custody. His body was found on July 8, about sixty kilometers from Diyarbakir; his skull was fractured, both legs were broken, and there were fifteen or sixteen bullet wounds to his body.