
Supranationalism

U.N. 'human rights' conference set to trample on sovereignty

by an EIR Investigative Team

The United Nations World Conference on Human Rights, which will take place in Vienna, Austria on June 14-25, is designed to engrave in stone major supranational reforms in the world judicial system around the issue of "human rights." The aim, however, is not to help nations protect their own citizens' rights, but rather to destroy the sovereign nation-state itself, the only institution that can in fact ensure that any individual rights are secured and protected. Some 8,000 delegates are expected to attend the Vienna conference, including governmental officials and a myriad of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from around the world.

Until late April, it was expected that most heads of state would also be in attendance, but as the final "prepcom" meeting in Geneva continues to drag on, even though it is clearly deadlocked on details, European and U.S. officials are now speaking of "downgrading" their diplomatic missions.

But heads of state or no, the actions coming from the conference are a grave threat to the principle of national sovereignty. The goals of the overall endeavor are:

- Create a legal, juridical, supranational framework in which a "human rights high commissioner" is established—like the high commissioner on refugees already in place—who would be empowered to enforce human rights conditionalities internationally. As the pro-terrorist "human rights" group Amnesty International explains in motivating this post: "As long as a substantial number of individual governments, each with their own specific bilateral and multilateral concerns, have to reach a common agreement on an appropriate response in a particular situation, it is inevitable that human rights situations will be addressed selectively." With a commissioner in place, however, such decisionmaking by sovereign countries can be neatly circumvented.

- Establish an international criminal court with the power to try and convict individuals. This would in effect give the United Nations the same power to kidnap anyone anywhere in the world, that has already been arrogantly adopted by the U.S. Justice Department under the rubric of the "Thornburgh Doctrine."

- Implement "structures for the preventive handling of human rights violations internationally." Here, the discus-

sion is not just around individual human rights—such as the "right" of narco-terrorists to wage bloody irregular warfare against nations in Ibero-America—but also "collective human rights." Thus, a human rights high commissioner could move against any government with the excuse that it has shown an inclination to violate some indigenous group's collective human rights. In plain English, that means instituting an international "thought police" which prosecutes countries for merely "thinking" about committing an alleged crime.

Blueprint for one-world dictatorship

What is being proposed for Vienna is just one part of an overall thrust toward a U.N. global dictatorship. If successful, it would eliminate the nation-state, and would destroy the basis for a community of principle among nations which could maintain world peace. Indeed, the U.N. bureaucracy is harboring fantasies that it can function as the British Foreign Office did during the 19th century, policing the world to root out potential foes.

Who are the architects of this madness? As the Geneva "prepcom" meeting became deadlocked, on April 27 former U.S. President and long-time member of the New York Council on Foreign Relations Jimmy Carter issued a call at the United Nations for a special commissioner for human rights within the U.N. structure. He told the press that he and other "activists" had agreed upon this proposal at a January meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. The "Atlanta statement" says that this special commissioner should be "empowered to act promptly to prevent and check human rights violations."

Addressing concerns of developing sector countries, Carter went on to "confess when I was in the White House I did not give adequate attention to the economic deprivation causing abuses of human rights, even in my own country." He neglected to add that the various human rights institutes connected to the Carter Center of Emory University which Carter now runs—such as the African Governance Program—pay no attention to the economic deprivation "causing abuses of human rights" either, but instead function as battering rams against the handful of governments in Africa that are still standing.

Among the large foundation funders of the Carter Center are the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, and the Prudential Foundation.

A spokesman for the Carter Center acknowledged that the former President was devoting much time organizing for this human rights commissioner initiative, but that the initiative had not been Carter's; it was all Amnesty International's idea.

Watch out for Amnesty International

Amnesty International is a front for British intelligence. In an interview made available to *EIR*, Amnesty's New York press spokesman Roger Rathman confirmed the Carter spokesman's contention that indeed the initiative had come from Amnesty. "It was our initial proposal . . . but Carter has been very effective in going around and pushing this idea. I think that if Clinton ends up supporting it, it will have had a lot to do with him listening to Jimmy Carter. Carter will be a *major player* from this country at this World Conference in Vienna."

Ample press play has been given to the fact that the wide assortment of NGOs with consultative status in the U.N. has reached a consensus on a common position for Vienna. In another interview made available to *EIR*, Carol Prendergras from Amnesty's Washington, D.C. office explained: "The non-governmental organizations have formed a coalition, which just sort of happened; it started in our office back in September. The group now has been meeting every couple of weeks. And it's everything from refugee groups, to development groups, indigenous groups, human rights groups. . . . We held a satellite meeting in which we met and put together a document. When I say a satellite meeting, this means it's an official meeting of the World Conference, even though it happened here in Washington; and we've submitted an important document giving recommendations to the World Conference. Brad Wahlquist here in our office synthesized that document; it could have been like 18 volumes, with everybody's suggestions in it, but he synthesized it into a fairly readable document."

Amnesty is still smarting over former Thai Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman's public accusation at the Asian Regional Meeting for the World Conference on Human Rights on March 30 that Amnesty and another NGO, Asia Watch, "are fronts for the CIA and are biased against Thailand." Thanat had gone on to say that he had "been watching these two organizations for a long time."

In discussing the Thailand incident, Amnesty press spokesman Rathman laughed almost hysterically: "I don't know how somebody can get any further out than that; we didn't respond directly to that Thai official; we wouldn't address anything at that low of level. . . . This statement is so ridiculous because you couldn't find an organization that is more non-political and non-partisan than Amnesty!"

Non-political? Non-partisan? Although Amnesty International is much more tied to London, the U.S.-based foundations that give large contributions to Amnesty are the J. Roderick MacArthur Foundation, and the separate John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Asia Watch is part of Human Rights Watch, which also includes Africa Watch, Americas Watch, Helsinki Watch, Middle East Watch, and the Fund for Free Expression, which is evidently the funding arm for the nexus. This apparatus, which is extremely active internationally, is coordinating tightly with Amnesty for the Vienna meeting. In Ibero-America, Americas Watch has dedicated its energies in the last year to stopping the Peruvian government's war against the narco-terrorist Shining Path organization, targeting the military as the problem, not the terrorists, as the real threat to human rights in Peru (see article, p. 51). In response, there is draft legislation before the Peruvian Congress demanding financial transparency of non-governmental organizations.

Who funds Human Rights Watch?

Some of the Human Rights Watch leadership also hold membership in the New York Council on Foreign Relations. The CFR was set up as the U.S. counterpart to Britain's Royal Institute of International Affairs. The Watches, in the form of the Fund for Free Expression and Helsinki Watch, were founded in 1975 by CFR member Robert Bernstein. Peter Bell, the present head of Americas Watch, is also a member of the CFR. The largest foundation funder of the Watches is the Ford Foundation, followed by the J.M. Kaplan Fund from New York (which congressional testimony on Aug. 31, 1964 described as a conduit for "left CIA" funds). Other large funders are the J. Roderick MacArthur Foundation, the New York-based Aaron Diamond Foundation, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Alex de Waal, formerly with Africa Watch, doesn't believe that the Watches are CIA; but he told a reporter that he does believe that the organization represents "the establishment." De Waal resigned in protest when Rakiyo Omaar, who had been the regional director of Africa Watch, was fired for criticizing U.S. policy on Somalia. "The peer group of the organization is the American policy making establishment, the liberal policymaking establishment. And the ordinary people in Africa don't matter to this organization at all."

De Waal said he was also "disturbed" about the fact that "just over a year ago, Middle East Watch essentially worked a deal with the Pentagon to help fly out archives from Iraq-Kurdistan that the Peshmarq guerrillas [Iraqi Kurds] had captured from the formerly government towns. These were archives of atrocities that were very valuable." He added that he opposed this when it happened, but that nobody had an explanation.

The link between the U.S. State Department, major NGOs, the CFR, and the foundations is no doubt strength-

ened by the fact that the personnel often move back and forth. Aryeh Neier, until recently the executive director of the Watchers, and an individual who some sources believe is a Mossad agent, will be leaving soon to head a foundation. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was the chairman of the board of Carnegie Corporation. Columnist for the *New York Times* Leslie Gelb, who was assistant secretary of state for politico-military affairs in the Carter administration, has just been named president of the CFR; he succeeds Peter Tarnoff, who has just joined the Clinton administration as undersecretary of state for political affairs. Michael Clough, who was the adviser on Africa for the Clinton presidential campaign, is a member of the Africa Watch Committee; he has also been senior fellow for Africa at the Council on Foreign Relations since 1987. Clough's book, *U.S. Policy Toward Africa and the End of the Cold War*, proposes as U.S. policy that "In all countries where basic civil rights are not guaranteed, all official U.S. assistance must be channeled through independent non-governmental organizations."

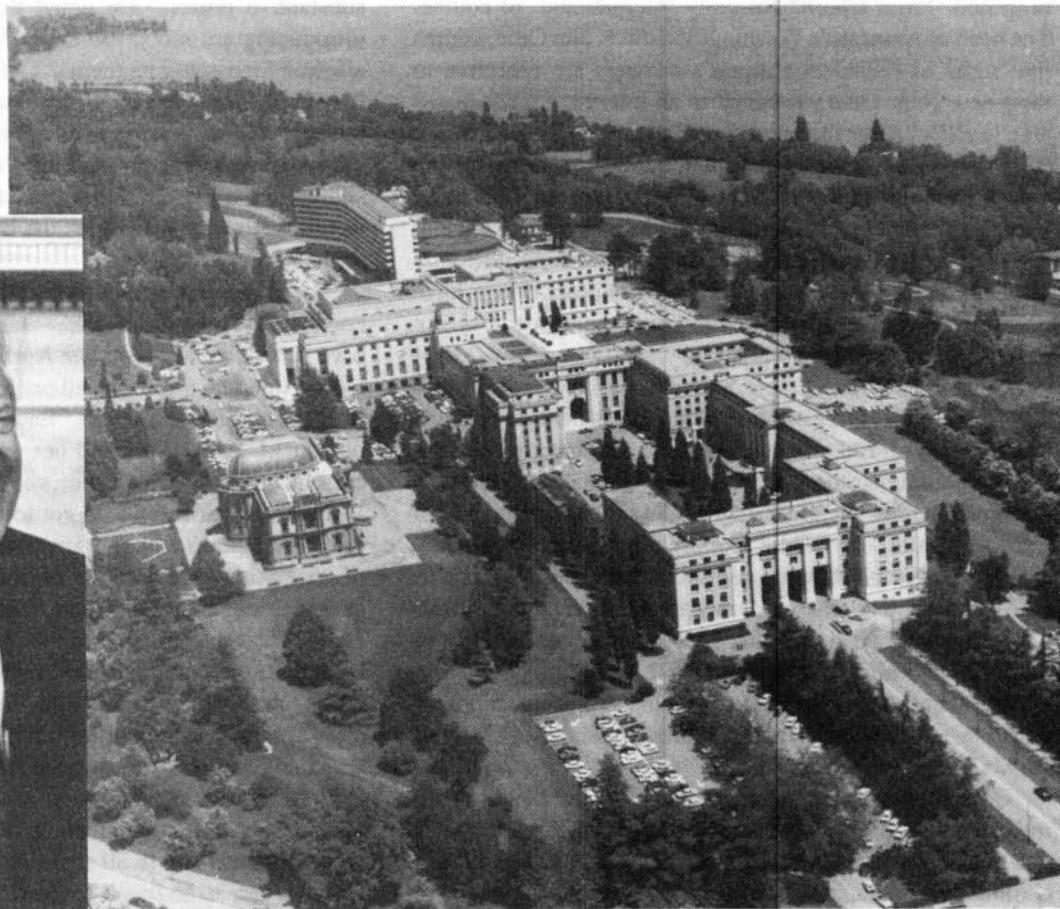
U.S. State Department officials and NGOs are quite cozy with each other at times. This was observed during the process leading up to the June 1992 U.N. Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)—the so-called Rio summit—when members of the Bush administration, behind

the scenes, worked quite closely with the U.S. Citizens Network, the chief non-governmental organization U.S. network involved in building for the Rio summit. At one organizing meeting prior to Rio that was held in Miami in late October 1991, an *EIR* reporter was taken aback by the interaction between Ambassador Ryan, the State Department official most closely involved with UNCED, and leading members of the U.S. Citizens Network in one private meeting. Ryan was basically plotting with the U.S. NGOs on how to use the U.S. NGOs' international network to manipulate NGOs in Third World countries to go along with the program—in essence, to deploy them as vehicles of Anglo-American policy.

The foundations

What are the mega-foundations that provide the bread and butter to what has become popularly referred to as "the human rights mafia"? According to one U.S.-based academic, "The Ford Foundation was taken over early in the game by the CFR, by the principal constituents of the CFR; and Henry Ford II, of course, before he died, complained that the Ford Foundation didn't represent his views. Rockefeller Foundation, of course, has real family involvement." The academic source recounts that the CFR came out of talks held

The United Nations headquarters in Geneva, where former President Jimmy Carter (inset) issued a call April 27 for a world human rights czar.



with the British roundtable group in Paris in 1919, “when they were talking about the terms of the Versailles Treaty. . . . From 1921 on, the council has represented the unified foreign policy thinking of the Morgans, the Rockefellers—the ones that have very *heavy* overseas connections; the Boston group, for example, is part of this.”

This source is of the opinion that very little has changed since then, that it is this CFR nexus point that “makes fools out of Presidents,” and that this at least partially accounts for “the reversals you find. . . . The reversals come when you get to the seat of power and you find that there are powers above that essentially dictate policy.”

How to con a government

In spite of the weight of the power base that is clearly behind what the U.N. apparatus and the NGOs are seeking to achieve at the World Human Rights Conference, the very real problem remains: How can these policies be sold to governments who are themselves the targets of the whole “human rights” operation? Many nations of the South have become acutely aware that this “human rights” phenomenon is the propaganda cover for the process of organizing, and in some cases creating, an opposition movement to overthrow whatever government is then in power.

But lo and behold, a possible point of mediation has been proposed. From whom? Amnesty International, of course. The head of Amnesty’s Washington Office, Jim Odie, claims that some of President Clinton’s advisers are receptive to their new plan. Odie explained in an interview made available to *EIR*: “After the universal declaration of rights, when they were thinking of an international bill of rights for the world, there was going to be one bill of rights; but it fractured into two parts: the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This conference—even though, as you know, things have been going very badly—provides an opportunity to *bring those together*” (emphasis added).

Odie insisted that “there are very positive indications” that the Clinton administration will shift its historic position away from a refusal to recognize these economic rights. “In the Bush administration, they were termed mere ‘aspirations of human beings,’ aspirations for food in their belly, aspirations for health, etc.” Odie proposed that a high-level U.S. official, preferably Clinton himself, attend this World Human Rights Conference and say to the developing world: “We hear you; we accept that economic rights, the right to food and clothing and housing and education, are basic rights,” that the U.S. would go with the express intention of ratifying the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Odie surmised that the governments of the South would respond to such a gesture by saying: “Well it does appear that the U.S. is offering something here; indeed, the U.S. is coming with something to bridge the difference.”

The trade? Short and simple: Clinton gives lip service to economic rights, in exchange for developing countries signing in to the formalized abrogation of national sovereignty. Odie claims that the U.S. has already formally adopted Amnesty’s proposal for the establishment of a high commissioner for human rights; this was announced by Ambassador Blackwell in Geneva.

North-South brawl

If the developing world buys this “trade” at the upcoming conference, heaven help them. At the moment, however, the situation has turned into a very large brawl, as the U.N. apparatus and leading industrial countries attempt to shove the massive policy changes down the throats of developing sector governments. Many developing countries are unwilling to give up their national sovereignty and to hand over such massive powers to the superpowers of the United Nations Permanent Security Council. It is recognized—at least by some—that the U.N. represents the political enforcement for the permanent five members of the Security Council, all of which have military power.

“There are very serious differences between North and South,” Redzuan M. Kushairi, deputy permanent representative to Malaysia’s U.N. Mission, told *EIR*. “It is too late in the day” to possibly achieve consensus on these “very substantive issues.” He noted that the ideas the North is introducing are much too major for the time that had been allowed for discussing them. “The whole approach is wrong; it’s simply not working.” Redzuan said he sympathized with the host country Austria in its desire to have something come out of Vienna meeting, but he thinks that now everybody should just cut their losses, and that perhaps one way out would be to simply reaffirm the heretofore accepted human rights norms.

As of the first week in May, the fourth prepcom conference—the last before Vienna—remained deadlocked. It had been scheduled to end in late April. The countries of Africa, Ibero-America, and Asia had earlier held their own prepcoms in their respective regions. Each had produced their own document. All players had not met together at all until the current meeting, which was supposed to be the final one. But once North and South got together, the U.N. chairman proposed that instead of going through the unwieldy process of attempting to harmonize the final documents of the three geographical areas, and then reaching consensus with the North, the working paper drawn up by the U.N. Center for Human Rights should be used as the basis for the final declaration to carry into the mid-June meeting. The difference, of course, was that the U.N. draft puts great emphasis on the creation of supranational mechanisms. The South’s contention “that the right to development is also an inalienable human right,” and that no one model of development can be applied universally to all situations, countries, and peoples, was nowhere to be found in the U.N. draft.