

# Jimmy Carter, Human Rights and the Cold War

Written by Hanne van Brienen

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### **From an 'Absolute' Commitment to an Inconsistent Commitment: Jimmy Carter, Human Rights and the Cold War**

Despite running for election during the Cold War era Jimmy Carter's election campaign promised an idealised form of US foreign policy which would create a break from the hawkish norm of US foreign policy and focus on morals and human rights. Indeed, it seemed that Jimmy Carter would reduce the dominance of the US policy of Containment, a policy first used by President Truman which aimed to contain and eventually repel "Communist – particularly Soviet – aggression and expansion by strengthening US allies" (Dictionary of American Government, 2010). Jimmy Carter's ideals proved popular as many Americans had grown tired of Cold War politics and the dominance of aggressive foreign policy actions such as the Vietnam War, leading Dumbrell to state the run up to Carter's election was an "era of revolution" (1997, p.71). Indeed, Carter understood that the American public were angry and used this to his advantage by stating in 1976 during an election campaign debate "we've been hurt in recent years in this country. In the aftermath of Vietnam, Cambodia, Chile... we've been hurt. Our people feel that we've lost something precious." (Jimmy Carter, 1976).

The fact that Carter ran for election on the claim that he would dramatically alter US foreign policy to incorporate morals and human rights considerations seemed to suggest that Carter would be highly committed to Humanitarian Concerns. Indeed, this argument is only increased through Carter's Inaugural Address, and his statement that "our commitment to human rights must be absolute" (Jimmy Carter, 1977). Indeed, coupled with the promises of reducing arms sales in order to reflect "the real security needs of the American people" (Jimmy Carter, 1976), and ending foreign policy based on around unfavourable dictators and autocratic regimes who share an "inordinate fear of communism" (Jimmy Carter, 1977), it seemed as though the administration would take a hard stance against nations that abused human rights.

While Carter did create some policies that had human rights considerations at their core while also encouraging institutional change to include humanitarian concerns, Carter did not have an 'absolute' commitment to human rights. Indeed, Carter was unwilling to press strategically important allies to improve their human rights standards as this would risk relations with nations that were valuable to the geo-strategic politics of the Cold War. Furthermore, Carter continued policies such as arming Iran (McGlinchey, 2014) and seeking normalisation with China (Kaufman, 2008) despite the fact that these nations abused human rights, illustrating how Carter's commitment to human rights was inconsistent rather than 'absolute'. The policies of arming Iran and Normalising with China were originally were policies of the administrations of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, suggesting that the Carter's foreign policy stance was not radically different from his predecessors, despite claims that it would be. Indeed, the inconsistent application of Carter's human rights policies have led Chomsky to state that "difference between the Carter administration and the Reagan administrations was not enormous" (Rai, 1995, p.112). This is due to the fact that the Carter administration placed an increasingly large focus on the United States strategic position within the Cold War, which meant working with nations that were strategically important to containing the Soviet Union despite their human rights abuses. Thus, leading to a weak and inconsistent approach towards human rights policies.

This project will analyse the success of Carter's 'absolute' commitment to human rights and will cite regional examples of where Carter's policies towards human rights was either inconsistent or non-existent, including Latin

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America, South-East Asia and the Middle East. This project will cast a critical eye on Carter's inconsistent approach to human rights which was tarnished by the influence of Cold War politics. The Project will include three chapters, with the first chapter focusing on the institutional changes Carter created in order to bring human rights into the centre of US foreign policy making and will explore how this effected US policy towards Latin America. The project's second chapter will focus on the region of the Middle East and why the administration focused so heavily on pre-Islamic Revolutionary Iran, despite Iran's abuses of political and human rights. The final chapter will focus on the region of East Asia, and asses why the reality of Normalising relations with China deeply affected human rights policies in the region.

This project will criticise the weaknesses of Carters human rights policies through a focus on a policy analysis method which uses regional examples in order to critique Carter's commitment to human rights. As the Carter administration is a unique example of a Cold War administration which aimed to break the norms of US foreign policy this project will not aim to use a comparative approach as this method would not allow enough depth of analysis towards Carter's human rights policies. In order to assess Carter's application of his human rights policies and how the administration was influenced by Cold War geo-strategic realities, this project use primary resources such as speeches and declassified documents, alongside secondary resources to achieve greater in-depth analysis and add strength to the Project's argument that Jimmy Carter's commitment to human rights was inconsistent due to the importance his administration placed on geo-strategic Cold War policies.

## **CHAPTER ONE – Jimmy Carter's Human Rights: Policy and Process**

President Jimmy Carter's inauguration marked the beginning of his mission to bring human rights to the centre of US foreign policy. During his inauguration speech Carter stated that "Our commitment to human rights must be absolute" (Carter, 1977), and to enable this absolute commitment President Carter aimed to redesign the process in which US foreign policy was created in order to bring human rights to the centre of US policy making institutions. For example, involving more voices within the policy making process and the revival of the Humanitarian Association, a branch of the State Department which Congress had pushed for with the aim of including human rights concerns in US foreign policy making during Gerald Ford's presidency, which Ford largely ignored (Kaufman, 2008). While these changes did prove successful in some cases, such as cutting military aid to Latin American dictators, there were serious issues with Carters institutional changes. Namely the highly inconsistent application of his human rights policies due to the fact that some nations seemed to be above Carter's 'absolute' commitment to human rights, while others were not. This chapter will use the regional example of Latin America to analyse how effective Carter's new foreign policy making process was in enhancing Human Rights and how this effected Carter's inconsistent approach towards Human Rights in the region of Latin America.

### **Carter's New Policy Making Approach**

Carter did not want to only tackle human rights issues through typical Presidential means such as public and private statements of discontent. He wanted to combine these with diplomacy, reductions in aid and reductions in arms sales (Dumbrell, 1997) in order to take a harder stance against nations who abused human rights. Examples of these methods in Latin America are the First Lady Roslyn Carter's diplomatic tour around Latin American nations where human rights were discussed (Kaufman, 2008), and reductions in military aid and arms sales to nations such as Argentina, Chile, El Salvador and Uruguay (Kaufman, 2008). In order to enable the administration to use these methods effectively Carter needed to ingrain human rights based concerns within US foreign policy institutions. As well as reforming policy making institutions Carter also altered the way in which his administration would formulate foreign policy in order to allow moral and humanitarian concerns to be taken into account. Carter stated in an interview in 2008 that when the administration was tackling big foreign policy issues there was "a cacophony of voices behind me, and I would make the decisions" (Edwards, 2008) once hearing everyone's opinions. These voices included Vice-President Walter Mondale who took on more than the usual symbolic role of Vice-President, Cyrus Vance Carter's Sectary of State and Zbigniew Brzezinski Carter's National Security Advisor who, untraditionally, Carter allowed the same access to the Oval Office as Vance (Kaufman, 2008). While in theory

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Carter's method of policy making had merit, as it would allow the leadership to brainstorm and choose the best course of action, in practice this approach became problematic. The method of analysing every event and decision as a singular case led Carter to "essentially micro manage" (McGlinchey, 2014, p.122) US foreign policy. Furthermore, this method alongside the influence of Carter's idea of having a cacophony of voices "resulted in disruption and indecision in the policy making process" (McGlinchey, 2014, p.122). The flawed nature of the Carter Administration's policy making process illustrates how human rights began to slip from the agenda as Carter gave equal influence to those that supported his human rights based policies such as Vance and Mondale and those who were more critical of human rights due to their focus on the Cold War, containment and geo-politics, such as Brzezinski and Lucy Benson (Under Secretary of State) (Kaufman, 2008).

Indeed, the influence of Brzezinski within the Carter administration marks difficulties with establishing consistent human rights policies. The disagreements between "hawkish Brzezinski" and "dovish Vance" (Murray, 2010, p.14) intensified the slow nature of Carter's policy making process and also marked the decline of the influence of human rights due to Brzezinski's focus on geo-politics and "hitting the Soviet Union" (Murray, 2010, p.14). Indeed, Brzezinski came to dominate the policy making process with his hawkish tendencies due to his willingness to engage in political battle within the Oval Office (Kaufman, 2008). In the context of Latin America the influence of Brzezinski led the administration to focus on arming the authoritarian Nicaraguan leader Anastasio Somoza Debayle to try and quell the influence of the communist guerrilla group the Sandinistas [1] despite Somoza's poor human rights record, illustrating how Brzezinski influenced Carter to be more inconsistent in his approach to human rights. Brzezinski was also very influential in the process of Normalisation with China despite the fact that human rights abuses were common in the People's Republic of China, an issue that this project will analyse in its third chapter. The fact that Brzezinski became Carter's "best advisor", as the former president stated in an interview (Edwards, 2008), reflected Carter's growing inconsistent tendencies in applying his human rights policies. Indeed, Brzezinski became so influential in the administration that Vance threatened to resign on three occasions (Edwards, 2008) as he was unhappy with the direction the administration was taking, largely due to the influence of Brzezinski and his hawkish supporters. Vance eventually resigned due to the military Operation Eagle Claw which aimed to rescue American hostages in Iran in 1980 (Kaufman, 2008), illustrating Vance's displeasure at the administration's hawkish foreign policy tendencies. Indeed, LaFeber states that within twenty-four months Carter's policies "revolved increasingly around anti-communism" (1994, p.683) and Brzezinski certainly influenced this change, thus illustrating the negative affect that Carter's idea of having a cacophony of voices created.

## The Humanitarian Association and its Limitations

As well as having a cacophony of voices Carter introduced institutional changes in an effort to bring human rights to the centre of US foreign policy making. Carter brought "new life" to the Humanitarian Association which had previously been established during the Ford presidency (Trenta, 2013) and appointed the civil rights activist Patricia Derian as its head (Kaufman, 2008). Although in institutional terms Carter had given human rights more focus than any other president before him (Clymer, 2003), the structural changes that he created were "fairly modest" (McGlinchey, 2014, p.122). In the context of Latin America LaFeber states that Patricia Derian "worked near miracles" in helping to quell human rights abuses and democratise the Military regimes in Brazil and Argentina, but elsewhere "often hit stone walls" (1994, p.686), illustrating that despite Carter's institutional changes his commitment towards human rights was still inconsistent. Derian's work in Brazil led to the increasing acceptance of political opposition by the Brazilian government, and thus, helped to create a more active opposition movement [2], which was a major achievement. However, the work of the Humanitarian Association was severely limited due to the backlash it met within the administration. Which was highly evident within the State Department as the officers of geographic bureaus wanted to maintain positive relationships with the nations they represented and were unwilling to risk relations with questions of human rights (Kaufman, 2008). A factor that encouraged Carter's inconsistent tendencies in applying Human Rights policies.

Furthermore, as the Carter administration's commitment to human rights became increasingly inconsistent and more focused on strategic interests and the leadership placed less importance on the Humanitarian Association. Indeed, this movement away from focusing on the Humanitarian Association and towards a US foreign policy focusing on geo-politics, Containment and Cold War strategic interests is illustrated by a document from Derian to Vance. She states

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that the Humanitarian Association plays a “very junior partner in the decision making process” [3] despite Carters aims to revolve foreign policy around the issue of human rights. Derian states examples of how the Humanitarian Association is often pushed out of the decision making process, “We were routinely cut off from cables, meetings, and discussions. Frequently we are told that our views are ‘known’ and taken into consideration... the result too often across the board is: ‘The President has decided’, when we have no sense of the human rights issue being raised and argued.” [4]. Despite the creation of the Humanitarian Association and Carter’s rhetoric of having an ‘absolute’ commitment to human rights the Carter administration came to frequently push human rights and the work of the Humanitarian Association aside and focus on Cold War strategic interests, and thus the administrations focus on human rights was no longer ‘absolute’, rather it became highly inconsistent.

## Latin America and Carter’s Inconsistent Approach to Human Rights

Latin America is a prime example of Carter’s inconsistent application of his policies towards human rights. Despite the fact that a vast amount of Carters human rights ‘successes’ were in Latin America, there were still nations in Latin America where it seemed that Carter’s human rights policies didn’t apply. Indeed, Latin America seemed the perfect place for Carter to illustrate his new stance on US foreign policy. Geographically and culturally close to the United States supporting human rights in Latin America was highly likely to win support with the US public (Coronil, 2002). Furthermore, geo-statically Latin America posed no large threat to the US, as Vance stated in 1978 “Our actions can also be read as focusing on Latin America as the best theatre for human rights activity” due to the fact that focusing on Latin America created “little risk to other American interests” [5]. An idea that Fagen concurs with, writing during the administration that “Latin America was, in global terms, not a high security area” (Fagen, 1978). Indeed, many nations in Latin America were governed by strong autocratic regimes such as Argentina, Chile and Brazil, (Gaddis, 2005). Therefore, these nations posed little security threats to the United States, as in the short term there was little chance of a regime change that would pose a threat to US national security due to the strength of these Authoritarian regimes. Therefore, it was easier for Carter to take a stand against human rights violators in Latin America than it was in other regions which were more strategically important, highlighting Carter’s inconsistent approach towards human rights. This argument is further illustrated by Vance through a document assessing the administrations human rights achievements in 1978. Vance states that “Our military programs in Latin America have been massively affected by human rights considerations; only marginally so in East Asia; and not at all in the Middle East” [6]. This document illustrates how the administration was able to apply human rights policies in Latin America over other regions in the world due to the lack of strategic influences in Latin America. Therefore, these concerns that allowed strategic importance to become so influential within the administration led to a highly inconsistent approach to human rights.

However, Carter’s human rights policies did enjoy successes in Latin America. Notably the reduction of US military aid to autocratic and military regimes in the region. During Carters term as president military aid to Latin America decreased by 75% from \$233.5 million in 1976 to \$54 million in 1979 (Kaufman, 2008). These reductions in aid showed that the administration was prepared to take a hard stance against human rights abusers as well as making public statements and symbolic gestures. Indeed, the administration’s policies towards Argentina showed the strength of the Carter administration. During the Carter administration Argentina was governed by a Military Junta who frequently abused human rights (Clymer, 2003). Due to the widespread ‘disappearances’ of Argentinians the administration cut military aid to Argentina while also encouraging Argentina to democratise through diplomatic means (Dumbrell, 1997), thus illustrating that the administration could use diplomacy while also taking a hard stance against nations who abused human rights.

However, there are issues with Carter’s approach towards Argentina. Indeed, Congress had long been pushing for the US to criticise Argentina’s abuses of human rights (Dumbrell, 1997) and some believed that the administration did not go far enough. In 1977 Senator Robert Kennedy created a bill that would ban the selling of ‘pipeline’ goods (goods that had already been purchased but yet delivered) to Argentina, this bill was actively opposed by Carter (Kaufman, 2008). Thus illustrating that despite the lack of strategic Cold War interests Argentina held for the United States the administration was still not prepared to have an ‘absolute’ commitment to human rights in regards to Argentina. Similar limitations in other areas of Latin American policy suggest that Carter was not prepared to make an ‘absolute’ commitment to human rights. These include, El Salvador due to the fact that in 1980 Carter re-started

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military aid to El Salvador due to threats that a revolution was eminent, despite evidence that the government in El Salvador had murdered 4 US citizens (LaFeber, 1994), and Carter's hesitation to strongly condemn the Nicaraguan leader Somoza's human rights abuses.

Indeed, Somoza's regime was staunchly anti-Communist and waged war on the Sandinistas a communist guerrilla group, thus, making Nicaragua a strategically important nation in holding back the tide of Communism (Schmitz and Walker 2003). Therefore, Carter was not willing to take a hard stance against Somoza's human rights abuses. A document written by Patricia Derain to the acting Secretary of State Warren Christopher illustrates how the administration had failed in applying human rights policy consistently in Latin America due to the lack of focus on Nicaragua. She discusses recent meetings with NGO's and their criticisms of the administration's human rights policies, particularly the "uneven application of the policy. When security or economic interests are involved, human rights are ignored" and they also single out the "Diminishing U.S. pressure on major violators" which include Nicaragua [7]. Further illustrating the limited influence that the Humanitarian Association enjoyed when nations were seen as being strategically important. Indeed, in a note to Brzezinski Jessica Tuchman (of the National Security Council Staff) stated when it came to applying human rights policy in Nicaragua "We follow this policy now in theory—but certainly not in practice." [8]. Although Carter did criticise Somoza in 1979 for bombing civilian slums where he believed Sandinistas were hiding (Coleman and Herring, 1991) this was only after it became clear that Somoza was losing control of Nicaragua and the administration became focused on the policy of "Somozism without Somoza", where the administration aimed to repel communism in Nicaragua without Somoza (Coleman and Herring, 1991, p.154). The case of Nicaragua illustrates the difficulties the Humanitarian Association due to the administrations inconsistent application of human rights policies when strategic Cold War interests were concerned. Especially when highly influential parties such as Brzezinski, stated in his memoirs that he believed, the Sandinistas were a threat "thrown down by the Soviet Bloc" (Brzezinski, 1983), and thus should be repelled at all costs.

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While Carter's institutional changes placed more focus on human rights than any administration before him the success of these institutional changes are severely limited by the administrations unwillingness to have an 'absolute' commitment to human rights. Indeed, the administration's commitment to human rights was highly inconsonant and this is very clearly illustrated through the regional example of Latin America. Due to the fact that, the administration had major achievements in reducing military aid and helping to tackle human rights abuses in nations like Argentina and Brazil while also ignoring human rights in nations that were seen as strategically important, such as Nicaragua. The influence of Brzezinski and his hawkish supporters certainly did not aid Carter's inconsistent tendencies due to their focus on the importance of maintaining the United States' dominant position in the Cold War, a pattern that is also illustrated in chapters to come. Indeed, Carter's unique style of foreign policy was highly inefficient and led him in the direction of inconsistency when it came to human rights policies due to his focus on Cold War strategic interests and Containment at the expense of his 'absolute' commitment to human rights.

## **CHAPTER TWO – The Shah's Iran: Human Rights Vs Geo-Strategic Cold War Interests**

Despite President Carter's inauguration claim that his administration would have an 'absolute' commitment to human rights, this did not seem to apply to the nation of Iran. Until the Islamic Revolution of 1979 Iran was a close ally of the United States which, particularly the Nixon, Ford and Carter administrations, relied upon heavily to implement Containment in the Middle East (McGlinchey, 2014). Since a CIA sponsored coup in 1953 Iran had been governed by the Autocratic Shah of Iran (Iran's equivalent of a King) whom remained a close ally to the United States until he was ousted from power in 1979 by Ayatollah Khomeini (Gasirowski, 2013). The strategic importance of Iran's geography, due to the fact that Iran bordered the Soviet Union and Pro-Soviet Iraq alongside Iran's vast oil reserves, meant that Iran was an incredibly valuable tool to contain the Soviet Union for the United States. Due the strategic importance of Iran the United States mainly focused US policy in the Middle East towards Iran, instead of focusing on a number of nations in the region, like the administration's policies towards Latin America. Furthermore, the United States placed a strong focus on Iran due to the fact that focusing on Arab nations would risk the administration's

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relations with Israel and vice versa (Pollack, 2004). These factors created a strong relationship between Tehran and Washington, and therefore, when it came to Iran human rights did not seem to be an issue for President Carter, thus, illustrating that Carter's commitment to human rights was highly inconsistent rather than 'absolute'.

## A Willingness to Reform?

Despite Iran's historic poor human rights records, during the 1976 Presidential Election in the United States the Shah of Iran showed signs that he was willing to improve Iran's focus on human rights. For example, the Shah opened Iran to charities and NGO's such as Amnesty International in order to investigate human rights abuses within Iran (Trenta, 2013). Furthermore, the Shah also began to reduce the use of torture and began to ease press restrictions (Trenta, 2013). As a result of the relaxation of the Shah's autocratic policies many who opposed the regime became more vocal, which resulted in new political parties emerging in Iran such as the Radical Party (Pollack 2004). While these parties were still technically illegal, due to Iran's one party state system, the emergence of new parties illustrated that the Shah was increasingly willing to show leniency towards opposition groups than he had been in the past (Trenta, 2013).

Furthermore, the Shah also ousted a number of his hard-line advisors and his Prime Minister in favour of more liberal candidates, again signalling a willingness to improve Iran's standing on human rights (Pollack 2004). While Iran still remained to be a repressive autocracy these reforms suggested that the Shah was willing to improve human rights issues which Carter could use to his advantage if elected. Indeed, this willingness to improve human rights in Iran were highly influenced by Carter's presidential election campaign and its strong focus on human rights (Pollack, 2004). Indeed, during the second presidential debate in October 1976 Carter stated that "We ought to be a beacon for nations who search for peace and who search for freedom, who search for individual liberty, who search for basic human rights. We haven't been lately. We can be once again." (Commission on Presidential Debates, 2012). Statements such as this led the Shah to believe that if elected Carter would push for Iran to improve its human rights conditions or may also punish Iran for its human rights abuses by refusing to sell the nation arms. This fear is illustrated by a document prepared by the CIA for the administration soon after Carter's inauguration in 1977 which discussed the situation of US-Iranian relations in regards to human rights, "Iran is sensitive, vulnerable and worried about the long term impact of their relations with the United States" [9]. However, this pressure that the Shah feared never came (Pollack, 2004). Indeed, the Shah did not realise that Carter was inconsistent in his approach to human rights due to the fact that he "was willing to overlook human rights abuses caused by despotic governments which were useful to America's position in the world" (Dumbrell, 1997).

Indeed, Iran was seen as too strategically important to risk losing through pursuing human rights improvements. Iran's geographic proximity to the Soviet Union and the fact that its land mass acted as a geographic buffer between the USSR and pro-Soviet Iraq meant that Iran was ideally located in order to maintain stability in the Gulf region (Murray, 2010). Furthermore, the fact that Iran held vast amounts of natural oil also meant that protecting the pro-US government in Iran was highly strategically important. Indeed Vance stated that, "Iran was seen as a major force of stability in the oil-rich Persian Gulf, Its military strength ensured Western access to Gulf oil and served as a barrier to Soviet expansion" (Kaufman, 2008, p.153) illustrating why the administration had difficulties in applying human rights policies in Iran. Furthermore, adding to the Shah's value for the administration was the fact that the Shah was willing to support the United States in its wider foreign policy ventures. For example, the counter insurgency assistance that Iran provided in Oman and also the fact that the Shah supported wider US foreign policy goals, such as actions in the Horn of Africa (Murray, 2010). Therefore, condemning the Shah's human rights records would not only risk the security of the Middle East but would also risk the support that the Shah provided for US action across the globe, and therefore, would risk the credibility of the United States' foreign policy on the global stage.

Furthermore, Iran housed two highly sophisticated electronic intelligence collection sites which allowed the United States to collect intelligence on the USSR's ballistic missile tests (Pollack, 2004). The information these sites provided were seen as so valuable in competing with the USSR in the Cold War period that the administration didn't want to risk the closure of these sites through talk of human rights issues (Pollack, 2004). As for Carter Cold War interests always trumped his inconsistent commitment human rights issues. Indeed, the points listed above illustrate why Iran was such a valuable prize in the Cold War, and thus, why US policy in the Middle East largely centred on

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the Shah's Iran rather than focusing on a number of nations. Therefore, focusing on issues such as human rights were not on the cards for the Carter administration as this would damage the United States' position on the global stage and, thus their dominant position in the Cold War. Illustrating why Carter's commitment to human rights can only be described as inconsistent due to the importance he placed on geo-politics and the Cold War at the expense of human rights.

## **The Shah's Human Rights Abuses**

The strategic importance of Iran dominated over Carter's so called 'absolute' commitment to human rights. Expanding this 'absolute' commitment Carter stated that the US would no longer support dictators due to an "inordinate fear of communism" during a speech in 1977 held at the University of Notre Dame (Carter, 1977). Despite this statement Iran's strategic position in the Cold War led Carter to ignore Iran's human rights abuses and support Iran in order to maintain Containment and repel the Soviet Union, directly contradicting Carter's Notre Dame commitment. Indeed, Ayatollah Khomeini, who would later become Iran's political and religious leader after the Islamic Revolution, illustrates the vast contradictions within Carter's human rights policy, "This Carter fooled people for a time, and they said he would do all kinds of things if he came to power... First he says human rights are inalienable then he says 'I do not want to hear about human rights'" (Hunt, 1996, p. 401). Indeed, Carter chose to ignore his 'absolute' commitment to human rights in favour of an inconsistent commitment tarnished by geo-strategic gains due to on Iran's Cold War strategic importance, despite the regular human rights abuses of the Shah's regime. Indeed, The Shah had established a single party state in 1975 (Mousavian, 2014) and controlled most aspects of civil society through his political party, The Resurgence Party (Pollack, 2004). The Shah also actively repressed political opposition through his secret police force, SAVAK who "spread terror" in Iran and were known for their brutal methods of torture and execution (Pollack, 2004). In a memorandum to Brzezinski William Odom (of the National Security Council Staff) stated that "If the Shah of Iran buys our arms, we can justify that as a measure toward stabilization of the region... but we should not let anyone believe that such sales mean U.S. moral approval of SAVAK's actions" [10]. This memo helps to illustrate how brutal SAVAK's actions were, due to the fact that the administration did not want to be associated with their brutality. Despite this, the CIA was actively working with SAVAK (Pollack, 2004) despite the Presidential Directive NSC-30 of 1978 stating that "the US shall not, other than in exceptional circumstances, take any action which would result in material or financial support to the police, civil law enforcement authorities... of governments engaged in serious violations of human rights" [11]. Again illustrating how that Carter's commitment to human rights and a moral foreign policy did not extend to Iran.

## **'Human Dignity' and Iran's Wealth Inequality**

Carter stated that in order to focus on human rights the US must aim to enhance "human dignity" (Carter, 1977) in his inaugural address. However, it seems this speech was merely words that Carter had little intention of putting into policy in Iran. Indeed, there were vast economic issues in Iran which seriously affected its population, from 1974 to 1978 the Iranian government state spent \$18 billion on arms alone (LaFeber, 1994). The Shah's fixation on arms and high tech military equipment placed a huge strain on Iran's economy (Trenta, 2013), which was intensified by high levels of corruption and inflation (Trenta, 2013). These economic woes resulted in high levels of poverty, with 15% of the population in of Iran's capital Tehran living in slum conditions (LaFeber, 1994), it seemed that when it came to Iran Carter had little intention to enhance the human dignity of Iranians. Furthermore, 20% of Iranian's relied on state hand outs to survive, and alongside poor education these factors resulted in illiteracy at rates of 60% (Pollack, 2004). Iran's vast oil wealth it seemed, was certainly not trickling down, and the United States turned a blind eye. Despite claims that Carter wanted to bring morals back into foreign policy through a focus on human rights and enhancing human dignity, it seemed that the Shah's repressive and immoral policies benefitted the United States, and thus, the administration would not aim to improve these issues. While Iranian's were scared to speak out against their government Carter could continue to work closely with their illegitimate leader to create a foothold in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East in order to elevate his position of dominance in the Cold War. Thus, illustrating that Carter's human rights policies were unsustainable and inconsistent, as they conflicted with wider geo-political goals and the politics of the Cold War.

## **The Shah's Lust for Arms**

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After Carter's election victory little effort was made even to open a dialogue with Iran to discuss human rights, illustrating the inconsistent nature of Carter's human rights policies due to his administration's emphasis on the Cold War. During Vance's first diplomatic trip to Tehran in May 1977 Vance mainly focused on the issue of arms and paid little attention to human rights (Trenta, 2013). During this visit Vance insured the Shah that arms deals Iran had made with the United States under the Ford administration would be honoured by the Carter administration (Kaufman, 2008), despite Iranian human rights abuses and Carter's aims to scale back US arms sales. As the Iranian Ambassador William Sullivan stated "The president made it clear that he regarded Iran as strategically important to the United States and our allies... and stressed the importance of Iran as a force for stability and security in the Persian Gulf" (Murray, 2010, p.16), and therefore, human rights policies did not apply to Iran. Indeed, McGlinchey states that "Like Nixon before him Carter had placed all his eggs in the Shah's basket" (2014, p.150), and Carter wasn't going to risk Nixon's achievements in managing to outsource Containment through arms sales to Iran to allow for US domination of the Persian Gulf (McGlinchey, 2014), through talk of strategically unimportant issues such as human rights. Indeed, Carter's close relationship with the Shah and the fact that Carter was willing to sell Iran record breaking amounts of arms, seemed to suggest that Carter was more than happy to continue President Nixon's policy of using Iran to outsource containment in the region of the Middle East (McGlinchey, 2014). Indeed, Gary Sick (a member of Carter's National Security Team) stated that Carter "had no desire to damage relations with the Iran or to see anything go wrong, and if this meant giving the Shah almost anything he wanted then so be it" (Trenta, 2013). Indeed, Sick's statement illustrates that despite his rhetoric and promises to protect human rights and reduce US arms sales the importance of Iran allowed Carter to be highly inconsistent to his approach to human rights as Carter did give the Shah almost anything he wanted, which was arms.

Why was Carter so willing to forgo his stance on improving human rights and reducing arms sales in regards to Iran? A memo from Guy Erb of the National Security Council Staff to Brzezinski answers this perfectly, stating that when it comes to arms "our policies can be described by one word, containment." [12]. Arming the Shah meant that Iran could be trusted to take on a regional security role which would discourage and repel any Soviet influence in the Middle East, a policy that was highly important to Nixon and Ford which Carter chose to continue. Indeed, Vance stated in 1978 that in regards to human rights influencing arms sales: "Are We Being Consistent? No. And we should not try to be so. There are times when security considerations, or broader political factors, lead us to be "softer" on some countries' human rights performance than others" [13]. Thus, illustrating that Carter was inconsistent with his application of human rights policies. The strategic importance of Iran made it difficult for the administration to commit to focusing on human rights policies in Iran, while in contrast, the administrations focus other regions such as Latin America, which were less strategically important, allowed involvement of human rights policies. Therefore, Carter's commitment to human rights policies and arms policies are inconsistent rather than 'absolute'.

The administrations reliance on Iran to act as a regional security actor led to an arms deal in 1978 which "dwarfed" previous arms sales to become the largest in history (McGlinchey, 2014, p. 140), amounting to some \$12 Billion worth of high tech arms (McGlinchey, 2014). These huge arms sales directly contradicted Carter's inauguration commitment for arms sales to reflect "the real security needs of the American people" (Jimmy Carter, 1976) and also for arms sales figures to reflect nation's human rights records. These arms sales figures certainly did not reflect the real needs of the American people, they represented the desires of the Carter administration to maintain their dominant Cold War position at the expense of human rights policies. Indeed, it is hard to argue that US sales of tear gas to Iran when anti-Shah protests were beginning to gain momentum before the Islamic Revolution (Kaufman, 2008) reflected the 'real security needs of the American people'. A development that the head of the Humanitarian Association Patricia Derian described as "raising serious questions" [14] about Carter's foreign policy intentions. Indeed, Carter's arms dealings with the Shah illustrates how Carter decided to pursue the same policies as the Nixon/Ford administrations in regards to Iran, despite the fact that Carter had been heavily critical of these policies during his election campaign (Trenta, 2013). This change in direction once Carter came into office illustrates how influential the Cold War geo-politics were on creating Carter's inconsistent commitment to human rights.

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Unlike Carter's regional focus in Latin America where human rights considerations seemed applicable for some nations and not for others, Carter's policies in the Middle East focused predominantly on Iran due to its pro-US



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government and strategic importance, where human rights considerations did not apply. Despite the Shah's willingness to improve human and political rights the Carter Administration strategically decided not to actively push the Shah to further improve Iran's human rights record due to Iran's value as a foothold in the Middle East. While Carter's policies in the Iran backfired in spectacular fashion due to the Islamic Revolution and the taking of US hostages in 1979 (Dobson and Marsh, 2006), Carter's policies in Iran also represented Carter's wider human rights policies becoming redundant due to their highly inconsistent nature. As the case of Iran clearly illustrates that Carter did not have an 'absolute' commitment to human rights, rather he had an inconsistent commitment to human rights which was largely influenced by the politics of the Cold War.

## **CHAPTER THREE – East Asia: Normalisation Vs an 'Absolute' Commitment to Human Rights**

Carter's policies in East Asia, unlike his policies in Iran, did initially focus on human rights and humanitarian concerns. Despite Carter's early achievements in Asia such as the release of political prisoners in Indonesia and the promise of elections in the Philippines, Carter's focus on human rights started to wane. Indeed, Carter's focus on the policy of Normalisation with the People's Republic of China (PRC), marked the end of Carter's commitment to human rights in East Asia. Originally a Nixon/Kissinger policy, Normalisation with the PRC aimed to create a block between the communist powers of China and the USSR and break the communist proxy in Asia through creating official diplomatic ties with China which had officially been severed in 1949 due to the communist revolution in China (Encyclopaedia of Sino-American Relations, 2009). Indeed, the fact that the administration sought to normalise with the People's Republic showed that Carter was inconsistent rather than 'absolute' in his commitment to human rights, due to the PRC's frequent human rights violations. Through Carter's focus on China it became clear that rather than pursuing humanitarian goals in East Asia the Carter administration sought to restructure containment within the region, with China at the heart of this policy. Indeed, the importance of this restructure of containment with its focus on China dramatically altered wider US-Asian relations which is reflected through examples such as South Korea and Cambodia. Indeed, the rising importance of China within the administration illustrates how Carter, all too easily, committed to an inconsistent approach to human rights policies due to the importance his administration placed on geo-strategic Cold War interests rather than an 'absolute' commitment to human rights.

### **Early Human Rights Achievements?**

Early in Carter's term as President US actions in East Asia suggested that Carter did aim to revolve US foreign policy around human rights. Indeed, the work of the Humanitarian Association had encouraged Indonesia, under regime of Haji Mohammad Suharto, to release 30,000 political prisoners (Clymer, 2003). The US had also encouraged the Philippines, a key strategic ally with two US military bases, to hold elections (Kaufman, 2008). Furthermore, due to humanitarian concerns Carter had stated that the US would withdraw troops from South Korea (Dobson and Marsh, 2006) which amounted to 5% of all troops in South Korea [15], suggesting that Carter was prepared to take a harder stance against nations in East Asia who violated human rights as a part of his wider 'absolute' commitment to human rights. However, there were limitations to these policies. For example, the elections that President Ferdinand Marcos had promised in the Philippines were rigged and Marcos' political opponents were openly arrested and intimidated (Kaufman, 2008). Furthermore, the administration limited the work of Derian and the Humanitarian Association in the Philippines due to affect that human rights considerations may have on ongoing talks US-Pilipino talks. These talks centred around the issue of US military bases in the Philippines which were the largest US bases in the Pacific region (Kaufman, 2008), therefore these bases held a strategic advantage for the United States in Asia and the Pacific, an advantage that Carter was unwilling to jeopardise due to humanitarian concerns. Furthermore, US action in encouraging human rights in Indonesia were also limited. While the US did encourage the release of political prisoners it also supplied Indonesia with arms during the Indonesian invasion of East Timor in 1978 where the slaughter of the local population reached genocidal levels (Simpson, 2009). Finally, Carter's decision to withdraw troops from South Korea was reversed, thus illustrating that Carter was unwilling to take a harder stance on nations who abused human rights. While Carter's early policies towards East Asia did signpost at least some commitment to

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improving human rights, the limitations with these policies show Carter's commitment to human rights to be inconsistent rather than 'absolute'.

## Normalisation and Geo-strategic Interests at the Expense of Human Rights

The Administration's commitment to normalise relations with the People's Republic of China under Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping marks the end of the Carter Administrations limited focus on human rights policies in East Asia. Indeed, by continuing the Nixon/Kissinger policy of normalising relations with China Carter chose to continue the highly strategic policy at the expense of human rights. Carter chose to pursue the policy of Normalisation in the aim that the policy would reshape containment and repel the Soviet Union, illustrating how Carter chose to pursue geo-strategic Cold War policies over human rights. Therefore, illustrating that Carter's commitment to human rights was inconsistent rather than 'absolute'. Furthermore, Carter continued the policy of normalisation despite the statement in his Notre Dame speech that "we are now free of that inordinate fear of communism which once led us to embrace any dictator that joined us in that fear" (Jimmy Carter, 1977). The contradictions between this language and Carter's actions in Asia suggests that Carter had succumbed to the Cold War pressures he had previously criticised early in his administration. Leading to a human rights policy that was inconsistent in its application and highly focused on strategic interests and the politics of the Cold War.

The idea of normalising with China was championed by Brzezinski who had long been calling on the United States to move closer to Beijing due to his belief that in order to defeat the USSR the United States needed to expand and strengthen its anti-Soviet allies (Cohen, 1993). Indeed, Foot describes the normalisation process as the "geopolitical vision of Zbigniew Brzezinski" (1995, p.139), and while Vance wasn't as strategically inclined as Brzezinski (Foot, 1995) the gains that the US would reap from normalisation meant that normalising with China soon became a wider goal of the administration. Indeed, relations between the Soviet Union and the PRC had long been frosty, which the Carter administration could take advantage of. Therefore, through normalising relations the administration would, as the Vice President's Chief of Staff Moe stated "enhance our strategic position vis-à-vis the Soviets" [16]. The normalisation process also benefited China in regards to gaining a strategic position over the Soviets, illustrated through a briefing memorandum directed to Vance which states that the Chinese Vice-Premier Deng believed that "diplomatic relations with the US are central to thwarting the Soviet and Vietnamese pressures on China" [17]. Indeed, by seeking to normalise with China the US would form a geographic barrier between the Soviet Union and the East Asian and the Pacific nations, including pro-Soviet Vietnam. Therefore, by supporting China the US could change the shape of containment in East Asia and rely on the PRC to be a regional security actor and to suppress Soviet expansion in the region.

## The Issue of Human Rights in China

While the benefits of Normalising were obvious, the fact that Carter pursued this policy at the expense of human rights meant that he had committed his administration to pursuing an inconsistent approach to human rights, due to the Cold War geo-strategic outlooks that he had previously criticised. The process of normalisation illustrates that in the regional example of East Asia Carter was unwilling to uphold his 'absolute' commitment to human rights due to the regions geo-strategic importance during the Cold War. Indeed, the conditions the US and the PRC agreed to meet in order to normalise relations largely centred around the issue of Taiwan, which the US officially recognised as the legitimate government of China, and included no human rights based conditions (Kaufman, 2008). A paper prepared in the State Department illustrates why Washington chose not to create human rights based requirements for the normalisation process, "At least the initial stages of the normalization process probably are inappropriate to press for major human rights improvements" [18]. Indeed, a transcript of a discussion with Deng shows how resistant the government of the PRC was toward issues of human rights. When the administration's commitment to human rights is mentioned in a wider sense and not in regards to the PRC Deng responds by saying "I do not want to debate the human rights question because the debate would be acrimonious. I have my own interpretation. I would not like to talk about this question now" [19]. This statement illustrates the difficulties in getting China to agree to a Western conception of human rights. Despite members of the National Security Council stating "let us look forward to the day when our diplomatic relations with China are such that we can begin to raise this issue" [20] the administration must have realised that this could not happen in the foreseeable future and that by pursuing normalisation with China the

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administration would do nothing to help improve the quality of life for those who were living within the PRC.

The commitment to normalise with the PRC came despite frequent human rights violations in China, thus illustrating that Carter's commitment to human rights policies were highly inconsistent in their application. Indeed, the administration was highly aware of these human rights abuses, through frequent reports in the media and congressional pressure to tackle these abuses (Svensson, 2002). In a memorandum from the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Inderfurth to Brzezinski Inderforth states that despite several high profile articles on the human rights situation in China and Congressional pressure to address these issues, "human rights in PRC is, obviously, a *very* sensitive subject. I am not suggesting we take any action at this time" [21]. This document illustrates how acutely aware Washington was of the situation in China and the lack of influence that Washington would have over the PRC's human rights abuses, and despite this the administration still chose to pursue normalisation. The administration was also aware of specific human rights abuses within the PRC, illustrated through a memorandum directed to Brzezinski stating that in regards to forced labour camps in China "literally tens and even hundreds of thousands of prisoners are held. My general reaction to this information of course, is no surprise" [22]. Both these documents illustrate that the administration were highly aware of the human rights situation within China and despite Carter's promise of an 'absolute' commitment his administration still chose to pursue normalisation with China for strategic gains, illustrating how inconsistent Carter was in the application of human rights policies.

Furthermore, the PRC greatly limited the political freedoms of their citizens. Between 1970-80 the Chinese constitution didn't protect the freedom of speech, freedom of residence and movement, freedom from forced labour, freedom from torture, the right of the presumption of innocence and the right to strike (Kent, 1999). Furthermore, rights protected within the constitution were not absolute as the government could detain citizens for counter revolutionary activity (Kent, 1999). The government of the PRC believed its governance was based on the will of the people and therefore could justify having authority over civil society, the political and the judicial process (Kent 1999). Indeed, the PRC was not a state that you would expect a nation who placed an 'absolute' commitment to human rights to associate with. Thus illustrating how the Carter administration was inconsistent in its commitment to human rights due to the fact it placed the importance of geopolitics and Containment in the Cold War period above human rights issues in the context of China.

## The Shifting Approach to East Asia and the Cambodian Example

The Carter Administration valued normalisation to such an extent that the US shifted its whole approach to East Asia in order to guarantee a smooth transition for normalisation. This shift in policy is illustrated by the administrations lack of action in regards to the deplorable human rights situation in Cambodia. Indeed, atrocities and genocide were largely ignored by the Carter Administration, due to the fact that Cambodia was a firm ally of China and staunchly anti-Soviet (Cohen, 1993). Carter didn't want to risk the normalisation process by criticising a Chinese ally or China's lack of action in discouraging the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia (Clymer, 2003), and so the situation was largely ignored. Cambodia emerged from French rule in 1953 and was led, relatively peacefully by King Norodom Sihanouk (Williams, 2005). This began to change during the Vietnam War, despite the fact that Cambodia was politically neutral and a "tiny, weak country" (Cohen, 1993, p.175) Nixon ordered Cambodia to be bombed through his policy of Vietnamisation (Cohen, 1993). This threw Cambodia into chaos and allowed Sihanouk to be overthrown in 1970 Lon Nol who's pro-US government was short-lived and enabled the communist Khmer Rouge led by Pol Pot to gain power in 1975 (Kaufman, 2008). The Khmer Rouge era is described by Williams as "one of the darkest periods of human rights violations in history" (2005, p.447). Furthermore, Carter himself stated that the Khmer Rouge were "the worst violators of human rights in the world today" (Kaufman, 2008), suggesting that Carter would try to tackle the human rights violations in Cambodia due to his 'absolute' commitment to preserve human rights. Indeed, the atrocities of Pol Pot had left over 1.7 million Cambodians dead and had led a further million to flee into neighbouring Thailand and Vietnam (Hunt, 1996), and yet the administration still turned a blind eye, despite the fact that 20% of Cambodians had died at the hands of their government (Williams, 2005).

Furthermore, there was significant pressure at home for Carter to address the issue of Cambodia and to encourage China to press Pol Pot to quell his human rights abuses. Indeed, an anonymous letter written by a member of the public illustrates the public's anger of how inconsistent Carter was when applying his human rights policy. They state,

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"I am especially amazed that you with your important policy of defending human rights, have not found it 'proper' to speak up in defence of thousands of defenceless Cambodians" (Clymer, 2003). Indeed, this pressure also came from Congress, for example, Representative Norman Dicks (D-WA) was highly vocal in his criticism of Washington's lack of action in Cambodia despite atrocities which he stated "make human rights violations in Chile, Uganda and the Soviet Union pale in comparison"(Clymer, 2003). Furthermore, in June 1978 when the administration was undergoing normalisation talks with the People's Republic a bi-partisan group of congressional leaders voted to urge Carter to discuss the Cambodian issue with China (Clymer, 2003). In regards to this vote the Assistant Secretary of State Douglas J Bennet declined to bring up the issue due to the fact that it would "seriously complicate" normalisation (Clymer, 2003). Thus illustrating why the administration had no intention of addressing this issue with China despite their supposed 'absolute' commitment to human rights.

The statement from Douglas Bennet does have some truth behind it as the Chinese were highly defensive when it came to the situation in Cambodia. This is illustrated through a memorandum of a conversation between Brzezinski and the Chinese Ambassador Han, when Brzezinski mentions the situation in Cambodia Han sates "Now, it would appear that the President joins in this attack. Isn't this an instance of the President joining our Polar Bear to the north?" [23], illustrating how frosty the government of the People's Republic reacted when the issue Cambodian was raised. However, for an administration that promised an 'absolute' commitment to human rights the fact that Carter was so unwilling to even encourage China to confront Pol Pot shows that Carter's commitment inconsistent due to the fact that it was easily pushed to the side when geo-strategic factors were at play. An idea that Clymer concurs with, by stating that the administrations focus on China at the expense of human rights issues in Cambodia meant that "American policy appeared to be purely based on realpolitik calculations and, in particular, a desire to play the China card in the strategic battle against the Soviet Union" (2003, p. 254/255). Through the example of Cambodia we can see how easily Carter pushed aside his 'absolute' commitment to human rights, in a nation he described as the world's worst human rights violator, for geo-strategic purposes. Indeed, the rewards that the US would reap from normalising with China and its ability to reshape containment in East Asia meant that Carter's 'absolute' was easily pushed aside in favour of an inconsistent commitment which focused heavily on the politics of the Cold War.

### **The Shifting Approach to East Asia and the South Korean Example**

Other examples of human rights issues being pushed to the side due to the United States' goal of normalising with China are US policies in South Korea. Indeed, as normalisation became an achievable goal for the administration Carter sought to reverse his policy of withdrawing troops from South Korea, (Dobson and Marsh, 2006) despite the frequent abuses of human rights in South Korea that had led Carter to promise a withdrawal earlier in the administration. Despite Carter's 'absolute' commitment to human rights the administration was willing to allow South Korea to continue its human rights abuses in order to help stabilise the region in preparation for the shift of power that normalisation would cause in the Far-East. Maintaining US troops would also help to appease the Right in Congress, and thus, gain more support for normalisation. Further illustrating how Carter committed to an inconsistent application of human rights policies due to strategic concerns. The policy would also help the South Korean's feel more stable in the knowledge that by normalising with the Chinese this did not mean the US supported the Chinese ally of North Korea, as since the division of the Korean Peninsula in 1945 relations between the North and South had been incredibly poor (Gaddis, 2005). Indeed, a paper prepared by National Security Council Staff illustrates these factors. By not withdrawing troops the US would "would assuage our Asian allies... It would greatly relieve Congress, where a majority favours strong security ties with the ROK... It would cover the nations flank on the Right thereby facilitating political management of the China normalization issue" [24] .Thus, illustrating how easily the administration pushed aside their 'absolute' commitment to human rights in favour of an inconsistent commitment influenced by geo-strategic Cold War realities such as the normalisation issue.

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Despite early indications that Carter would focus on improving human rights in East Asia this was not to be the case. As soon as Normalisation with China became a reality Carter curtailed the work of the Humanitarian Association in regards to East Asia and began to restructure the region to prepare for the reshaping of containment that normalisation would create. Despite the obvious human rights violations in China the administration still sought to

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normalise relations, thus illustrating how Carter's commitment to human rights policies were inconsistent. Indeed, the People's Republic of China was seen as such an asset in redefining containment in East Asia that the administration, all too easily, abandoned their focus on human rights in the region of East Asia, illustrated through the examples of Cambodia and South Korea. Thus, illustrating that Carter's commitment to human rights in East Asia cannot be described as 'absolute' despite Carter's inaugural promise. Indeed, his focus on the Cold War and Containment through policies such as normalisation meant that Carter's commitment to human rights, not only in East Asia but in the Middle East and Latin America, can only be described as inconsistent.

## Conclusion

Through the use of the regional examples of Latin America, the Middle East and South East Asia it becomes clear that Jimmy Carter's 'absolute' commitment towards human rights was unsustainable due to Cold War complexities and the importance the Carter's administration placed upon containing the Soviet Union. Thus, meaning that in reality Carter's commitment towards human rights was inconsistent rather than 'absolute'. Indeed, factors such as the influence of hawkish advisors such as Brzezinski on Carter and the legacy left by the Nixon/ Ford administrations and their focus geo-politics certainly encouraged Carter's inconsistent approach towards human rights. This inconsistent approach to humanitarian concerns is highly clear within the regional examples of Latin America, the Middle East and South-East Asia. These examples illustrate the administrations focus on the politics of the Cold War and Containment due to the fact that the Carter Administration did not press for human rights improvements in nations that were considered to be strategically important in containing the Soviet Union and Communism generally, such as Iran, Nicaragua and China. Whereas, in nations that were less strategically important and posed little threat towards the national security of the United States, such as Brazil and Argentina, the administration were willing to press for human rights improvements. Thus illustrating the influence the Cold War had over Carter's inconsistent application of his human rights policies.

Despite the fact that President Jimmy Carter promised an 'absolute' commitment towards human rights, his administration was highly aware of the need to maintain relations with nations that were strategically important, which would inevitably complicate humanitarian concerns. Indeed, the administration actively chose to commit to continuing the Nixon/ Ford policies of arming Iran and Normalising with China, despite realising that this would mean the US would have little influence over improving human rights issues in these nations. Indeed, Carter's knowledge that his administration would have to be inconsistent in their approach to human rights is illustrated through Carter's first Presidential Directive which focused solely on human rights. The Presidential Directive states that human rights policies will be applied globally but will have to take into account the "the significance of U.S. relations with the nation in question" [25]. Indeed, Carter's approach to strategically important nations illustrate Carter's unwillingness to risk the significance of US relations with nations that were strategically important, such as Iran and Nicaragua, in order to preserve human rights. This inconsistent commitment towards applying human rights policies only increased as the administration drew on, through policies such as continuing Nixon's legacy of Normalising relations with China and the reversal of the decision to withdraw troops from South Korea.

Carter's focus on the Cold War and Containment meant that his human rights ideals could never be achieved, due to the importance he placed on repelling Soviet influence. It seems that the 1970s was not the time for talk of a moral foreign policy. While, Jimmy Carter did place more of an emphasis on human rights based issues than any other President before him, his administration had little success in creating a moral foreign policy based around human rights. However, there is solace in the fact that Carter's administration has created a legacy through its human rights based ideals and institutional changes. A legacy that certainly would have influenced future politicians such as President Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton to prioritise human rights and vocally promote Humanitarian issues. Due to the more appropriate timing of Clinton's administration due to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Dictionary of Contemporary History, 1999). Examples of this focus towards human rights can be seen through Hillary Clinton's famous statement during the United Nation's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing that "women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights" (United Nations, 2015).

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## Notes

[1] Memorandum from Jessica Tuchman of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski). (October 10 1977) *Footnote 9*. Available at: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v02/d80#fn9> [accessed 1st March 2015].

[2] Action Memorandum from the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Lake) to Secretary of State Vance. (January 20 1978) *The Human Rights Policy: An Interim Assessment*. Available at: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v02/d105> [accessed 5th March 2015].

[3] Briefing Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs (Derian) to Secretary of State Vance. (October 22 1979) *Goals and Objectives for the Next Eighteen Months*. Available at: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v02/d194> [accessed 1st March 2015].

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[10] Memorandum from William Odom of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs. (October 20 1977) *Weekly Report*. Available at: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v02/d82> [accessed 4th March 2015].

[11] Presidential Directive/NSC-30 (February 17 1978) *Presidential Directive/NSC-30*. Available at: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v02/d119> [accessed 4th March 2015].

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