

private protest might be easier to ignore but could also be accepted more conveniently if it were interpreted as being linked to other aspects of the relations that were regarded as important. In each case, diplomatic and political judgment have to be brought to bear on the issue and general rules will be found to be of little relevance.

It may be thought that too much is made above of the difficulties of putting into practice the principles and ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Yet, in this case as in others, it is not always true that to understand all is to forgive all. Better understanding of the variety and complexity of the issues involved in human rights and foreign policy is desirable if the worst abuses are to be ended or prevented. Whether or not such understanding implies a weakening of the capacity for moral judgment is a matter of individual character. It certainly need not do so. Indeed, to make such judgments without at least attempting to discover the facts is more likely to render them suspect. Few governments are ready

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The impact of human rights on the process of *détente*

By Adam Bromke

The growing interpenetration of nation states has universalized the issue of human rights. Those of us who live under democratic governments are sensitized daily by the mass media to violations of personal freedoms in some other part of the globe — be it Uganda, Chile or Iran. This offends our dignity as human beings and evokes our

to delegate to international instruments the powers of investigation and of arbitration that we have come to expect in our domestic affairs, but most have to take account of international public opinion if it is based on informed and impartial sources.

The last word may be left to the UN Secretary-General:

Perhaps more than in any other field of international activity the UN faces in the human-rights field a gulf between idealistic declarations and hard realities. The fundamental principle is that respect for individual human dignity is based on universally-accepted values, and therefore abuses of human rights, wherever they may occur, are a legitimate subject for international concern. However, this concept, touching as it does upon the sovereignty of states as well as on the relations between human rights and the individual's duty to his society, confronts the UN with a challenging problem of putting principles into action and effectively balancing national and international concerns.

sympathy for the victims of persecution. For some ten years now, the Western media have been giving special attention to infringements of human rights in the Soviet Union. This article is confined to a discussion of the human rights of individuals, and does not deal with the aspirations for freedom of various nationality groups in the Soviet Union or with the strivings by the Eastern Europeans for national independence. The latter problem is more complex, for it involves, in addition to the suppression of personal liberties, the denial of the right to national self-determination.

Our special interest in the situation within the Communist orbit has coincided with the progress of *détente* in East-West relations. In fact, the two developments have been closely linked. Better access to the U.S.S.R. has made us more responsive to

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