



3. Our greatest impact in the human rights area is probably the experiences gained by over 2000 AID participants trained in Western--particularly American---value systems, including the respect for basic human dignity. These persons have risen to positions of considerable importance and leadership in the society and their influence has been felt all the more given the limited numbers of educated persons to man key positions throughout the country. It is no exaggeration to say that it is difficult to find administrators at the joint secretary or above in virtually all government offices who have not been exposed at one time or another to American values throughout direct experience. This elite constitutes a fairly important pressure group in assuring that basic human rights are not trampled upon, even in a country whose monarchical powers are supreme. They are, for example, the "intellectual class" which has successfully pressed for the release of political prisoners in Nepal and which has forced the government to restrict the application of "catch-all laws" used in the past to harrass political dissidents.

4. Through our emphasis on creating an adequate infra-

structure in health and education we have successfully created new institutions which not only aid the economically and intellectually depressed rural areas of Nepal, but also institutions which provide direct participation by relatively large segments of society. Although it is difficult to make definitive judgment on larger philosophical question of whether economic assistance promotes human rights, experience over 25 years in Nepal indicates slow, but steady, progress towards a political and economic system promoting and protecting basic rights. In that period the use of cruel and inhuman punishment has all but disappeared: arbitrary arrest has been vastly reduced, and the right of freedom of expression, although not comparable to the United States, is not severely restricted. It is something of an anomaly that Nepal, one of the few remaining monarchies in the world, currently enjoys more fundamental rights than other countries in the area.

5. That this situation exists is, in part at least, the result of increasing confidence ~~by~~ of the nation's leadership that economic development need not be a threat to political stability. US assistance through aiding the country's economic development has likely increased Nepal's political stability and confidence in maintaining a sovereign and independent state without the need to resort to immoral or inhuman methods to remain in power.

6. Consequently, we believe our development programs have had a positive if largely indirect impact on human rights in Nepal. However, we have not in the past directed our programs specifically on human rights. While we believe opportunities to carry out programs in such politically sensitive areas by foreign aid donors are very constrained, we do believe there are some limited ways in which we can directly help enhance or protect those rights. For example, we would support a modest program to provide financial assistance to organizations such as "World Peace Through Law" to allow Nepalese participation. Similarly direct assistance to "Amnesty International", which has played an important "watch dog" role in Nepal, or the International Commission of Jurists would not only demonstrate our continuing concern over human rights but would have a direct effect on those HMG officials concerned with the administration of justice. A SEADAG conference, although politically sensitive, devoted to the broader question of human rights and development efforts could serve the same purpose. Above all, we would urge an increase in exchanges and participant grants to be devoted to those directly involved, be they local administrators or central government authorities in the field of law.

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