

SUMMARY - MEETING WITH FRATERNALS - September 6, 1979 - 1:30 PM
at the U.S. Mission - 12th Floor -
Conducted by Mr. Ed Mezvinsky

Mr. Mezvinsky opened the meeting with a short talk about what takes place at the U.N., and the processes involved in getting things done. He mentioned meeting at other times with different ethnic groups, but also felt the importance of the Fraternal's. He stressed his concern over the Helsinki Accord Process. Spoke of how the U.N. operates... The Human Rights Commission meets once a year - 32 countries are members, and next year there will be 43. Unfortunately, he said, that many were there to promote their own political interests, and their own countries interests. Also, the body (in the Human Rights Commission) that handles complaints is very very slow. However, the fact that there can be discussion is a step in the right direction....as perviously, there was not even this recourse. He mentioned how the Commission deals on a regional basis: ex. Middle East question, African question. They next deal with individual complaints....by families or individuals.... a vehical to register complaints where they are filed at the U.N. and then come to the Human Rights Commission.

Spoke of the importance of the Pope's visit in October.. felt it was significant becaus the very first statement of the Pope had to do with the question of religion freedom. Mentioned Declaration on Religious Freedom has gotten no where, but 3 articles were passed this year.

The Question of Individual Rights, Political freedom -

Civil, Economic and Social rights are interchanged. Some countries use Commission for a defence mechanism. Political prisoners do exist - Individual rights are tested by complaints - Stressed how the UN IS political....not just in the Middle East, but in Africa, S.E. Asia, etc.

Methods of enforcement at U.N. is mainly dealing with reason, public exposure, and putting forth resolutions condemning or praising certain actions. Minority groups opportunity is limited, slow, almost ignored. Human Rights has been raised in the past.... but it is out there now, and can't be put back. Unfortunately the process is slow.

It is not enough for the U.S. to be strong. It takes other countries to respond. We have to help lead and guide, but we have to encourage others to act. We also have our own blemishes, which are often used against us.

The Fraternalists who were invited were those with the closest links to this cause, and we wanted to meet before the G.A. started.

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Discussion:

How is the Helsinki Agreement being enforced?

35 countries signed... U.S. Canada and Europe. We can't put any country in jail...but it could affect our relationship with them. Example: Salt agreement. Enforcement is not automatic. Economic, public exposure...could affect relations

with the country. Trade biggest lever we have. In terms of the U.N. enforcement....Resolutions at Security Council...but limited. It is only a platform for discussion....BUT at least people can talk before they fight. Politics have not allowed the U.N. to operate as the Charter would state.

We supply a large percentage of the budget....We are looking into the subject of finance....we have paid 20 to 25%, a large chunk.

Enforcement: if we are dealing with multi lateral agreements such as Helsinki Accord..is there an active platform in the State Department? We try to meet with other governments. We send representatives to have issues raised. We try to get other countries and Bi lateral discussion to achieve some progress. But we are dealing with other cultures and other governments.

Bnai Zion: In What way can we cooperaton with you here in the U.S. to make your work easier. Give us some concrete ideas.

Mexvinsky: Wants you to understand how the process works so you can understand mechanism. That is why important to visit the U.N.

The Human Rights Policy started because people made their voices heard and it then became a political pressure point. Religious Freedom is an area where we can all get into. It is a basic human right that affects every other human right. I (Ed Mez.) act as a vehicle in which to express your frustrations, arguments and feelings. Pick certain issues to unify on...Try to have representatives in Government speak out. Put public

officials on notice that this is significant issue and that it should be heard.

Mr. Michael Zakorsky: The U.S. is too damp peace loving... too honest in keeping an agreement. We see Human Rights taken away, but we do nothing about it...too concerned about keeping an agreement. When have we challenged these people on Human Rights violations.

Mez: We did challenge this year more than any year before. I sat for six weeks next to Zorin...I learned that they respect toughness and we can make progress. I think we should be tough.

Mr. Thomas Mack: Brought up the subject of salt....Felt it was an extremely important issue. Thinks some salt is better than no salt. Felt we can lean on our congressment, and can get votes...Felt Fraternalists had a big influence... Wants to move for SALT to get them to sign an agreement.

Ms. Wochok: Regarding SALT agreement....any agreements have all been broken. The other side did not live up to agreement. Since Human Rights have been signed by 35 nations, we will have to take a stand one day.

Mr. Brindzak: Russians have never signed a treaty unless it benefited them.

Short discussion on toughening up.....

E.Meiz: I subscribe that the right to self determination is a basic human right.

Wochok(?) Policy of Human Rights is not implemented. For example immigration.....

Discussion turns to Teddy Roosevelt...times have changed..

We cannot wave a big stick. What is important is that we

understand each others problems of Human Rights. If you are silent, rest assured that no one has heard you. It is good to get together to understand each others problems.

Meeting moved on to the United Nations.