

Human rights and the Cold War: the campaign to halt the Argentine 'dirty war'

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In the late 1960s and 1970s, internationally-focused human rights groups in the United States worked to raise public awareness and generate popular opprobrium of repressive regimes overseas, and lobbied policymakers for more stringent congressional control over foreign aid funding to regimes violating human rights. By the mid-1970s, non-governmental human rights advocates and their sympathisers in Congress had created a strong grassroots base, established a powerful presence in Washington, and could effectively mobilise on behalf of human rights issues, as evidenced by the successful 1978 congressional cutoff of all US arms transfers to Argentina.

News of Olga Talamante's kidnapping reached her parents by telephone in mid-November 1974. The call, dialled by a friend in Azul, Argentina to the elder Talamantes' residence in Salinas, California was brief, the details agonisingly vague. There had been a gathering, a classic Argentine *asado*, a day-long barbecue held as a kind of *despedida* for Talamante as she prepared to return to the United States and pursue graduate studies. Late in the evening, as Talamante and a group of friends started to leave, an unidentified car pulled up to the curb and a man identifying himself as a policeman demanded that they accompany him for questioning. When Talamante refused, the individual forced them into the vehicle at gunpoint.

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Olga Talamante's whereabouts, the caller concluded, along with a dozen others who had attended the *asado*, were unknown.¹

For *Don Lalo* and *Doña Cuca*, as Talamante's parents Eduardo and Refugio were known in the local Latino community, news of their daughter's disappearance came as a terrifying shock. *What could be done?* Immigrants from Mexico, the Talamantes had raised Olga and her two brothers in an agricultural labour camp in Gilroy, California. For nearly a decade the family had lived in a single room with no furniture, stove, or refrigerator in an old warehouse that had been divided up to house labourers. From the long hours in the fields to the irregular pay to discourage worker transience, it was a hard, grinding existence rooted in exploitation emblematic of the immigrant experience in rural California. Having endured for years the weekly indignity of waiting in line with other farm labourers for the *patrones* to dispense an allotment of cash, the possibility of successfully lobbying on Olga's behalf, of harnessing enough political leverage in Washington to influence the Argentine government – if, indeed, she was held captive by the state – was a challenge of extraordinary magnitude.²

Yet Olga Talamante was no ordinary young woman. After spending roughly the first decade of her life in Mexico, she had accompanied her parents to the United States in 1961. Unable to speak English, Talamante was initially classified as mentally retarded and placed in a classroom with younger students. After only one year, however, she had mastered the language sufficiently to move directly from fourth to sixth grade. In high school, Talamante's stellar performance in the classroom and participation in extracurricular activities set her apart from her peers. She was elected president of her sophomore class, acted as both secretary and vice president of the honour society, led the local chapter of an international student exchange programme, served as president of a student-run advisory council on school reform, and earned a letter in girls' hockey. Receiving the 'Outstanding Student of the Year' award at her graduation, Talamante – whose parents had not completed elementary school – set her sights on a college education, and with the assistance of several academic scholarships she enrolled in autumn 1969 at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she majored in Latin American Studies.³

Talamante graduated from UC Santa Cruz with honours in 1973, shortly after obtaining US citizenship. She spent the summer working in the garlic fields of Gilroy until she had saved enough money to buy a plane ticket for Argentina, where she taught English and volunteered at a community centre in Azul that offered basic social services such as legal aid and tutoring to the residents of a poor neighbourhood.⁴ In early November 1974, with political violence in Argentina deepening, Talamante wrote her family that she had purchased a return plane ticket and would be home on the twenty-fourth. Eduardo and Refugio's daughter, however, never arrived.

The Talamantes immediately began working to ascertain what had happened, frantically contacting elected Representatives in California and Washington, as well as Olga's associates in Gilroy and at UC Santa Cruz. Initially, it seemed a fruitless endeavour since the Department of State could provide no information on Talamante's case. Officers in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs (ARA) dutifully

contacted the US Embassy in Buenos Aires, however, and by the end of the month it was confirmed that Talamante had been arrested five days after President Isabel Perón had enacted 'State of Siege' provisions – in which suspected subversives could be held indefinitely and without charge – to crack down on left-wing political violence. The embassy further ascertained that Talamante was being held in a government prison in Azul for alleged possession of 'subversive literature' and handguns, and that she would remain in detention until the case was adjudicated by the Argentine justice system.⁵ No doubt overjoyed to learn that their daughter was alive, Olga Talamante's parents also received word that their daughter had been tortured by Argentine security personnel.

Recognising that Olga's academic achievements and extracurricular activism had cultivated supporters in both the white and Latino communities, the Talamantes redoubled their efforts to generate support for her release. In early December they formed the Olga Talamante Defense Committee (OTDC) and began a grassroots campaign, including vigils, letter-writing drives, and picket lines.⁶ In subsequent months, the Talamantes' unflagging dedication to securing Olga's release propelled the OTDC into a full-fledged movement. With support from Ed McCaughan and Peter Baird, editors at the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA), a left-wing, non-profit organisation dedicated to social justice in hemispheric affairs, the committee eventually cobbled together a broad coalition of support from a diverse range of organisations, including the United Farm Workers Union, the National Council of Churches, the United Auto Workers, and the National Women's Political Caucus.⁷ Indeed, by mid-March 1975, Norman Y. Mineta (D-CA) – House Representative for the Talamantes' congressional district – informed the State Department, 'It is rare that a day passes without an inquiry from a friend, relative, or school acquaintance regarding her trial's progress'.⁸

The initial support garnered by the Olga Talamante Defense Committee was indicative of the widespread respect in Gilroy and at UC Santa Cruz for Talamante's extraordinary success in overcoming linguistic, racial, and cultural barriers. The immense outpouring of solidarity the OTDC eventually generated, however, not only among thousands of petition-signers in the San Francisco Bay Area, but also among religious, church, and labour groups nationwide, reflected the rising support for human rights in US society and politics.⁹ Rooted in the struggle for Civil Rights and the anti-Vietnam War movements and gaining strength thanks to widespread disillusionment with US government ties to repressive regimes, the effort to institutionalise human rights in US foreign policy and improve the protection of human rights overseas blossomed in the early 1970s. Put broadly, grassroots organisers, human rights lobbyists in Washington, and sympathetic members of Congress consciously embodied a counter-movement to the maintenance of close US political, economic, and military ties to staunchly anti-communist, authoritarian governments – a defining feature of US Cold War policy, particularly toward Latin America. Over the course of the 1970s, in other words, the blossoming human rights

movement vied for primacy with the policy prescriptions that had undergirded US–Latin American Cold War relations since the late 1940s.

Drawing on recently declassified US government documents, personal interviews, and archival collections of human rights organisations, this article focuses on US–Argentine relations between 1974 and 1978 as a case study to examine the impact of the human rights movement on US foreign policy over the course of the decade. Situating Olga Talamante’s incarceration as the unifying narrative thread, I argue that human rights advocates played a central role in raising awareness of state-sanctioned violence in Argentina and, following the 1976 military coup d’état, in pressuring policymakers to distance the US from the Argentine military junta. The successful 1978 congressional cutoff of US security transfers to Argentina, I contend, was a clear indication of the human rights movement’s evolution; by the end of the decade, human rights advocates had established broad grassroots support, organised an influential lobby in Washington, and demonstrated an ability to effectively mobilise on behalf of human rights issues.

Although human rights were written into the United Nations Charter in June 1945 and the protections outlined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights gained widespread acceptance by the end of the decade, over the course of the subsequent quarter-century human rights took a back seat in US foreign policy to the perceived exigencies of the Cold War.¹⁰ By the early 1970s, however, increasing disaffection with US support for repressive right-wing regimes and the rising costs of US military intervention in South East Asia among both non-governmental anti-war advocates and their liberal allies in Congress stimulated a broad re-evaluation of United States foreign policy. On Capitol Hill, human rights advocacy took a major step at the beginning of August 1973, when Representative Donald M. Fraser (D-MN) utilised his chairmanship of the House International Relations Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements to initiate an unprecedented series of hearings on the international protection of human rights.¹¹ The following March, Fraser published a landmark report, *Human Rights in the World Community: A Call for U.S. Leadership*. Including 29 specific recommendations for integrating human rights into US foreign policy, Fraser notably called for the creation of a Department of State Bureau of Human Rights, as well as the assignment of a human rights officer to each regional bureau in the State Department. Fraser also lobbied for annual human rights country reports, and emphasised the need to link US foreign aid to human rights conditions.¹²

Eventually conducting 150 hearings over five years on US relations with governments across the globe and involving more than 500 witnesses, Fraser’s subcommittee played a critical role in raising human rights awareness, integrating human rights NGOs into the policymaking process, and institutionalising human rights in US foreign policy. From the outset, the Fraser Subcommittee hearings reflected a remarkable degree of coordination with the close-knit community of non-governmental human rights advocates, providing a government-sanctioned venue for NGOs to recommend hearings as well as witnesses to give testimony.¹³ Correspondingly, the hearings stimulated NGOs to become increasingly effective at

collecting, analysing, and distributing reliable human rights data. 'Congress became the critical point that brought it all together', recalled Roberta Cohen, who served as Executive Director of the International League for Human Rights (ILHR) throughout the first half of the 1970s. The Fraser Subcommittee, she continued, 'brought together all the different groups that were interested', thus facilitating the establishment of new region- and country-specific human rights organisations, and increasing coordination among existing groups.¹⁴

Fraser's *Human Rights in the World Community* was also instrumental in setting the stage for an unprecedented wave of congressional human rights legislation. In November 1974 Fraser successfully introduced a 'sense of Congress' amendment (Section 502B) to the Foreign Assistance Act. Patterned on the UN language utilised in *Human Rights in the World Community*, 502B explicitly linked human rights to US security assistance.¹⁵ Although the non-binding nature of 502B and the amendment's vague terminology quickly proved problematic, it nonetheless provided a foundation for subsequent efforts to institutionalise human rights in US foreign policy, which gained momentum in late 1974 following the immense popular outcry accompanying the Watergate scandal.

From the outset, congressional human rights initiatives were fiercely resisted by the Nixon and Ford Administrations. With his close adherence to *realpolitik*, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger consistently dismissed human rights as a viable US foreign policy goal, creating deep enmity between the White House and Capitol Hill. Indeed, notwithstanding the rising chorus of human rights advocates in the House and Senate, Kissinger repeatedly ignored internal proposals by the State Department Policy Planning Staff on how to integrate human rights more fully into foreign policy. More remarkably, despite a unanimous recommendation from the Department of Defense, the State Department Latin America Bureau, and the Politico-Military Staff, in 1974 Kissinger reportedly refused to consider cutting military aid to Latin America. The Secretary of State also sidestepped congressional requests in 1975 for human rights reports on individual countries receiving US military assistance, sending instead a general report containing little country-specific detail. The response, recalled one observer, was 'sulfurous', with Senator Hubert Humphrey (D-MN) describing the document as 'about as bland as swallowing a bucket of sawdust'.¹⁶

Seeking to maintain Executive Branch primacy in the formulation of foreign policy, Kissinger was particularly opposed to congressional legislation binding US actions in the international arena to human rights considerations – a theme evident on 5 December 1974, when a group of congressmen led by Fraser held a tense meeting with the Secretary to discuss the role of human rights in US foreign policy. Having repeatedly pressed the Department of State on the issue in written correspondence in previous months, Fraser went straight to the point.¹⁷ 'Basically we feel it's very difficult to continue to support foreign assistance programs to governments which oppress their own people', the congressman bluntly asserted. 'We feel that the United States should be putting stronger emphasis on human rights issues in countries around the world.'¹⁸

In response, Kissinger expressed a willingness to discuss human rights with the Congress, but emphasised that quiet diplomatic discussions, rather than congressional legislation, should constitute the core of US human rights policy. 'The thing that I'm most allergic to is the obligatory statutes', Kissinger declared. 'I don't mind requirements for reports of periodic progress, but I feel very strongly that obligatory requirements are counterproductive'. When Alan Cranston (D-CA), pressed Kissinger to discuss foreign aid, which the California Senator described as frequently politically-motivated, military-focused, and 'seems to serve the people who are already powerful', the Secretary responded coldly. 'This has been a very interesting session', he abruptly informed the assembled members of congress. 'Could we perhaps arrange a meeting again in late January?'¹⁹

Ironically, Kissinger's refusal to mollify congressional concerns over human rights strengthened legislators' resolve to enact binding legislation. Indeed, Donald Fraser believed Kissinger's opposition played a key role in the movement's success. 'If Henry Kissinger had been a little less arrogant and a little less haughty vis-à-vis the Congress', Fraser told one human rights advocate, 'and a little more willing to descend to the level of Congress he could have handed off all this legislation – it wouldn't have been legislation.'²⁰ Instead, by mid-decade growing support for human rights in Congress forced a rearguard action in the State Department to head off further legislative action. In a classified memo summarising a human rights meeting on 12 September 1974, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Ingersoll informed Kissinger 'the general consensus, was that, if the Department did not place itself ahead of the curve on this issue, Congress would take the matter out of the Department's hands.'²¹ Thus despite Kissinger's antipathy toward the human rights initiative, the State Department named human rights officers to each of the five geographic bureaus, began requesting US embassies in countries affected by congressional human rights legislation to prepare human rights reports, and, in 1975, established an Office of Humanitarian Affairs in the State Department with career-Foreign Service Officer James M. Wilson at the helm.²²

Notwithstanding the Ford Administration's tentative steps toward integrating human rights into the machinery of US foreign policy, human rights advocates continued to press the issue. An amendment by Fraser in November 1975 added teeth to 502B, replacing the 'sense of Congress' language with a legally binding stipulation denying US security assistance to gross human rights violators. Although Ford vetoed the foreign authorisation bill in May 1976, human rights considerations nonetheless gained prominence in a watered-down version signed by the President in July.²³ More significantly, in September 1975 Representative Tom Harkin (D-IA) successfully offered an amendment to the International Development and Food Assistance section of the Foreign Assistance Act, stipulating that no US aid be provided 'to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of international recognized human rights', unless it could be shown that the aid would benefit the 'poor and needy'.²⁴ Particularly in Latin America, the legislation inserted human rights considerations into nearly every foreign aid decision. As Wilson

lamented to Kissinger in an internal memo, 'We will get no respite from the Harkin Amendment'.²⁵

Like the broader human rights movement, despite Kissinger's resistance, the State Department could not ignore the Olga Talamante Defense Committee's intensive lobbying effort. Facing unprecedented congressional pressure on the human rights issue, Kissinger hoped to resolve cases involving US nationals as quickly and quietly as possible. Indeed, in a February 1975 cable to all US embassies in Latin America, the Secretary of State directed US ambassadors to give human rights issues, 'especially with respect to [the] treatment of U.S. nationals, host country nationals and others . . . a high priority in U.S. policy formulation and implementation'. In particular, the Secretary emphasised the need for consular officers to immediately seek access to US citizens imprisoned overseas; in such cases, Kissinger continued, Embassy officials should evaluate the prisoners' physical and mental health and document evidence of mistreatment, provide 'appropriate humanitarian assistance', and advise the incarcerated on their rights under international law.²⁶

Illustrating the significance of the human rights movement in forcing the issue to the forefront of US diplomacy, Kissinger further emphasised that a quick response to human rights cases involving US citizens could prevent 'explosive publicity' generated by allegations of an inadequate response by the US Embassy. 'Failure to act promptly in protection cases may not only endanger the rights of the American nationals involved', the Secretary wrote, 'but also can prove most detrimental to the Department's relations with the public, the information media and with the Congress'. By contrast, the Secretary concluded, 'quick and effective protection can be very helpful to all – the U.S. national, the Department and the field', a point he underscored by appending a transcript of a Fraser Subcommittee hearing on human rights in Brazil, in which a US national recently released from a Recife prison praised prompt US diplomatic efforts on his behalf.²⁷

From the outset, however, the Talamante case failed to fit Kissinger's model of consular assistance for US nationals imprisoned overseas. Indeed, human rights advocates flooded US Ambassador Robert C. Hill with letters he described as 'depicting Miss Talamante as being in a "fascist" prison'.²⁸ The Embassy was also heavily criticised by human rights advocates on Capitol Hill, notably Senators Edward M. Kennedy and Alan Cranston, for failing to meet with Talamante until 4 December 1974 – nearly a month after her arrest. Such criticism was an unwelcome irritant for Hill; Talamante, the Ambassador reported to Washington, had made no effort to contact the Embassy, and when news of her arrest finally reached Hill on 25 November it came from the young woman's supporters in California by way of human rights advocates in Washington. Piqued by the bad publicity, the Ambassador nonetheless dispatched consular officers to visit Talamante in Azul – nearly 200 miles from Buenos Aires – more than a dozen times over the course of 1975, and took up the case himself with the Argentine Foreign Minister. 'I emphasized the need to resolve this case quickly by having Miss Talamante leave Argentina as soon as possible before this case

poisoned the good relations between the United States and Argentina', Hill cabled Washington in July.²⁹

As congressional pressure on the State Department to secure Talamante's release continued unabated – in all, nearly three dozen members of Congress wrote to the Department on Talamante's behalf – in early October Secretary of State Kissinger signed off on a cable from ARA Bureau chief William D. Rogers, instructing Ambassador Hill to 'assume personal charge of this case in effort to obtain [the] earliest solution... This will ensure that we are provided accurate and complete information on all pertinent developments as they occur in Talamante case'.³⁰ Accordingly, in a meeting with the Argentine Minister of Interior on 15 October, Hill reiterated the importance of Talamante's release, asserting that the young woman's expulsion would 'avoid an orchestrated publicity campaign that could cause the GOA embarrassment if the Talamante case were allowed to become a cause célèbre'.³¹

Despite the efforts of the State Department and the US Embassy in Buenos Aires, Olga Talamante remained incarcerated for the duration of Isabel Perón's fraught presidency, which came to an abrupt end following the military coup d'état on 24 March 1976. Within a matter of months, it would become clear that the coup dramatically accelerated the unprecedented state-sanctioned terror campaign against perceived subversives carried out over the previous two years by right-wing paramilitary organisations and in the military's counterinsurgency campaign in Argentina's northern province of Tucumán.³² In the immediate aftermath of the military takeover, however, the Argentine military's effort to promote an image of protecting human rights, and, correspondingly, to cultivate US support provided US Ambassador Robert C. Hill with a window of opportunity to resolve the Talamante case – the only known instance of a US citizen incarcerated in Argentina at that time. The case had already dragged on for nearly a year and a half and – thanks to ongoing political pressure by the OTDC – threatened to sour the newly installed Argentine government's relationship with the United States.

Accordingly, only two days after the coup, a group of soldiers entered the cell occupied by the female political prisoners at the Azul prison. After an extensive search, the women were ordered to line up against a wall. 'Who is the Talamante woman?' demanded one of the guards. 'I stepped forward and identified myself', Talamante recalled years later. 'The officer looked at me and spat out, "So you're the one that Kissinger wants released"'.³³

Less than 48 hours later a Pan American Airways jetliner touched down in New York with a stunned Talamante on board. Welcomed by members of the OTDC, she immediately boarded a flight to California, where she was greeted by a teeming throng of supporters and journalists. Three years after departing for Argentina, including 16 months as a political prisoner, Talamante – the first foreign national to be expelled by the Argentine military junta – was finally reunited with her family.³⁴

The Talamantes' long-awaited reunion, however, would prove short-lived. For Olga, the suddenness of her release and the continued incarceration of close friends offered little peace of mind. Acutely aware of the extent of state-sanctioned violence in

Argentina, Talamante felt incapable of remaining with her family in California. Transforming the Olga Talamante Defense Committee into the Argentine Human Rights Commission (*Comisión Argentina por Derechos Humanos – CADHU*), Talamante established an office in Washington, DC, and set out to draw upon the OTDC's infrastructure to raise awareness in the United States of political conditions in Argentina and lobby policymakers to curtail US military assistance to the Argentine junta.

Talamante's arrival in Washington corresponded with a heady moment in the development of the human rights movement. On Capitol Hill, Senators such as Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Alan Cranston and Representatives such as Donald Fraser and Richard Drinan (D-MA) had made major advances in the effort to institutionalise human rights in US foreign policy. Revealing the dramatic rise in human rights awareness since the outset of the decade, in September 1976, 102 incumbent members of the House and Senate and more than two dozen contenders in the forthcoming congressional election signed a statement encouraging candidates for public office to promote human rights in US foreign policy. More concretely, over the course of 1976, the Congress significantly strengthened human rights legislation, cutting off bilateral US security assistance to Uruguay and Chile, and, through the Humphrey–Cranston Amendment, replacing the non-binding 'sense of Congress' language in Section 502B with a legal obligation that the Executive terminate security aid to gross violators of internationally recognised human rights, and providing congressional legislators with the right to overrule the President. Similarly, Section 301 of the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act of 1976 (PL 94-329) reiterated the restriction on security assistance to human rights violators, and also required the State Department to draw up human rights reports on every nation receiving US security assistance.³⁵

Finally, throughout 1976, Fraser's wide-ranging subcommittee hearings continued to frustrate Washington bureaucrats unwilling to embrace the call for an infusion of morality in US foreign policy. As one Foreign Service Officer wrote in a memo in mid-July, 'there are some hearings coming up . . . which will undoubtedly result in adverse publicity, possibly be embarrassing to Departmental officers who testify, and almost certainly will be the forerunner to adverse actions under the new Foreign Assistance Legislation'.³⁶ Raising the hackles of the Foreign Service, Fraser's subcommittee thus continued to serve as a key point on the expanding human rights spectrum. As one human rights advocate asserted during the hearings on Argentina the following month, 'It seems to me that the kind of attention, whatever it is, that is attributed to human rights today is partly a result of the hearings of this very committee, [and] that it does indicate a sustained interest in this question, that it will be weighed throughout the policy process'.³⁷

In addition to growing interest in human rights on Capitol Hill, by 1976 non-governmental human rights advocacy had blossomed into a major political movement. Indeed, the 1970s witnessed a veritable explosion of newly formed non-governmental human rights organisations.³⁸ Consisting of perhaps 100 organisations

in the latter half of the decade, an 'amorphous yet multifaceted aggregate', as one early study aptly put it, the movement ranged from faith-based groups (such as the National Council of Churches), to organisations dedicated to raising awareness (such as the Council on Hemispheric Affairs), as well as solidarity organisations advocating on behalf of particular nations, ranging from Chile to the Philippines.³⁹

On one level, internationally-focused human rights groups in the United States worked to raise public awareness and generate popular opprobrium of repressive regimes overseas. Drawing from the playbook of the Civil Rights and anti-Vietnam War movements, human rights groups sought to elicit human rights improvements abroad through mass mobilisation campaigns; utilising petitions and letter-writing campaigns on behalf of political prisoners, such efforts sought to shame the leaders of rogue nations into compliance with international norms. 'We assumed that all governments wanted to be accepted in the family of civilized nations and that by publicizing information that was not generally known, we would bring the force of world opinion to bear on them', recalled Jeri Laber, who acquired a reputation as a hard-hitting human rights advocate in the early 1970s. 'By shedding light on hidden atrocities, we would make governments sensitive to the image they projected to the outside world', Laber continued. 'Publicity was our primary tool'.⁴⁰

On another level, a growing coterie of US human rights groups focused their efforts entirely on influencing Washington's policymaking elite. In a novel approach that eschewed a mass base, human rights advocates focused their energies on lobbying for more stringent congressional control over foreign aid funding to halt US support for human rights violating regimes. In turn, such efforts resulted in a close working relationship between the non-governmental human rights community and sympathetic members of Congress. As Senator Kennedy informed a gathering of human rights advocates, 'we are absolutely dependent on you for information. We are basically all generalists, and we depend upon you for information, for the trends, the movements, the opportunities for congressional action'.⁴¹

The surge of popular interest also dramatically affected the handful of longstanding human rights organisations such as the International League for Human Rights. Having languished since its founding during the Second World War, at the dawn of the 1970s the League consisted of a handful of dedicated advocates along with affiliations with more prominent US civil liberties organisations.⁴² Less than half a decade later, however, ILHR Executive Director Roberta Cohen was nearly overwhelmed by a wave of human rights volunteers. 'Having been in this tiny office where it was so hard to find anybody to pay any attention, in the course of several years suddenly I began getting telephone calls and walk-ins ... from so many people, many of them prominent writers and scientists and publishers', recalled Cohen in a recent interview.⁴³ Indeed, in a matter of months, some 50 lawyers had offered to assist the ILHR on human rights cases *pro bono*, making it possible for Cohen to establish a parallel organisation, the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights. 'Human rights is suddenly *chic*', Cohen exuberantly told the *New York Times* in early 1977. 'For years we were preachers, cockeyed idealists, or busybodies and now we are respectable'.⁴⁴

A similar process occurred at the US affiliate of Amnesty International (AIUSA). Founded in Britain in 1961, Amnesty subsequently developed into a voluntary organisation focused on obtaining the release of international prisoners of conscience and using popular pressure to encourage governments to adhere to international standards governing their treatment. Yet during the 1960s Amnesty's global influence, as one journalist accurately put it, was 'almost imperceptible'.⁴⁵ The following decade, however, the organisation underwent an extraordinary transformation – a development most clearly evident in the United States. Between 1970 and 1976, membership in AIUSA increased by an average of roughly 10,000 new members per year, and by mid-decade, the organisation boasted offices in Washington, DC, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles, and was operating on an annual budget of nearly \$1 million.⁴⁶ 'Our time has come', one research assistant told a journalist in December 1976. 'The interest in Amnesty has just absolutely boomed'.⁴⁷

In addition to facilitating grassroots human rights advocacy, Amnesty International also developed into an effective lobby for human rights legislation on Capitol Hill. In 1973, Amnesty's groundbreaking *Report on Torture* solidified the organisation's credibility as a global human rights watchdog, and by mid-decade AI representatives were not only serving as frequent participants in congressional hearings, but the organisation was continuously feeding information to between 40 and 50 members of Congress, thus significantly enhancing legislators' ability to pressure the State Department to fulfil the requirements of the growing body of human rights legislation.⁴⁸ Underscoring the impact Amnesty International achieved on the policymaking process, following the completion of the first round of State Department human rights reports on nations receiving US security assistance, in an internal memo to US embassies in Latin America, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Harry W. Shlaudeman noted the 'high credibility Amnesty and others have with Congress' and requested that Embassy personnel 'go rather carefully through recent Amnesty and other reports and extract the references to individuals or specific legal situations (e.g. "fair trials are not available")', and provide Washington with updated information on each issue. Shlaudeman further requested that embassies maintain detailed chronologies of conversations, diplomatic representations, and programmes on human rights. Underscoring Amnesty International's political influence, he concluded, 'we simply have to establish – to congressional satisfaction – that we are paying detailed attention . . . that we are familiar with what Amnesty and others are reporting and that we are active'.⁴⁹

Amnesty International had kept a particularly close watch on the deteriorating human rights situation in Argentina since the March 1976 military coup d'état. Over the course of the year, Amnesty published a series of press releases and short reports on human rights issues in Argentina including the number of political deaths reported in the international press, academic freedom, and detained or missing refugees.⁵⁰ The scale of state-sanctioned violence against perceived subversives in the South American nation, however, inspired Amnesty to dramatically extend its reporting by organising a

'mission' to Argentina, with the intention of documenting first-hand human rights violations committed by the Argentine military government.

Unwilling to risk the negative publicity a refusal would undoubtedly generate, the Argentine military government reluctantly accepted an AI delegation, and on 5 November three human rights advocates arrived in Buenos Aires to conduct an 11-day study: Amnesty International Secretariat member Tricia Feeney, Lord Eric Avebury, and Representative Robert M. Drinan. From the outset, the group was subjected to intense surveillance by Argentine military and police forces, who frequently detained and questioned individuals with whom the delegation met. On the morning of 15 November, the group received a desperate telephone call from the mother of 25-year-old Josefa Martinez, a student who had gone missing after meeting with the AI group the previous evening in Córdoba. Martinez's disappearance, Drinan later wrote, 'caused me anguish as if a member of my own family had met such a fate'. Immediately alerting the US Embassy, Drinan also made a personal appeal to the Papal Nuncio to intervene, and continued to advocate on Martinez's behalf after returning to Washington.⁵¹ Like thousands of other Argentines swept up in what *Buenos Aires Herald* Editor Robert Cox plaintively described as a 'terrible black night, that may well be getting blacker', Martinez failed to reappear.⁵²

Notwithstanding the military's effort to deter cooperation with the Amnesty mission, more than 100 Argentines met with the delegation to declare arrested or disappeared friends or relatives or to deliver personal testimony regarding violations of human rights at the hands of security service personnel. As a result, Amnesty's mission report, released in March 1977, revealed in unprecedented detail the extent of human rights violations in Argentina.⁵³ Estimating that more than 15,000 Argentines had disappeared or been abducted since mid-1974, the report asserted that the Argentine government had permitted widespread abductions and torture of political prisoners. Setting a remarkably high standard in human rights reporting, the 92-page document, as social scientist Lars Schoultz asserted in a pioneering study of human rights shortly thereafter, constituted a 'masterpiece of the genre, possibly the most comprehensive public evidence ever assembled by a NGO on human rights violations by any Latin American government'.⁵⁴ Solidifying Amnesty International's reputation as a reliable and courageous human rights watchdog, and underscoring the extraordinary rise in human rights awareness, nine months after the report's release Amnesty was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Arriving in Washington with little more than a suitcase, Talamante and CADHU co-founder Gino Lofredo 'scraped by' – staying with friends and relying on donations to rent a tiny office in Washington's relatively inexpensive Dupont Circle district. 'We lived very, very meagerly', Talamante recalled in a recent interview.⁵⁵ Limited resources notwithstanding, Talamante quickly established CADHU as a leading voice among non-governmental human rights organisations engaged in US–Argentine relations. In addition to working closely with the Washington Office on Latin America, CADHU established close ties with other Latin American national solidarity committees including Brazil, Chile, Nicaragua, and Peru. Talamante also became an outspoken

member of the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, an umbrella organisation with roots in the Vietnam War protest movement representing 35 religious, political, trade union, and human rights organisations.⁵⁶ Congressional lobbying, however, remained CADHU's primary mission. 'The first thing we started doing was documenting what was happening', Talamante recalled. 'We put together information packets and walked the halls of Congress'.⁵⁷

It was a heady moment to be engaged in human rights work on Capitol Hill. By early 1977, the human rights movement had emerged as a defining feature on the US political landscape. Indeed, it was a development most clearly evident in Jimmy Carter's electoral victory over the incumbent Ford Administration. A Washington outsider, during the campaign Carter had emphasised the need for an infusion of morality into US foreign policy, and, underscoring how far human rights advocates had shifted the US political debate since the outset of the decade, in his inauguration address on 20 January Carter asserted that 'our commitment to human rights must be absolute', and 'because we are free we can never be indifferent to the fate of freedom elsewhere'.⁵⁸

Cognisant of Carter's political inexperience and embrace of the human rights issue late in the run-up to election day, human rights advocates nonetheless welcomed the opportunity the new Administration presented for accelerating the institutionalisation of human rights in US foreign policy. In early March, for example, ILHR Director Jerome J. Shestack wrote to Carter, 'of the widespread support your advocacy is generating throughout the world'.⁵⁹ Similarly, although human rights advocates quickly recognised that Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's conception of the role of human rights in US foreign policy was far from 'absolute', few could deny the dramatic shift in State Department relations with the Congress. To be sure, human rights advocates quickly recognised that Secretary Vance's conception of the role of human rights in US foreign policy was far from 'absolute'; few, however, could deny the dramatic shift in congressional relations with the State Department. When a newly-elected legislator asked Representative Tom Harkin's opinion of Vance following a meeting with the Secretary, the veteran human rights advocate responded dryly, 'You should have been here when Kissinger was Secretary of State'. The latter, Harkin continued, 'would never have come down here to meet with us', or 'condescended to answer our questions, except in only the most general and non-committal way'. Secretary Vance, Harkin concluded, 'is indeed a breath of fresh air in that position'.⁶⁰

If the Carter Administration's apparent support for human rights in the opening months of 1977 raised hopes among human rights advocates, it did not deter non-governmental groups from continuing to actively lobby liberal members of Congress to expand the existing body of human rights legislation. Indeed, the Administration's clumsy efforts in the late spring to derail additional congressional human rights legislation – foreshadowing Carter's shift away from human rights as a signal foreign policy issue in the second half of his presidency – confirmed for many human rights advocates that pressure from NGOs and the legislative branch remained essential.⁶¹ With state-sanctioned violence at its peak, Argentina took centre stage in the US

human rights debate, and Olga Talamante became a leading voice in the effort to convince congressional lawmakers to curtail US security transfers to the South American nation.⁶² As Talamante told participants at a symposium on US foreign policy in April, 'for the past 15 years the United States has explicitly supported the role of the Armed Forces in Argentina as in the rest of Latin America'. Notwithstanding the Argentine military junta's 'apparent strength, fervent anti-communism and identification with the United States', Talamante continued, 'the current military regime in Argentina is actually deeply vulnerable, unstable and weak'. Faced with an 'embarrassing and undesirable ally', Talamante concluded, the United States 'must have the courage to recognize its past mistakes and firmly disassociate itself from the Argentine Military'.⁶³

Human rights advocates were heartened by the Carter Administration's February decision to reduce Foreign Military Sales (FMS) credits to Argentina for fiscal year 1978 from \$30 to \$15 million on human rights grounds. Although the Argentine military junta subsequently rejected the remaining FMS quota, the US government reduction did not affect \$750,000 in International Military Education and Training (IMET) – a credit programme for foreign soldiers to train at US military institutions – and Argentina retained access to US government and commercial cash sales of military hardware.⁶⁴ Accordingly, in the late spring non-governmental human rights advocates' lobbying efforts for a complete arms cutoff to Argentina intensified. 'I visited office after office every Senator or Representative for a period of three months', recalled Patricia Erb, a US citizen who had survived abduction and torture by Argentine security forces in 1976.⁶⁵ Similarly, capturing the sense of urgency that guided her efforts, in a three-page letter detailing the extreme brutality of the Argentine military government to Jimmy Carter in early June, Talamante quoted General Iberico Saint Jean, the Governor of Buenos Aires Province. 'First we will kill all the subversives', the General had recently asserted, 'then we will kill their collaborators; then ... their sympathizers; then ... those who remain indifferent; and, finally, we will kill those who are timid'. In light of such brutality, President Carter, Talamante concluded, should 'join the United States Congress on this issue and support its initiatives to terminate all forms of military aid to Argentina'.⁶⁶

The debate over US policy toward Argentina culminated in September 1977. In deliberations over the Senate's military aid authorisation bill, staunch human rights supporter Edward Kennedy introduced an amendment cutting off all US military and commercial sales to Argentina.⁶⁷ With the support of Senator Frank Church (D-ID), and substantive backing in the House of Representatives – a similar proposal by Representative Gerry Studds (D-MA) had been defeated by a mere 13 votes – the amendment appeared destined to pass muster.⁶⁸ At the twelfth hour of negotiations, however, the Carter Administration entered into the debate. Fearing the bill's passage would prevent the President from offering the Argentine military junta incentives for improvements in human rights, Carter requested Senator Hubert Humphrey to negotiate a postponement of the cutoff date. Incensed by Carter's apparent

unwillingness to enforce tough human rights sanctions, Kennedy nonetheless pragmatically agreed to postpone the cutoff until 30 September 1978.⁶⁹

Notwithstanding the delayed implementation date, the successful passage of the Kennedy–Humphrey Amendment constituted a defining moment in the effort to institutionalise human rights in US foreign policy. The amendment, combined with broader congressional legislation binding US foreign policy to human rights considerations, provided Patricia Derian – the Carter Administration’s newly-installed Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs – with the ability to use delayed or denied transfer applications earmarked for the military junta in Buenos Aires as leverage to demand improvements in the protection of human rights.⁷⁰ Indeed, by mid-1978 the Department of State had blocked an estimated \$800 million in US transfers to Argentina on human rights grounds.⁷¹ With the total cutoff mandated by the Kennedy–Humphrey Amendment looming, the extensive backlog of US sales to Argentina played an important role in convincing the military junta in mid-1978 to accept a formal visit by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (IAHRC), an organ of the Organization of American States. In the months leading up to the September 1979 visit, state-sanctioned violence in Argentina decreased markedly as the military junta sought to avoid an embarrassingly negative report – disappearances dropped, prison conditions improved, and the government made small steps toward confronting the issue of the disappeared.⁷²

More broadly, as the Kennedy–Humphrey Amendment made clear, by 1978 the human rights movement could cite major achievements in the effort to institutionalise human rights in US foreign policy. A counter-movement to the maintenance of close US ties to anti-communist, right-wing military regimes, since the late 1960s human rights advocates had worked to uproot the policy prescriptions that had undergirded US Cold War policy over the previous quarter-century. A decade later, non-governmental human rights advocates and their sympathisers in the Congress had created a strong grassroots base, established a powerful presence in Washington, and could effectively mobilise on behalf of human rights issues. In the short term, these developments would prove essential following Jimmy Carter’s defeat in the 1980 presidential election, as the impetus for human rights advocacy during the Reagan Administration quickly shifted from the Executive and the State Department back to the Congress and the non-governmental sector.⁷³ More broadly, although at the end of the 1970s the human rights movement’s effort to remake US foreign policy remained unfulfilled, the formative struggles over the course of the decade would serve as a foundation for ongoing efforts to shape US actions in the international arena in the post-Cold War world.

For Olga Talamante, the successful congressional cutoff was a defining triumph in her own struggle to cast international opprobrium on the Argentine military junta. Having personally experienced the horrors of state-sanctioned violence in Argentina, Talamante had developed into a tenacious advocate on behalf of human rights, and following the successful passage of the arms cutoff, she shifted from CADHU to a position with the American Friends Service Committee focusing on global human

rights-related issues. Yet as state-sanctioned violence continued in Argentina, Talamante would find little peace of mind. Capturing the lasting imprint of her experiences in Argentina, in a poem inspired by the annual round-trip migration of swallows from Argentina to California, Talamante later wrote:

I, swallow,
 my tears on the shores of a new ocean
 I am no longer a swallow
 I will not make the 6,000-mile trip
 every other beat of my heart
 I will no longer swallow my tears and smile unhappily
 I will now cry happily in my sadness.⁷⁴

Notes

- [1] Olga Talamante, Official Affidavit, State of California, 12 October 1976, Argentina Declassification Project (1975–84), Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Electronic Reading Room. <http://foia.state.gov/SearchColls/CollsSearch.asp> (hereafter ADP); Gómez, 'Feminism, Torture, and the Politics of Chicana/Third World Solidarity', 171–2.
- [2] Details from the Talamantes' life from Thomas, 'Dirty Wars', 108–9.
- [3] Pogash, 'Friends Remember Argentine Prisoner'.
- [4] Talamante, Official Affidavit, 12 October 1976.
- [5] Congressional Correspondence (hereafter CC), Michael J. Harrington to Henry Kissinger, 12 March 1976, ADP.
- [6] Thomas, 'Dirty Wars', 118.
- [7] *Ibid.*, 117. On NACLA's role in the Talamante case, see for example, 'Free Olga Talamante', *NACLA Report on the Americas* 9, no. 6, 1 September 1975.
- [8] CC, Norman Y. Mineta to Robert C. Felder, 12 March 1975, Box 10, Folder 7, George Lister Papers, Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin (hereafter LP).
- [9] For the sake of clarity, in this article the 'human rights movement' refers to the effort to a) elevate moral and ethical considerations in the formulation and implementation of United States foreign policy; and b) to promote the protection of human rights overseas. The term 'human rights' defies a single definition in the historical context of the late 1960s and 1970s given the diverse political leanings of human rights advocates, but is broadly construed as a) freedom from government violation of the integrity of the person; b) economic and social rights, such as food, shelter, and education; and c) civil and political rights.
- [10] On the role of human rights in US foreign policy in the early post-Second World War period, see Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*; Glendon, *A World Made New*; Lauren, *The Evolution of International Human Rights*; Moyn, *The Last Utopia*, 120–75.
- [11] Fraser's subcommittee was later renamed the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations. On the role of Congress in the human rights debate during the 1970s, see Arnsion, *Crossroads*; Forsythe, *Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy*; Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War*; Keys, 'Congress, Kissinger, and the Origins of Human Rights Diplomacy'.
- [12] US Congress, *Human Rights in the World Community*.
- [13] Personal interview with Rev. Joe Eldridge, 4 May 2008, Washington, DC.
- [14] Personal Interview with Roberta Cohen, 1 May 2008, Washington, DC.
- [15] See Cohen, 'Conditioning U.S. Security Assistance on Human Rights Practices', 251.

- [16] James M. Wilson, 'Diplomatic Theology – An Early Chronicle of Human Rights at State', Undated, James M. Wilson Papers, Box 1, Folder: Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs – Wilson Memoir, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, MI.
- [17] For Fraser's correspondence on specific countries, see Fraser to Kissinger, Box 149.G.13.7B, Folder: Human Rights; and Fraser to Kissinger, Box 149.G.9.7B, Folder: Human Rights, 1975 [1], Donald M. Fraser Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, MN.
- [18] Department of State Memorandum (hereafter DSM) of Conversation, 17 December 1974, Subject: 'Human Rights', Box 7, Folder: Human Rights (D/HA), Records of Deputy Secretary of State Charles W. Robinson, 1976–1977 (hereafter RCR), General Records of the Department of State (hereafter GRDS), Record Group 59 (hereafter RG 59), National Archives II, College Park, MD (hereafter Archives II).
- [19] Ibid.
- [20] Personal interview with Rev. Joe Eldridge.
- [21] Breslin, 'Human Rights: Rhetoric or Action?'
- [22] Salzberg, 'A View From the Hill', 17.
- [23] Cohen, 'Conditioning U.S. Security Assistance on Human Rights Practices', 252–3.
- [24] Apodaca, *Understanding U.S. Human Rights Policy*, 40; 'House Votes to Ban Foreign Aid for Human Rights Violations', *New York Times*, 11 September 1975, 18.
- [25] DSM, J.M. Wilson to Henry Kissinger, 1 October 1976, Subject: 'D/HA Monthly Report', Box 7, Folder: Human Rights (D/HA), RCR, GRDS, RG 59, Archives II.
- [26] Department of State Cable (hereafter DSC), State A-1285, Secretary of State (Kissinger) to All ARA Diplomatic Posts, 26 February 1975, Subject: 'Human Rights and Protection of U.S. Nationals in Latin America', Box 63, Folder 25, LP.
- [27] Ibid.
- [28] DSC, Buenos Aires 6870, US Embassy (Hill) to Secretary of State, 15 October 1975, ADP.
- [29] DSC, Buenos Aires 4645, US Embassy (Hill) to Secretary of State, 14 July 1975, ADP.
- [30] DSC, State 239839, Assistant Secretary of State (Shlaudeman) to US Embassy (Hill), 8 October 1975, ADP.
- [31] DSC, Buenos Aires 6870.
- [32] On the Argentine military dictatorship (1976–83), see for example Wright, *State Terrorism in Latin America*; Duhalde, *El Estado Terrorista Argentino*; Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror*; Frontalini and Caiati, *El Mito de la 'Guerra Sucia'*; Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*.
- [33] Thomas, 'Dirty Wars', 117.
- [34] Ibid., 118. See also Omang, 'Argentines Release Jailed American'; 'Freed American Tells of Torture in Argentine Jail', *New York Times*, 29 March 1976, 9.
- [35] Apodaca, *Understanding U.S. Human Rights Policy*, 39.
- [36] DSM, Don Tice to Charles W. Robinson, 16 July 1976, Subject: 'Fraser Human Rights Hearings', Box 7, Folder: Human Rights (D/HA), RCR, GRDS, RG 59, Archives II.
- [37] US Congress, *Human Rights in Argentina*, 41.
- [38] On the non-governmental human rights movement in the 1970s, see Cmiel, 'The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States'; Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*; Morgan, 'The Seventies and the Rebirth of Human Rights'; Schoultz, *Human Rights and United States Policy Toward Latin America*; Korey, *NGO's and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.
- [39] Wiseberg and Scoble, 'Monitoring Human Rights Violations', 183–5.
- [40] Laber, *The Courage of Strangers*, 73–4.
- [41] *U.S. Policy on Human Rights in the Latin America (Southern Cone)*, 81.
- [42] Memorandum, Roberta Cohen, undated, Personal Papers of Roberta Cohen, Washington, DC.
- [43] Personal interview with Roberta Cohen, May 1, 2008, Washington, DC.

- [44] Teltsch, 'Human Rights Groups are Riding a Wave of Popularity'. The Lawyers Committee was later renamed Human Rights First.
- [45] Ottaway, 'The Growing Lobby for Human Rights: Time for Action'.
- [46] Cmiel, 'The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United State's', 1235.
- [47] Ottaway, 'The Growing Lobby For Human Rights', 31.
- [48] Amnesty International, *Report on Torture*; Rejali, *Torture and Democracy*, 43.
- [49] DSC, Harry W. Shlaudeman to all[?] US Embassies in Latin America, 28 October 1976, ADP.
- [50] See, for example, Amnesty International, 'List of Refugees Detained or Missing in Argentina', press release, 17 June 1976, ADP; Idem, 'List of Politically Motivated Deaths in Argentina Between 3 January and 3 June 1976', press release, 2 July 1976, ADP; Idem, 'Attack on Academic Freedom in Argentina', report, 6 September 1976, ADP.
- [51] Drinan, 'Religious and Political Repression in Argentina'.
- [52] DSM of Conversation, 5 December 1976, ADP.
- [53] Amnesty International, *Report of an Amnesty International Mission to Argentina*.
- [54] Schoultz, *Human Rights and United States Policy Toward Latin America*, 84.
- [55] Telephone Interview with Olga Talamante, 28 March 2008.
- [56] Argentine Commission for Human Rights, Press Release, 10 November 1977, Box 73, folder: Human Rights 12/76-11/77, Office of Public Liaison, Margaret (Midge) Costanza (hereafter OPLMC), Jimmy Carter Library, Atlanta, GA (hereafter JCL).
- [57] Telephone Interview with Olga Talamante.
- [58] Jimmy Carter, Inaugural Address, 20 January 1977. <http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/speeches/inaugadd.phtml> (accessed 8 October 2009). Early scholars of Carter's human rights policy were generally critical. See for example, Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.*; Muravchik, *The Uncertain Crusade*; Smith, *Morality, Reason, and Power*. Recent generally positive studies include: Brinkley, 'Bernath Lecture'; Dumbrell, *The Carter Presidency*; Schmitz and Walker, 'Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights'.
- [59] Jerome J. Shestack to Jimmy Carter, 2 March 1977, box: 4, folder: Foreign Policy and Human Rights, 1/77-3/77, OPLMC, JCL.
- [60] CC, Tom Harkin to Cyrus Vance, November 11, 1977, Box 13, Folder: Human Rights – Argentina I, Records of Warren Christopher, 1977–1980 (RWC), Office of Deputy Secretary (ODS), GRDS, RG 59, Archives II.
- [61] See Hunt, 'House Coalition's Plan on Human Rights'; Goodfellow and Morrell, 'U.S. Aid and Comfort for World Torturers'; Russell, 'Hill Bars Softening on Rights'.
- [62] On US–Argentine relations during the period of military dictatorship, in addition to the sources cited elsewhere in this essay, see Sheinin, *Argentina and the United States*; Tulchin, *Argentina and the United States*; Cisneros and Escudé, *Historia General de Las Relaciones Exteriores de La Republica Argentina*; Cohen, 'The Carter Administration and the Southern Cone'.
- [63] Argentine Commission for Human Rights, 'Statement Prepared for the International Symposium on Human Rights and American Foreign Policy', 27–30 April 1977, University of Notre Dame, box: 74, folder: Human Rights: Argentina and Chile 1/76-11/77, OPLMC, JCL.
- [64] Griesgraber, 'Implementation by the Carter Administration of Human Rights Legislation Affecting Latin America', 71.
- [65] Erb, 'A mis Compañeros y Compañeras les Regalé mi Voz', 143.
- [66] Olga Talamante and Horacio D. Lofredo to Jimmy Carter, 3 June 1977, box: 74, folder: Human Rights: Argentina and Chile 1/76-11/77, OPLMC, JCL.
- [67] The Congress had passed similar legislation suspending US military transfers to Chile the previous year. See Sikkink, *Mixed Signals*, 125. For a useful abstract of human rights legislation in the 1970s and early 1980s, see Newsom, *The Diplomacy of Human Rights*, 223–35.

- [68] Schoultz, *Human Rights and United States Policy Toward Latin America*, 84.
- [69] Kaufman and Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.*, 52.
- [70] Derian's began her tenure at the Department of State as 'Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs' but was named Assistant Secretary on 17 August 1977. The Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs was established 27 October 1977.
- [71] DSM, John Bushnell to Patricia Derian, 13 June 1978, Subject: 'Commentary on Cutler Hammer Letter', Box 13, Folder: Human Rights – Argentina III, RWC, 1977–80, ODS, GRDS, RG 59, Archives II.
- [72] On this point, see, for example, DSC, Buenos Aires 5172, US Embassy (Castro) to Secretary of State (Vance), 26 June 1979, Subject: 'Ambassador Discusses Human Rights with General Viola', ADP; and Organization of American States, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, *Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Argentina* (Washington, DC: OAS, 6 April 1980), 6. On the significance of the IAHR visit, see also, Seoane and Muleiro, *El Dictador*, 228–9; Novaro and Palermo, *La Dictadura Militar (1976–1983)*, 119; Arditti, *Searching for Life*, 38; Gorini, *La Rebelión de las Madres*, 334; Guest, *Behind the Disappearances*, 177; Flood, 'U.S. Human Rights Initiatives Concerning Argentina', 133.
- [73] On the Reagan Administration's human rights policy, see for example Carleton and Stohl, 'The Foreign Policy of Human Rights'; Hartmann, 'U.S. Human Rights Policy Under Carter and Reagan, 1977–1981'; Jacoby, 'The Reagan Turnaround on Human Rights'.
- [74] Quoted in Gómez, 'Feminism, Torture, and the Politics of Chicana/Third World Solidarity', 119.

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