



**SCHWEIZERISCHE VERTRETUNG
REPRÉSENTATION SUISSE**

in/à

A d d i s A b e b a

an	DB	DZ	MX	W	PR	JB	BB	dodis.ch/53272
Datum	23.3	24.3	lax	24.3	24.3	1/13	hw	a/a hw
Visa	18	4	lax	2	1/13	hw	hw	
EPD		23.03.77			15			
E Ref. p. B. 73. Eth. O.								
Direktion für Völkerrecht								

Ihr Zeichen
Votre référence

Ihre Nachricht vom
Votre communication du

Unser Zeichen
Notre référence

Datum
Date

431.0 - B/sp

21.3.1977

Gegenstand / Objet:

Verletzungen des Menschen- und Völkerrechts durch
die Provisorische Militärregierung (II)

Ich beziehe mich auf mein Schreiben vom 14. März, das ich wie folgt ergänze:

- 6) Am 13. März 1977 nahmen die Schüler im Dorf unserer Köchin an einer Feier teil, die die Leiter des Quartiervereins (Kebele) veranlasste, die nächste Armee- oder Polizeistation zu informieren. Die Bewaffneten kamen in einem Lastwagen angefahren, was die Kinder zur Flucht trieb. Mit Automaten schossen die Vertreter der Regierung dann auf die fliehenden Schüler. Nach Angaben der Köchin wurden 23 Kinder getötet.
- 7) Einige Tage zuvor flüchtete sich ein Schüler auf der bekannten Churchill Road vor Soldaten, die ihn festnehmen wollten. Als es ihm gelang, in ein Geschäft zu verschwinden, schossen die Soldaten ihm aus Automaten nach und töteten dabei mehrere - angeblich 8 - Personen. (Diese Art Feuereröffnung ist hier bekannt. eine verbotene Versammlung der Mechaniker der Ethiopian Airlines wurde vor zwei Jahren so aufgelöst, und vor Wochen trieb man auf gleiche Art die vor dem Gewerkschaftsgebäude in Addis Abeba besammelten Arbeitnehmer auseinander.)
- 8) Am 15. März 1977 bemerkte mein Chauffeur, dass Soldaten mit MP die "Technical School" umstellten. Tags darauf waren in der Zeitung die 24 Schüler abgebildet, die in der "first-round campaign of exposing anti-revolutionaries" als Mitglieder der "subversiven" EPRP überführt und, woran hier niemand zweifelt, erschossen worden sind.
- 9) In diesem Zusammenhang ist die im gleichen Blatt noch unter dem Namen eines Beamten am 11. März 1977 veröffentlichte Stellungnahme zu den Menschenrechts-Erklärungen und -Konventionen von Interesse: Diese Rechte seien von Bedeutung gewesen, solange die UdSSR noch alleine sozialistisch war; nachdem die Mehrheit der Staaten sozialistisch geworden sei, habe das System der Menschenrechte "outlived its time".

Beilagen/Annexes:

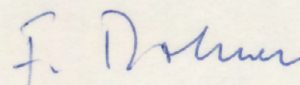
Durchschlag an

Copie à



- 10) Die Behörde macht ihre Erschiessungen nach übereinstimmenden Berichten aus Spitälern nun auch noch zu Einnahmequellen: Die Erschossenen (der Kebele usw.) werden von der Polizei eingesammelt und in die Spitäler gebracht. Wenn die Angehörigen sie abholen wollen, müssen sie dafür einen Betrag zahlen, der sich aus Anzahl Schusseinschlägen X 30 Birr ergibt - die Munition ist teuer und knapp.

DER SCHWEIZERISCHE BOTSCHAFTER:



(F. Bohnert)

Beilage:

Ausschnitt aus "Ethiopian Herald" vom 11.3.77

Je ein Durchschlag dieses Schreibens ging mit Beilage an:

- Politische Direktion II
- Verwaltungsdirektion

Talking Of Rights & Wrongs

by Yacob W. Mariam

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued by the United Nations in 1948 is not a legal enactment with a binding force on any member-state of the world organization. To my knowledge, the United Nations has not also named any power to act as world policeman for enforcing its agreements and for investing its declarations with the mantle of positive rights for all men. It is therefore presumptuous of any power to arrogate to itself the right of sitting as the supreme court of the international community.

Rights are considered to be those conditions of social life recognized by a state without which no man can seek to be himself at his best. It would be clearly a violation of the sovereignty of a state for its laws to be made subservient to the will of a foreign power. At a time when not even international law seems to enjoy the authority of force, a mere declaration of abstract rights is not worth the scrap of paper it is written on.

Human rights are meaningless in that "there is as yet no universal system of law to enforce them — nor any universal court to give rulings concerning them". At the same time also, there is no indication in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that this "international" standard should be made subject to the self-centred interpretation of bourgeois societies. Clearly, man is shorn of his fundamental human rights nowhere else but in feudal and bourgeois countries.

One of the most basic demands of justice is that the needs of the masses should be satisfied. It is hypocritical of any nation to act as world policeman for enforcing non-existent laws when millions of its own people are being deprived of the right to work — without which right no man can seek to be himself at his best. When the same power is reducing millions of men, women, and children in southern Africa

to the level of animals by operating in alliance with colonialism and racism, it is an open secret that the same self-appointed guardian of human rights is trampling on the very principles that it is championing.

Diverse philosophers have been digressing at length on the rights of man for centuries on end. These conceptions of rights could only make sense when they are related to the collective good of society. Since man is a social animal, his rights can never be viewed in isolation from the overall interests of the community, of which he is a member. In these circumstances, any declaration of human rights which does not take the political, social, and economic equality of all members of a society into account is bereft of all meaning. It is evidently hard to conceive of the rights of the working classes of bourgeois societies who are forced by the most inhuman laws imaginable to accept their fate as virtual social and economic slaves. In this sorry scheme of things, it is the shadow of democracy which is the opium of the working population.

Man would be only in a better position to realize his best self when he is the master — and not the slave — of impersonal economic factors. The standard by which properly to judge whether human rights are being accorded due recognition by a society is the social and economic values a community of men — and not a small coterie of exploiters — cherishes. It is sad to note that the society of wolves in sheep's clothing now shedding crocodile tears for human rights does not stand such a critical scrutiny.

The Soviet Union is a pioneer in a great experiment to create a truly just society. The fact that many countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America are treading the same path pioneered by the Soviet Union provides conclusive evidence that there exists a universal yearning to adopt the same pattern of rights established by that great votary of socialism. It is, of course, very unscientific to judge the rights of 250 million people by merely examining the clinical needs of a

(Contd. on page 4 col. 4)

Talking of Rights . . .

(Contd. from page 2 col. 6)

small bunch of social misfits. What does human rights signify to the tens of millions of men and women in bourgeois societies who are the victims of the two in-built evils of capitalism: social exploitation and recurrent economic crises. Unfortunately, bourgeois conceptions of human rights are blind to the mass-oriented economic benefits of socialism.

It is also a fact well-known to imperialism that feudalism has been sucking the blood of Ethiopian peasants for generations on end. However, when under one thousand rapacious and predatory landlords were gnawing something like sixty per cent of the rural population into their very bones, the high priest of international imperialism was remarkably reticent on the issue of human rights. Some sixteen years ago, for instance, one diplomat was recounting to me the joys of riding horses on the hills of Entoto. I told him that his joys were all the more remarkable since he was riding high in the company of excellent Oromo horsemen. He addressed himself to a fellow diplomat and said with some air of contempt: "You know, Jim, the Oromos are like those Red Indians..."

The point that I am trying to make is that imperialism has no respect for the rights of common people. Judging from certain utterances recently made, it is shocking to learn that imperialism is still tying the issue of human rights to the vested interests of less than one thousand dispossessed landlords. What is paramount is not — according to the argument of international imperialism — the rights of over 28 million Ethiopians! This reinforces my old conviction that no nation can do wise to subsist on crumbs of bread charitably thrown to it by international imperialism.

"Human rights" is — like "international law" — such a fine sounding phrase. However, it means different things to different people, depending on their ideological orientation. At any rate, rights are claims recognized by a state — and not laws to be imposed on it by a non-existent supra-national power. One of the hallmarks of sovereignty is, surely, that a state makes and enforces its own laws — and is not bound by any extra-territorial laws. Certain political *débutants* are, therefore, talking through their hats by making impassioned appeals to the sanction of rights, which have no legal basis. It is, of course, difficult to believe that the United Nations Organization has delegated international imperialism to be its world policeman.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was issued at a time when the Soviet Union was almost alone holding high the banner of socialism. Since then, this ideology has been expanding in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America to

such an extent that socialism now commands more following among members of the human race than the bankrupt systems of feudalism and individualism. In these circumstances, one reason for the misunderstanding being currently generated by conflicting conceptions of human rights is that the declaration issued by the United Nations on the subject has outlived its time and usefulness. It would be in the best interest of international understanding for this archaic declaration of rights to be revised in the light of the tremendous advancement of socialism since 1948. Until that is done, and a common ground of understanding is established between socialists and individualists, talks of "human rights" boil down to a bag of nonsense.